

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is conceived as a theoretical - empirical study, which is focused on modifications in attitudes of fourth and fifth grade pupils towards people with disabilities. The research is based on three possible influences for attitudes, (1) the effect of classmate with disability on pupils' attitudes towards people with disability, (2) teacher's approach to the issue, their inclusive teaching competences and the effect on pupils' attitudes and (3) if school and its inclusive setting (which is represented by schools with "Fair school" certificate) has any influence on pupils' attitudes towards persons with disabilities. We try to explain one elemental empirical question by dealing with these three particular research issues. Does inclusive environment have positive influence on fourth and fifth grade pupils towards people with disabilities? We decided to choose a quasiexperimental design of this study to answer this question. Two validated empirical instruments were used in the research, they were administrated on a sample that consists of 1948 pupils from fourth and fifth grades and (their) 102 teachers. The acquired data were processed by appropriate statistical methods. Our outcomes partly confirmed the assumption that inclusive environment may have an impact on pupils' attitude towards people with disabilities, but only in certain areas. The assumption that a classmate with disabilities may have influence on attitudes of fourth and fifth grade pupils towards people with disabilities has not been confirmed. On the other hand, if a pupil has a close relationship with someone with disability, it has a positive impact on his/her attitudes towards people with disabilities. It tells us something about the need of positive interactions between pupils with and without disability, so they could start a friendship. It also may change their attitudes towards people with disabilities into more positive ones. Further, it was affirmed that a teacher with high inclusive competencies also has a positive influence on the pupils' attitudes towards people with disabilities. It has not been proved that inclusive attitude of school may have influence on pupils' attitudes towards people with disability. In the last part of the work all interpretation with some further researches suggestions and main recommendations for pedagogical and special educational practice and theory are expressed.

KEYWORDS

Attitudes towards disability, inclusion, inclusive education, inclusive environment, quasiexperiment