

# Peer support and inclusion for students with disability

Nikolina Bajkovec

Faculty of Organization and Informatics Varaždin

Pavlinska 2, 40000 Varaždin

nbajkovec@foi.hr

**Abstract.** *The goals and purpose of this case study and research are to highlight the importance of social inclusion in the 21st century, emphasize the potential and identities of the person with a disability and other members of society and point out how peer support improves the quality of study of students with disabilities.*

*Inclusion is an approach that emphasizes that diversity is strength, abilities, and needs is natural and desirable.*

*It requires the development of sensitivity and the creation of conditions for articulation and the satisfaction of various individual needs, not just the needs of persons with disabilities.*

*Inclusion is a good way of preparation in terms of human capital management for the future labor market.*

*Many studies show that peer support has positive effects on the socio-emotional and academic life of youth.*

*This case study was observed in a university course called Peer Support for Students with Disabilities, which lasts the whole semester*

*An important form of support for students with disabilities in teaching is provided by the university course "Peer support for students with disabilities", which was introduced as an optional course at the universities of Zagreb, Rijeka, and Pula as part of the EduQuality Tempus project. The evaluation was done based on methods: questionnaire for student assistants; assessment scales and open-ended questions, focus groups with student assistants and focus groups with students with disabilities. 52 student assistants and 52 students with disabilities participated in assessment from the academic year 2011/2022 to 2021/2022.*

**Keywords.** Inclusion, Accessibility, Support

## Acknowledgments

Special thanks to my mentors, Professor Dr. Lelii Kiš Glavaš and Professor Valenti Novak Žižić, for their generous help and selfless sharing of knowledge and experience. Thanks also to the Dean's office of the Faculty of Organization and Informatics and to the project manager, Professor Dr. Violeta Vidaček-Hainš,

for enabling participation in the 10th Student Research Symposium in the United States.

## References

- Borić, S., Tomić, R. (2012). Stavovi nastavnika osnovnih škola o inkluziji. Available on: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/87847> [30.5.2022.]
- Cerić, H. (2007). Mogućnost konstituiranja teorije inkluzivnog obrazovanja. Available on: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/file/40721> [30.5.2022.]
- Cvetko, J., Gudelj, M., Hrgovan, L. (2000). Inkluzija. Zagreb. Edukacijsko – rehabilitacijski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu. Available on: <http://hrcak.srce.hr/file/32356> [30.5.2022.]
- Kovačić, A., Kirinić, V., Vidaček-Hainš, V. (2011). Students with disabilities and other special needs in the process of higher education: inclusion issues. Available on: <https://www.bib.irb.hr/568742> [24.6.2022]
- Simplician, S. C., Leader, G., Kosciulek, J., & Leahy, M. (2015). Defining social inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities: An ecological model of social networks and community participation. *Research in developmental disabilities*, 38, 18-29. Available on: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/270118024.pdf> [30.5.2022.]
- Paić-Karega, P. (2019). Provedba i evaluacija intervencije unapređenja socijalne inkluzije. Available on: <https://repositorij.erf.unizg.hr/islandora/object/erf:635> [30.5.2022.]
- Novak Žižić, V., Kiš-Glavaš, L. (bez dat). Vršnjačka potpora studentima s invaliditetom - rezultati evaluacije. [21.5.2022.]
- Sveučilište u Zagrebu (bez dat). Sveučilišni predmet Vršnjačka potpora studentima s invaliditetom. Available on: <http://www.unizg.hr/studiji-i-studiranje/podrska-studentima/ured-za-studente-s-invaliditetom/vrsnjacka-potpورا> [28.5.2022.]
- Sveučilište u Zagrebu (bez dat). Ured za studente s invaliditetom. Available on:

<http://www.unizg.hr/studiji-i-studiranje/podrska-studentima/ured-za-studente-s-invaliditetom/>  
[27.5.2022]

Šešmun, M., Radić Šestić, M., Slavnić, S. (2016). Profesionalni identitet gluhih i nagluhih adolescenata. Available on:  
<http://rfasper.fasper.bg.ac.rs/handle/123456789/2470> [30.5.2022]