

Social Theories about the Disability of Autism.



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ABSTRACT: In this paper, the question arises as to whether modern social theories about education make sense, among other things, of the identity of the person who is a carrier of the disability of autism. The critical view for a common educational "place" regarding the specificity of lifelong disability is attempted to be understood through the deficit in the education of social skills and the identity of the person with autism. The dominant characteristic of the invisible disability of autism is examined based on Goffman's theoretical views on the social construction of "stigma", and of Bourdieu on the social reproduction of unequal relationships. In the complex of special education and training, social considerations often discuss the clinical approach without overlooking the importance of establishing social relations in the identity of the person with autism.

KEYWORDS: Identity, autism, stigma, inequalities, inclusive education, differentiation.

I. INTRODUCTION

The deficit of social skills of the person with autism is a key objective in interventions in special education and training (SET) (Christakis, 2011 a;b;c). The sociology of disability focuses on any form of disadvantage, and discusses the stigma (Goffman 2001) on the basis that this is based on the principle that it is the social environment that determines the norms of lifestyle and the categories of people.

The description of social skills is meaningful with the daily life of each person. So, every day we come into interaction with those around us - we greet, we shake hands, we look - without analysing our movements. What it is happen when "another" person like the one with autism (Hellenic Society for the Protection of Autistic People, 2022), with the deficit in the training of social skills is hindering the communication? The balance in the flow of communication is disturbed when an unknown person with the disability of autism makes its appearance in the unfamiliar environment (Synodinou, 2007). Goffman believes that the best way to understand the "other" and come into real interaction with him is to analyse the "little things" of everyday life. The characteristics of autism behaviour is understood by from the systematic review of longitudinal follow up studies in cognitive, language, social and behavioural outcomes in adults with autism spectrum disorders (Mayati et al., 2014). Also, with the research through the meaningful participation (Fletcher-Watson et al., 2019) as it happens from 2002 to now into Agricultural University of Athens with the students on the autism spectrum and their invisible difficulties and associated problems (Wright, et al., 2014).

We have all been involved in our lives in similar moments of embarrassment regarding our social relationships, where we are unable to balance the situations. For Goffman the stigma refers to any characteristic that a person can distinguish in the eyes of other people, or even because of this feature to be attributed to him the image of an inferior status. Goffman, (2001) distinguishes three major categories of stigma:

- a) The various physical malformations: physical disability, repulsive signs
- b) Flaws related to the personality or past of the individual, such as character problems, history of staying in a mental hospital or in guard, alcoholism, unemployment, homosexuality, suicidal tendencies, radical political behaviour
- (c) Stigmas relating to race, nation and religion transmitted through family, geographical, local, social origin.

From the above three categories (Goffman, 1994) in this paper, we discuss the cases from the individual history of people with autism. According the Internationale entre Psychotherapeutist Psychanalysts et members asocial occupant de persons' Autists [Cippa], 2022) the individual with autism may pass educational times from their life through the psychiatric clinics, the asylums and the special schools. The researchers (Cook, et al., 2016) have studied the experiences of learning, friendship and bullying of boys with autism in mainstream and special settings. From this qualitative study else we would conclude that the society, is not prepared and trained to naturally accept "different" people such as people with autism disabilities as its "normal" members. According the Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders of American Psychiatric Association, (DSM V, 2013) the scientific society tends to accept the established categorizations of individuals but denies to adapt to the needs of all those who are considered stigmatized, "socially disabled" after their autism diagnosis. An inclusive society has been understanding education

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(Gewirtz, & Cribb, 2011; Drossinou-Korea. &, Abramidi, 2020) into a sociological perspective and accepts the full range of identities as opposed to categorizations (Ballerine et al., 2011). In the present work, autism is presented with references to modern society that recognizes multiple identities by including people with all the kinds of known disabilities (Oliver, M, 2009). The presentation of the self (Goffman, 2002) is discussed in the context of the inclusive or non-inclusive conditions that define autism as a lifelong disability.

II. INDIVIDUALS - CARRIERS OF AUTISM DISABILITY

Autism is defined as part of the complexity of modern society and is directly related to the emergence of new identities. The recognition that we live in a world much freer than the 60's, in a world that we are supposed to be able to live better and easier than in the past. According Bend Vandeborg, (2001) in search of Ariadne's Thread to what it is meaning the autism, he is referred that it is disability which has related directly with the Educational Curriculum and Practical Approaches. Because, each of us with our peculiarities creates new social and educational needs, which requires the individual to know at every moment to skilfully handle his social relationships.

In other words, it is a much more debilitating world of the social communication and the education in the social skills for the person who bears the disability of autism himself (Frاندji, & Rochex, 2011).

The complexity of society today allows to see a variety of forms of identities and in many combinations, among them students who are carriers of the disability of autism. In the frame of research has discussed the barriers, the possibilities and the ways to support them in the higher education (Stamboltzi, et al., 2018)

The acceptance and recognition of everything today is a complex issue that shifts the responsibility to the person with autism himself, who is called upon to undergo deep training and reconstruction of himself in matters of communication, social interaction in order to achieve daily communication in an orderly way.

Lindsay, (2016) referred of the know-how and the perspectives of parents to support the educational and social needs of their children with language dysfunction or autism spectrum disorder.

Also, as Oliver, (2009) has noted, after the 60's with the development of a more general humanitarian movement, the constant political struggles for the assertion of political rights testify to the lack of recognition of specific identities in society such as those individuals who are the carriers of autism. In Greece by the Law (4074, 2012) it is revealing of a society that has not yet accepted people with disabilities as its equal members with the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Historically, we observe, the disability movement in America is pushing out of the margins a broad social group of disabled people who, following the example of other marginal groups (women, African Americans) claim with their mobilizations their rights and the self-evident recognition of their presence in society (Poulogiannopoulou, 2020). In Britain (Powell, & Jordan, 2001), the introduction of the social model highlighted the deficiency and inadequacy of the medical model of approaching autism disability. In addition, the disability movement worldwide acquired a new perspective based on the idea of the "independent living" of people with disabilities, the deinstitutionalization and de-asylumation of people with autism (Drossinou-Korea, 2017; 2020 a; b). In Greece, it was not until 2000 that the Greek society for the protection of autistic people in Athens raised the issue around their lack of social recognition and the inadequacy of political and socio-economic structures. As today there are the demands for a) the potential social identity and how the individual with autism sees his identity and himself, and b) the real social identity and how others see him.

III. SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION STYLE

All The "poor" as a general group of the population are not only the people who are defined in relation to their position in the labour market. They are more of a collection of dispersed groups defined mainly in terms such as "race", ethnicity and gender and linked together by a status of "inferior citizens". Christakis (2011a; b; 2022) referring the behavioural problems of students in the education, gives a definition of "poverty". He is examining the problems of behaviour as a primary disability due to deprivation of capabilities. "Poor" are those people who due to lack of potential are unable to participate in the life of the community and they live educational and social inequalities. The lack of capabilities excludes people with autism from the life of the community and leads them to social exclusion (Barrère, & Mairesse, 2015).

Accordingly, by the Laws (4019, 2011; 4430, 2016) vulnerable groups of the population are defined by the degree of their participation in social and economic life. More specifically, people with autism belong to the vulnerable social groups and are distinguished either by socio-economic problems, or by lifelong neuropsychiatric disorder, or by unforeseen events, which affect the proper functioning of the local or wider regional economy. They belong to the population groups that are most likely to be excluded from a society due to a lack of skills and the inadequacy of accessibility structures and the approximation of the privileges of education, work, and culture.

The concept of "Integration" refers to the process of social integration of people belonging to the vulnerable groups of the population, mainly through their promotion in employment, ignoring the Aristotelian meaning of the "order of things, situations and processes".

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In 2016, the meaning of integration was replaced, in fact, with the meaning of "collective design" focusing on the promotion of collective actions and the protection of collective goods through development, economic and social initiatives of a local, regional or wider nature. Social services.

However, the increase in the unemployment rate of people with autism indicates that socio-economic inequalities increased. Gradually under the directions of the Ministry of Health General Directorate of Public Health & Quality of Life, Directorate of Public Health and Environmental Hygiene, (2021) during the pandemic the adults with autism were led to the social margins (Drossinou Korea, 2020 a).

From the 80's, a series of political actions against social exclusion began in the USA, England and France, which were carried out in parallel with policies in favour of social inclusion. So, in the socio-linguistic codes include the compensation teaching, in language and relating with the social classes and social control (Bernstein, 1975, pp. 249-262).

Also, the term social inclusion was theoretically based on the issue of the adaptation of society to diversity, as "special abilities", "special perspectives", "gifts", (Barère & Mairese, 2015) little taking into account the specific needs of people with autism.

The lengthening the years of compulsory education and the training of all students with autism and without, together from all social environments were some benefits for the special education with emphasis to the teaching social skills. These policies (Oliver, 2009) mobilised financial means and mobilised professionals and educators to oppose school inequalities and (Christakis, 2011, pp. 190-229; 2022) educational and social exclusion focusing in the disadvantages of socio-cultures and their educational remedies (Isabert-Jamati, 1973).

In addition, according the Participatory Autism Research (Pellicano et al.) the inclusive education acquired a strong theoretical background, as it was based on specific sociological theories that attributed school failure and social marginalization to a kind of "socio-cultural disability" that was inextricably linked to the family and social environment of the person with disabilities as the autism. Since then, towards a more collaborative research culture expanding translation science from research to community (Stahmer, et al., 2017) and back again and on the basis of these theories, the failure has been attributed to a deficit in terms of language, in terms of social skills, in terms of culture, in terms of interests, aspirations and prospects. And that is why, in order to eliminate the deficits that constitute "disability", inclusive education and the school is rethinking as unified and concerns all students with or without special educational needs (Lindsay, 2016).

IV. THE CONCEPT OF AUTISM DISABILITY AND SOCIAL STIGMA

The latest edition of the statistical manual on mental illnesses of the American Psychiatric Organization (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) has included the concept of autism disability with a series of parameters identified as to the functionality of the individual to cope with a series of actions, requiring social skills.

Through the theoretical prism of Erving Goffman (1922-1982) as a social stigma, and the thoughts of Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) on the reproduction of social relations we have discussed the social theories about the disability of autism and the deficit in the education of social skills. According to Goffman's perspective, "disabled people like people with autism" are "stigmatized" people with a falsified social identity.

Regarding the term stigma, we noted, that it was originally coined by the ancient Greeks (Dictionary of the Ancient Greek Language, 2012) who wanted with some indelible marks (scars, burns, etc.) to state the moral state of the person who brought them. Usually with these signs they wanted to publicize that their bearers were criminals, traitors or slaves, and their purpose was for the bearers of these stigmas to stand out in society and be marginalized disparagingly.

The term is also used in the original sense to denote ugly characteristics in people and to distinguish them in society as "different", however with the difference that they no longer need signs physically as proof, but the term is more about the moral and social staining of the individual (Babinotis, 2010).

Goffman in his works "Stigma" (1963) and "The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life" (1959) supports the thesis that people with their social interaction obey a double process. On this basis emerge the cultures of the family and the school. Inclusive education, without necessarily being concerned with the moral realization of these models, teaches "social skills that are limited to their persuasive impression and less to functional and spontaneous social interaction. This means that the self makes an effort every day to present itself in its social context on the basis of defined social models in order to be accepted in the whole.



Figure 1. The concept of autism disability and social stigma

More specifically, the educational and therapeutic approaches (Kalyva, 2005) are stigmatize person with autism because he represents the one that does not meet the defined social norms and is therefore undesirable in his environment and loose the right to join the school framework equally (Wright et al., 2014).

The stigma refers to "imperfections" and "flaws" physical, psychiatric, mentally related to autism and it is meeting in all the social concepts regarding the ethnicity, gender, race, religion, social status with an emphasis on social skills. According to Goffman, the body plays an important role in how the individual participates in social and communicative relationships. The body itself is a carrier of messages, moods, ideas, attitudes, behaviours and mediates between individual and social identity. Much more, people with autism disabilities who are usually a direct invisible and perceived deviation from the "normal", cause embarrassment and disturbance of balance in a possible social communication in evert day life (Alexias, et al., A, 2014).

The presence of the "disabled autistic" is not easily manageable by the "normal" in terms of social skills, with the result that often the person with autism is excluded and isolated or receives symbolic violence.

Goffman approaches stigma and therefore every form of disability including autism as a social construct. The individual tries to adapt in such a way as to meet the social characteristics that are considered "normal" and understood as "permissible" by a given social environment. In these cases, there are a discrepancy according the social data between the potential and the real social identity (Goffman, E, 2001). Given that the person with autism himself finds it difficult to understand the limits, when he thinks about his position and he experiences it as an identity crisis in a dramatic way as he is unable to adapt and integrate into the established norms and social norms. The same It is happened for the individual himself with autism, but also for society, which in turn is unable to demarcate and accept the individuals with autism.

"Stigmatized" people with autism are obliged to present themselves in a world that has been structured according to the criteria and conditions of the "normal". This is sought through inclusive setting without a targeted individual structured integration intervention of special education. The non-recognition of their peculiarities proves that this world considers them inferior with limited social status. This means that they are not allowed to present themselves in any other way than by showing and accepting what they are and are stated by the diagnosis which they have obtain using these to the institutions such as schools and universities. Based on this reasoning, "the stigmatized person is not entirely human", because the established social order does not provide him the realistic opportunities for social adaptation and development. So, the social skills are chosen as the supports and assistants that accompany the "economy" of disability first of all and the after in the secondly time, the school society with the education is emphasizing the person with autism and the realistic special needs in the realization of his daily program. The school segregation to students with autism come to continuum of the separation of populations, of the social inequalities arise from the distribution of forms of capital to individuals. According Bourdieu (1930-2002) we have understand the separation two groups of individuals, the privileged groups and the disadvantaged groups. For Bourdieu there are the forms of capital that a person can own or inherit (Bourdieu, 2015). The first form is economic capital, which concerns property, the money that one owns and that has the power to dominate the economically weaker. The persons with autism holders of economic capital form the dominant social class. The second form is social capital and concerns the image and the way one presents oneself to the other members of society. This chapter is the criterion that differentiates the social position of individuals who are carriers of autism.

Of course, in modern neoliberal societies, the one who owns the economic capital also has the power to construct the content of social skills and cultural capital. So often people with autism who come from wealthy family's "cover" the deficit of social skills.

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The reproduction of social and education inequalities is a result of the class that the person with autism belongs to and is shaped by the culture of the family primarily. Education is the one that from childhood imprints on individuals the normal and the abnormal, social norms and attitudes of life. Already from early age the division is made into privileged without developmental disorders and into young children with autism. The social status of the family is the one that predetermines the profile of people with autism into the educational system and later in society. Children who come from a higher social class due to their daily contact with the culture of their parents and their friction with the educational tools into their family, such as books, language, entertainment, music, utilization of free time, learn easier and better the social skills. While children with autism who come from lower social strata, for them the school is a key route to culture of SET. The educational imposition is expressed in a violent, symbolic way through direct didactic interventions. Sometimes also the context of school integration applicate teaching methods with "symbolic violence" through the proposed social skills. It should be noted that symbolic violence is the means of imposing a certain orderliness on the school community and a way of thinking, which is perceived as correct by inclusive education for people with autism applying the predominant perception of a certain scientific "elite" on the issues of autism in society.

CONCLUSION

The empirical possibilities from the special education are remarkable in the debate on the identity of individuals who are carriers of autism disability regarding the point of the predominant deficit of social skills. of autism and the point of "worn-out identity" of the person with autism.

In addition, research on educational and social care, does not always identify the ways in which different theoretical educational perspectives on disability base conceptualizations on the formation of social identities of people with autism. The deficit in the education of social skills is recorded in the protocols of individual sessions of special education and education in the effort to understand the identity of the person with autism by the special educators with mixed observation and intervention methodologies.

Nevertheless, it is noted that the disability of autism is considered even in the most progressive western societies as a disadvantage. The medical model of approaching disability has left residues and is not conducive to a radical change in society's perception of normality. Access barriers, lack of financial assistance is assessed as structural and systemic problems affecting the development of social skills. The social model is based on this very perception that it is society that is sick, as it has not been properly prepared to adapt to the needs and peculiarities of excluded groups as the individual as with autism. The negative perception of the autism under the state of disability, is due to the fact that society still operates under the terms and standards of the "normal". Thus, the modern school society and academical society on a global level has developed a system of examinations, certifications, excellences, distinctions and evaluations. These are based on the abilities of the "normal". In the other side the special schools are gradually abandoned with some of them having an "asylic" character and they are addressing to the people with autism and multiple disabilities that may accompany them.

Although the unified public school takes into account the peculiarities of students with autism from low socio-economic strata, this is happened with horizontal selection without qualitative pedagogical criteria that determine the SET interventions. The reproduction of social inequalities is greater in the neighborhood schools when students with autism are not supported with appropriate pedagogical tools such as the Targeted, Individually Structured Intervention Programs of Special Education and Training (TISIPSET). The pedagogical applications with TISIPSET recognizes the experiences of individuals with autism (Drossinou, Korea, 2017). In addition, according the social theories the non-acceptance of their deficits by the other members of the school community violates their desire for others to see them as ordinary people who perform ordinary activities with limited social skills.

Finally, reflectively, the sociological view of the disability of autism is based on the theory of the social construction of identities within the school community (White, et al., 2011). We have accepting that society sets the conditions and limits for the development of the socialization of people with autism. The image, the structure of the body, the way of walking, the health, the way of clothing, the problems in behavior highlight social and class differences, and reproduce inequalities. The privileged classes take care of people with autism. While on the other hand the disadvantaged classes have a significant economic, cultural and social deficit and are unable to participate in privileges or make a great effort to obtain them. Thus, the accessibility to higher education of people who are carriers of autism is increased in the cases of the offspring of a well-established family. The educational privileges are transferred by inheritance and are usually denied to people with autism who come from low socio-economics (Fong et al., 2020).

However, with the data of modern society, identity is unique for every person with autism and there are as many autisms as their human carriers. They reveal their identity to the outside world when they allow them. Thus, the peculiarity of the disability of autism is found in all people in all social classes in both sexes. The elements from the United Nations, (2006) emphasize the characteristic deficits such as those of social skills do not precede in society. The social skills are among the historical, socio-economic and cultural constructs that are constantly repeated and solidified in the perception of individuals with or without autism. Similarly, according the social theories we are note the lifelong disability of autism as a neuropsychiatric disorder is not decisive for a person's identity to society. In closing, we would say that individuals who bear autism follow a deterministic path and are compulsively subject to the cultural conditions set by the «normal non-autistic" socialized and normal people in order they to be accepted into the system.

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