UDC: 376.091.3-056.262
*Original scientific paper*

# READINESS OF TEACHERS TO PREPARE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEP) FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS

**Blerta ALILI[1], Daniela DIMITROVA RADOJIQIQ[2]**

[1]*University of Tetova "Fadil Sulejmani"-Tetovo, Republic of North Macedonia.*
[2]*University Ss. Cyril and Methodius-Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia.*

**Abstract**

Most people believe that they know the answer to that question. Maybebecause this damage can be simulated. We close our eyes and think that this is exactly what itlooks like to be blind. In reality, blindness is very different. Most people who are blind have some kind of residual vision, distinguishing light from dark, only about 10% are completely oralmost completely blind. Blindness is not synonymous with complete visual impairment. Visually impaired children have the same educational needs as their peers. These students exude a heterogeneous group that has one thing in common, the degree of visual impairment. In the first special schools that opened in Western Europe in the late 18th century, the goal of education differed in many ways from the goal of mastering elementary general knowledge and vocational training. Today, the educational goals are the same as for other students. **Subject of research:** *determining the concerns, the readiness of teachers in regular elementary schools for the inclusive education of blind students.*
**Methods:** The research included a sample of 100 respondents, which consists of 100 teachers from regular schools, which are included in inclusive education, in regular primary schools in the municipality of Tetovo. Calculation of frequency and estimation of the structureof the obtained results. The $\chi^2$ test was applied. The statistical analysis was done using the computer program Excel and the statistical software SSPS. The difference at the level of significance of $p<0.05$ will be considered a statistically significant difference.
**Result:** The results of this research show that educators of regular primary schools arewilling to work with people with damaged vision, also to cooperate with colleagues for achievingsuccess in inclusive schooling. As we could notice by the results, the primary schools in Tetovoonly had three blind students, which lead us to believe that the awareness of people upon the education and inclusion of blind people in public and inclusive schools is still very low.
**Conclusion:** The results of this paper show us that teachers from regular elementary schools are ready to work with visually impaired people, as well as to cooperate with their colleagues to achieve progress in inclusive education.

*Keywords:* visual impairment, blind students, inclusive education, teacher readiness.

## Introduction

Vision impairment is a general term used to describe varying degrees of loss of visual functions. The sense of sight provides information about objects and space. Sight has a significant role in acquiring representations of space, perception of the environment, movement and orientation, speech development, role in communication and in educational process. Visually impaired students have specific needs regarding their education. Successful education implies a certain way of working with these students, while using adequate teaching aids, as well as teaching materials in an appropriate script, according to their individual abilities, possibilities and needs.Visually impaired children, like all other children, are obliged to enroll in primary school at the age of six. It is the age at which the neurophysiological and psychological development of these children basically ends, and the basic biologically and genetically determined psychomotor activities become functional, so that the children are capable of systematic learning, reading and writing.

https://doi.org/10.62792/ut.education.v6.i11-12.p2640

When participating in the educational process, visually impaired students are classified according to the degree of visual functioning:

- **visually impaired students** - use vision as the primary sensory channel;
- **functionally blind students** - they use their modest visual remains in the realization of everyday life tasks, but in the process of their schooling they need to use the sense of touch and/or the sense of hearing; and
- **blind students** - use the sense of touch and/or the sense of hearing both in the educational process and in everyday life.

This research aims to determine the concern, that is, the readiness of teachers in regular primary schools for the inclusive education of blind students.

## Research methodology

**Subject of research.** The subject of this research is the readiness of teachers to develop an individual educational plan for visually impaired students, i.e. whether teachers know and can include a visually impaired student in regular classes and how they prepare with the plan-program when they have inclusive education.

**Research objectives.** This research aims to find out how much teachers from regular primary schools are ready to work with blind and partially sighted students, whether they are ready and do they know how to make an IEP plan for those students, do they know which methods and techniques they should use when they have students with visual impairments. The research is quantitative, descriptive and evaluative.

**Methods**: descriptive method, causal method.

**Technique**: surveying, interviewing.

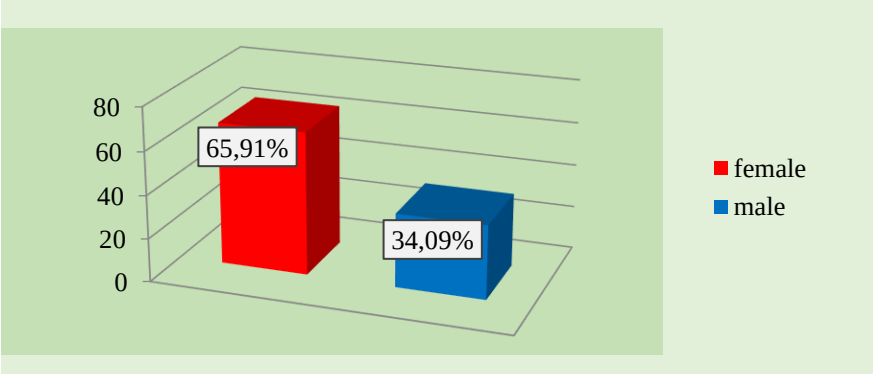
**Instruments**: Survey questionnaire (Stages of Concern Questionnaire, Averu YS, 2017) intended for teachers of regular elementary schools.

The sample will consist of 100 teachers from regular schools, who are involved in inclusive education, in regular elementary schools in Tetovo. After the data are collected, they will be grouped and tabulated in order to facilitate further processing. Then we will approach the calculation of frequency and the evaluation of the structure of the obtained results. The $\chi^2$ test will be applied. Statistical analysis will be performed using the computer program Excel and the statistical software SSPS. The difference at the level of significance of $p<0.05$ will be considered a statistically significant difference.

*The expected results of the research are: Teachers to be ready to formulate IEP and to be ready to work with blind students in inclusive education.*

## Sample analysis

**Sample 1.1** Sample analysis: gender of the surveyed teachers



| Examined teachers (gender) | | f | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| *1.* | *female* | *58* | *65,91%* |
| *2.* | *male* | *30* | *34,09%* |
| | **total** | **88** | |

The presented Exhibit no. 1.1 shows that the female gender predominates in the sample (approximately 2/3 of the total number) i.e. female teachers, compared to their male colleagues (about 1/3). It is a data in accordance with the preferable position of the teaching profession for the female gender in our environment, so we appreciate that it represents a real reflection of the wider population situation (note: 12 out of 100 respondents did not express their opinion on this data, i.e. did not leave data on gender).

## DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND THE ASSESSMENT OF TEACHERS' READINESS FOR DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING IEP FOR STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

To begin with, a statistical cross-check of the results of the dependent (criterion) variables with the gender of the examined teachers will be carried out. Descriptive data are presented in Table no. 3.1.1a, and visually additionally supported by the corresponding Display no. 3.1.1a. It can be seen from them that male teachers are inclined to significantly higher average evaluations compared to their female colleagues, in all three individual criteria of the dependent variable.

**Table 3.1.1a** The readiness of teachers for the preparation and application of IEP and gender (descriptive data)

**Descriptives**

| | *1) female 2) male* | *N* | *Mean* | *Std. Deviation* | *Std. Error Mean* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Personal readiness for IEP* | *1* | *58* | *2.1197* | *.74966* | *.09843* |
| | *2* | *30* | *2.5847* | *.94349* | *.17226* |
| *Preparedness of the environment for IEP* | *1* | *58* | *2.9066* | *1.04327* | *.13699* |
| | *2* | *30* | *3.1667* | *1.00072* | *.18271* |
| *Objective value of IEP* | *1* | *58* | *2.0738* | *.88490* | *.11619* |
| | *2* | *30* | *2.5313* | *.89529* | *.16346* |

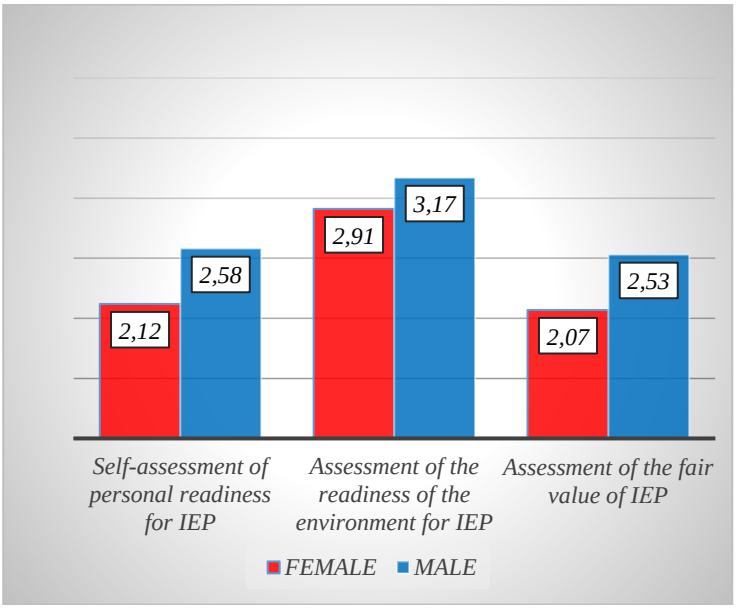



**Exhibit. 3.1.1a** The readiness of teachers for the preparation and application of IEP and gender (descriptive data)

Statistical testing of the significance of the indicated differences between the two gender is forthcoming, ie. checking whether these differences are sufficiently pronounced for statistical confirmation of significance, or whether they will be treated as the result of chance. A common statistical procedure for this purpose is the t-test for Independent Samples. The calculation of the complete t-test is presented in Table no. 3.1.1b.

**Table 3.1.1b** ndependent samples t-test: Teachers' readiness to develop and implement IEP and gender

| | *Levene's Test* | | *t-test for Equality of Means* | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *F* | *Sig.* | *t* | *df* | *Sig. (2-tailed)* | *Mean Diff.* | *Std. Error Diff.* | *95% Conf. Int. Lower* | *Upper* |
| *Personal preparedness* | *1.247* | *.267* | ***-2.521*** | *86* | ***.014**** | *-.46501* | *.18444* | *-.83167* | *-.09835* |
| *Environmental preparedness* | *.552* | *.460* | *-1.124* | *86* | *.264* | *-.26011* | *.23144* | *-.72020* | *.19997* |
| *Objective value* | *.003* | *.957* | ***-2.290*** | *86* | ***.024**** | *-.45754* | *.19979* | *-.85472* | *-.06036* |

## Conclusion

The conducted t-test for independent samples shows that the ascertained differences between the two gender are confirmed as statistically significant in two of the three criterion variables. Namely, the examined male teachers manifest a statistically significantly higher average assessment than their female colleagues of the personal readiness to prepare and apply the IEP for visually impaired students ($t=-2.521$, $df=86$, $p<0.05$) and the objective weight of IEP preparation for visually impaired students ($t=-2.290$, $df=86$, $p<0.05$). The difference between the two genders in the assessment of the readiness of the environment for the preparation and application of the IEP for visually impaired students was not confirmed as statistically significant.

In general, it can be concluded that gender appears to a high degree as a factor of differences between the examined teachers in terms of their assessments of readiness for the preparation and application of the IEP for visually impaired students. Such a finding provides a high degree of argumentation for accepting the research Hypothesis H1.

## References


[1] Acedo, C. Inclusive education: pushing the boundaries, Prospects, 38,2008,pp.5-13.

[2] Ајдински Л, Андреевски В. (2001). 50 години-заштита, рехабилитација, воспитание и образование на лицата со пречки во развојот во Република Македонија. Скопје:Гоце Делчев; 2001

[3] ADB [Asian Development Bank] (2010). Strengthening inclusive education. Manila: ADB. Available from: https://www.adb.org/publications/strengthening-inclusive-education

[4] Ајдински, Г., Киткањ, З., Ајдински, Љ. (2007). Основи на дефектологија. Куманово: Македонска ризница.

[5] Ajdinski G. The Role of the Special Teacher in the Process of Inclusion in the Regular

[6] Primary Schools. J Spec Educ Rehab 2007; 8(1-2):5-14.

[7] Andjic, B. (2015). Inkluzivno obrazovanje u Republici Srpskoj: Formalna osnova i praksa. Available from: https://www.scribd.com/document/446186458/Andjic-B-2015-Inkluzivno-obrazovanje-u-Republici-Srpskoj-formalna-osnova-i-praksa

[8] Avramidis, E.., Baylis, P.l, Burden, R.( 2000). Students teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the ordinary school.Teaching and Teacher Education 16: 277-293.

[9] A. Kızılaslan, "The development of science process skills in visually impaired students: analysis of the activities," International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE), vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 90-96, 2019.

[10] Asrial, Syahrial, D. A. Kurniawan, P. Nugroho, and R. Perdana, "Etno-Social Knowledge: How Does Knowledge of the basic school teachers in Indonesia?" EduLearn, vol. 13, no. 4, pp. 583–288, 2019.
[11] A. M. Jebba and N. N. Umaru, "The role of social media in reshaping the academic activities of vocational and technical education lecturers in Nigeria," International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE), vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 735-741, 2019.
[12] A. Pratiwi, A. P. Lintangsari, U. F. Rizky, and U. W. Rahajeng, Disability and Inclusive Education in universities (in Bahasa). Malang, Indonesia: UB Press, 2018.
[13] Banks, L.M. & Polack, S. (2013). The economic costs of exclusion and gains of inclusion of people with disabilities: Evidence from low and middle income countries. London: CBM and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.
[14] Bardin, J.A., Lewis, S. (2008). A survey of the academic engagement of students with visual impairment general education classes. Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness 102(8): 472-483.
[15] Barraga, N. C. Visual handicaps and learning: A developmental approach. Belmont,CA:Wadsworth, 1976.
[16] Beatrice, A.O., Janet, S.A. (2003): Introduction to special education: An African perspective. Adwinsa publications Ghana.
[17] Bardin, J A., Lewis, S. (2008). A survey of the academic engagement of students with visual impairment general education classes. Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness 102 no. 8: 472-483.
[18] Barton, L., Armstrong, F. (2008). Policy, Experience and Change: Cross-Cultural Reflections on Inclusive Education. Lodon: Springer Science Business Media B.V