A positive case study of empowering people with intellectual disabilities through work/school alternation

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ABSTRACT

For those with disabilities, entering the workforce is a critical step toward professional inclusion. The project of school/work alternation carried out with a student with intellectual disability in a supermarket throughout the frequency of the past year in a higher institute in northern Italy is presented using a case study. The goal of this research is to describe the process and emphasize the methods that were used during the event.

The study concludes with an examination of the factors that can contribute to a positive experience and serve as a spring board for future similar experiences. This experience demonstrates that, with the right training, people with intellectual impairments may be protagonists in an experience that benefits their well-being and social integration. The project's main goal is to enable a person with a disability to venture out into the world independently, based on his or her abilities; every assistance should allow the person with a disability to experience autonomy, effectiveness, and determination, finding the drive to overcome the inevitable obstacles to reach an autonomously achieved goal.

Keywords: Disabilities; Emphasize; Professional inclusion; Autonomously; protagonists

INTRODUCTION

The theme of the life project is inextricably linked to that of orientation, which is offered as a path of tailored support and assistance to the individual in the lengthy, sluggish, and extended process of developing personal knowledge required to "move" in the global and local labor markets. Orienting, in this sense, is assisting people in gradually defining their own life project. In Italy, the issue of professional orientation for people with impairments has become more prominent since the early 1980 s. De Anna had already mentioned Mr. Fadda's contribution in 1989, in which he provided a strategy for employment as well as certain vocational training projects for people with disabilities. It is not a matter of adopting pressures that may fuel harmful expectations, but rather of recovering and reinforcing a sense of reality free of closures, limitations, conditioning, cultural, social, and personal, through openness to real prospects, free of false meanings or unattainable possibilities. The law-enforced alternation path between education and job is one of the most important instruments available to students with impairments [1]. This is a combined educational path that allows students to alternate between school and job as part of their educational curriculum. Pupils might attend a private or state institution for training and work-related activities during school hours. This provision is in line with the Ministry of Education's Guidelines for the Integration of Students with Disabilities, which were released with a Note on August 4, 2009, and suggested the implementation of actions and projects aimed at facilitating the transition of these students from one level of school to the next, as well as the adoption of initiatives to support their transition to adult life and work through experiences such as school-work alternation, internships, and collaboration with local businesses. Despite the importance of this chance from a legal standpoint, there appear to be some key aspects that can influence the path's result. According to the data gathered by Dainese (2015) 12, school/work alternation, as well as internships and traineeships, are not extensively used with disabled students. Furthermore, according to the same survey, 54 percent of instructors who responded to the questionnaire believe that the future of their students with disabilities is undefined and far from their personal desires and expectations. Finally, these same teachers say that the support teacher and experts make the majority of the decisions, with minimal input from the curriculum teachers. Good practices implemented in several Italian schools, as well as a wide range of plans and initiatives, have emerged, indicating a high level of sensitivity to the issue of work-related inclusion, as well as a number of procedural flaws. With tremendous difficulty, the consolidation of practices tries to provide continuity and concreteness to the procedures and support activities tested through time. There are excellent synergies between schools, communities, and the territory as a result of these practices, and this contextual element appears to be a decisive factor and cross-cutting to many projects, enhancing schools' ability to use the resources already available within the institute and effectively interacting with the resources of the territory (for example the companies). The examination of the events the projects get more complex, necessitating the presence of professional talents and a wide range of sensitivities in order to properly handle all actions, from receipt to insertion [2].

These steps lead to the development of an individual plan that considers the characteristics of the person with disabilities, the business environment, the duties that the subject is capable of performing, and the best contractual forms to establish this sort of working relationship. What unites the projects is the idea of pooling all of the resources that would otherwise be spent and invested by various institutions in the context of various activities of assistance and support for a single disabled person, into a single project managed by the schools and local governments involved, giving meaning to the various resources. The importance of networks is stressed in a third way, both at the start, when it is vital to create links with families and local authorities, and while entering the production setting. The network is initially engaged at a micro level in the school and anticipates a bigger participation of the actors directly involved in the student's life project (parents, teachers, specialists). When the school comes into contact with external organizations, this internal component is the beginning point for effectively managing openness to the outside.

The value of the life project for individuals with disabilities is well documented in the literature, but the tactics used to create and implement it receive far less attention [3]. The purpose of this research is to describe and analyses a school/work alternation experience that moved a student with an intellectual disability from school to employment. The actions carried out during this process demonstrate the possibilities of developing

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shared practices that may be duplicated in a variety of settings. A single-case study drove this qualitative research. Because of the favorable outcome of the encounter, this case study was picked. In this approach, the factors that led to the beneficial outcome may be described and analyzed. A case study research approach is defined as one that "allows for the exploration of a phenomenon in its context using a variety of data sources." "A comprehensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon like as a programmer, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit," according to the definition of a case study. Particularistic (focused on a specific circumstance, event, programmer, or phenomena); descriptive (producing a rich, detailed description of the thing under investigation); and heuristic (illuminating the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under study) are the qualities of a case study. 20. Case studies are detailed examinations and descriptions of a single unit or system that is constrained by space and time [4]. Case studies allow for a more in-depth knowledge of occurrences and its significance for everyone involved. Data analysis is defined as "the act of producing meaning out of data, which entails consolidating, minimizing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read." The data was examined using an Interpretive Phenomenological method (IPA), which intended to elucidate the participants' perspectives on their experiences in depth. IPA can be used to analyses data in order to create thick descriptions (that is, descriptions that include not only behavior but also context) that can help throw light on human experience. An IPA researcher must think about their data from two perspectives. The initial goal is to try to comprehend the participants' perspectives and worldviews. The second goal is to create a more obviously interpretative analysis that takes a stand. The purpose of this second-order account is to provide a conceptual and analytical analysis of the participants' personal "sense-making" activities [5].

The first stage was to read each transcript several times, then identify and write down all of the fascinating and noteworthy features that emerged from the material. The next stage was to detect repeating content patterns (abstraction process) and group the patterns into emergent themes. The analysis was carried out by two independent raters. The two raters individually coded the data before meeting to compare analyses. Dissension was used to address any disagreements. The themes were chosen not for their frequency, but for their meaning and importance, as well as for parallels and variations amongst groups of participants. All participants in the study gave their consent, including people with disabilities, their families, and representatives from the services. The information gathered during the study was kept strictly secret [6]. The confidentiality of participants was maintained throughout the research process and in any subsequent published work. The findings are the outcome of a thorough examination of the materials gathered.

DISCUSSION

Initially, I discussed the case by stressing the various processes that constituted Andrea's experience using examples. Following that, I attempted to highlight the things that contributed to a positive outcome of the encounter utilizing the protagonists' voices. Andrea (all names are made up), a student with intellectual disability, was involved in the project throughout his final year of secondary school in the 2017/2018 academic year, when he completed his education at a technical institute in northern Italy. The choosing of an intellectually disabled student is driven by a desire to take into consideration a disability that, according to the research, makes it difficult to find and keep a job [7].

Andrea lives with his mother Antonella (55), father Giorgio (59), and brother Filippo in a tiny village in Northern Italy (28 years old). Antonella is a housewife, and Vincenzo, like Filippo, is a retired bricklayer. Andrea is a Down syndrome youngster who has a severe intellectual handicap (IQ 42). He grooms himself and takes care of his personal hygiene. He walks on his own and she does not take public transportation on her own [8]. He understands how to use money, but he struggles with the rest since he does not understand the worth of money.

He follows a customized school planning system at school, including programmer simplifications and reductions [9]. He will not earn a diploma

but merely a certificate of attendance at the end of his academic career because he will not take the state exam. He has attention issues, and she requires a break in between activities. At first, Andrea's parents, the social worker, the support teacher, and the educator who follows her at school have a series of meetings. Only the mother attends these gatherings; the father claims to be uncomfortable because of his shy nature and aversion to social situations. Andrea's mother is a middle-aged woman with brown hair and a round face. Physically, he recalls Andrea quite well, with the same lip expression and eyes. "We're here to think of a professional path for Andrea, a new beginning point after school," the social worker says to the mother, "since now it's getting bigger, so we think he has a chance to achieve it [10]."

CONCLUSION

This qualitative study was guided by a single-case study. This case study was chosen for the positive outcome of the experience. In this way it was possible to describe and analyze the factors that contributed to this positive outcome. A case study research approach is defined as one that "allows for the exploration of a phenomenon in its context using a variety of data sources." "A comprehensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon like as a programmer, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit," according to the definition of a case study. 19. Particularistic (focused on a specific circumstance, event, programmer, or phenomena); descriptive (producing a rich, detailed description of the thing under investigation); and heuristic (illuminating the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under study) are the qualities of a case study. 20 Case studies are detailed examinations and descriptions of a single unit or system that is constrained by space and time. Case studies allow for a more in-depth knowledge of occurrences and their implications for everyone concerned. The researcher picks the suitable unit to represent the topic or questions of interest, and defines what is known based on rigorous investigation of many sources of information about the case. The research process is characterized by a set of procedures that are aimed to give a thorough examination of the case.

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