

Stavroula Vasilakopoulou,
PhD,
Mira Tzvetkova-Arsova,
PhD,
St. Kliment Ohridski University, Sofia, Bulgaria

SELF-DETERMINATION OF PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN INDEPENDENT LIVING AND QUALITY OF LIFE

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Abstract. *Self-determination means the possibility of each person to determine its actions and actions without external constraints. Independent living for people with disabilities is described by the concept of self-determination, autonomy, self-regulating, psychological empowerment and self-realization to be their key features. On the other hand, independent living and self-protecting behavior enhance internal motives, goals and aspirations of people with disabilities regardless of external inhibitors. In the development of self-determination, in childhood, family and school play, children of the typical population, while children with disabilities, the degree of disability, age, leaf, social skills, etc. emerge in key factors.*

Keywords: *self-determination, disability, learning disorder*

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Introduction

Self-determination is a dynamic concept that through a long historical redesign and use has resulted in its modern performance, but also its correlation with disability. A general approach to the concept of self-determination is based on the fact that each person can decide for himself the course of his life, without the influence of others, that is, to determine the course of his actions and deeds without external restrictions according to his own will.

So, every person who acts, having full control of his life, as well as his choices, completes the meaning and the essential content of self-determination, having all the necessary supplies, when he will now move into his adult life (Voelkeretal, 1990).

However, complete control of life in the case of people with disabilities depends on the severity of the disability as well as other factors. Thus, the concept of self-determination can fully describe the level of personal independence or, alternatively, independent living of people with disabilities. Self-identification of people with disabilities, although not an easy task, is a basic and fundamental human right that should be enshrined in appropriate legislation (Wehmeyer & Garner, 2003).

This right is also linked to respect for the choices and preferences or even the aspirations of people with disabilities. All people, even if they do not have the same disabilities, should recognize and respect this right of people with disabilities (Tossebro, 1995). Of course, the path of claiming is a difficult and complicated process, which presupposes necessary changes and reforms, which many societies have not fully accepted, until today.

Behaviors based on self-determination have some basic characteristics which are distinguished by: autonomy, self-regulation, psychological empowerment and self-realization. Initially in terms of autonomy, an independent and autonomous person, acts according to his own desires and interests, without external influences.

In addition, self-regulation refers to the individual's ability to modify his behavior. Self-regulating behavior really exists when a person decides which of the skills he or she has, he or she can use to respond to any situation presented to him / her, considering all possible and necessary changes that should be made. in order to achieve the final goal.

Then, when a person act based on their own strengths and self-belief, possessing the skills required for each activity and when he can bring about any change in his environment, while also anticipating the possible results of the actions, then the psychological empowerment.

Eventually, self-realization occurs, in which a person, being aware of his actions and energies, limits or adjusts at the same time the influences and influences he receives from the external environment in a beneficial way (Wehmeyer & Garner, 2003).

Independent living and self-determination are two interrelated concepts and therefore the struggles for the rights of people with disabilities in the decades from the '60s to the ' 80s also marked the beginning of independent living.

Independent living is one of the basic-fundamental characteristics of self-determined behavior (it springs from it), it is directly related to the concept of self-determination of the individual's motivations that contribute to independent living and the autonomous execution of actions and of its actions (Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1997). Through self-determination and independence, individuals can redefine their

internal balance, which further enhances their autonomy while enhancing their motivation, aspirations and goals, regardless of external factors.

- Conclusion Independent and autonomous action-living is recommended with the characteristic of independence, which is the independence of the individual is freed from external influences and interventions.
- Independence extends to various areas of a person's life. as are all activities related to the management of the environment in which he lives and works, as well as the management of his social obligations. Equally important are the creative and professional activities, which are part of the broader context in which each individual, utilizes his personal preferences and corresponding interests.

In addition, independence is related to an individual's internal balance, which enhances his or her self-confidence, as long as an individual acts autonomously in order to pursue and accomplish his or her personal goals in relation to other external control agents that may limit this action. (Cihak & Gama, 2008).

In the case of people with disabilities, internal motivations, as opposed to controlled motivations imposed by other people in the light of guidance, in order to control their behavior and their actions involved in an activity, due to their influence, influence and limit levels of independence of people with disabilities. This requires a form of self-organization that will allow people with intellectual disabilities to determine their inner harmony and control of their choices, without being influenced by the will or control (or even the need) of someone another powerful controlling person who will determine their actions (Cihak & Gama, 2008).

At this point to emphasize that self-determination develops throughout a person's life, from childhood to adulthood. This is because during this time he is constantly learning new skills and developing or shaping those behaviors that allow him to have a more complete and targeted life orientation.

During childhood, the family and the school play a very important role, as well as some other factors. But the school takes on perhaps the most important role in shaping a person's social behavior along with his or her intellectual skills. However, in the case of children with disabilities, the family plays a primary role, especially in

terms of programs for the promotion and development of self-determination, in addition to the degree of disability, age, gender, social skills, etc. affect the evolution of self-determination and therefore their quality of life.

During childhood, the family and the school play a very important role, but also the school, which together with its intellectual skills plays perhaps the most important role in shaping the social behavior of an individual. However, in the case of children with disabilities, the family plays a primary role, as in the programs for the promotion and development of self-determination. In addition, the evolution of self-determination and therefore the quality of life is influenced by the degree of disability, age, gender, social skills, etc.

Parents of children with disabilities should be supportive to some degree so that children do not become dependent on them during their later adolescence and adulthood. On the contrary, the greatest emphasis should be given to educational action as teachers can be considered the most suitable persons to teach self-determination to children with disabilities and especially, special education teachers, compared to general education teachers.

Special education teachers. are responsible for teaching many methods and means of independent living, as they have the academic background, the appropriate training, as well as greater experience of correlation and teaching with children with multiple or severe disabilities, compared to the general education teachers mentioned and above, who have a more limited range of experience and management of teaching with specific children-students (Djuric-Zdravkovicetal, 2011).

At this point it is worth mentioning a study conducted on people with intellectual disabilities, with the main goal of highlighting the environmental factors that affect their self-esteem as well as the level of intelligence, age, gender, social skills and their adaptive behavior, affects and determines their quality of life. The study sought to examine the relationship between personal characteristics of self-determination, social skills, and environmental status of individuals with intellectual disabilities.

The study involved 141 people (the study was conducted in Italy), health professionals and social workers, who participated for at least one year in programs

related to the completion of measures and methods of self-determination, as well as strengthening social skills. For the analysis of the results, the method of the analysis of the variation of the percentage results was used, in order to be able to determine whether the different levels of mental retardation were correlated and influenced by the different degrees of the dependent variables. In addition, IQ tests were performed to examine all possible relationships between the dependent variables and their scores.

The results of the research showed that the participants who had higher levels (degree) of mental retardation (severe mental retardation) had lower levels of self-esteem and social skills. At the same time, the analysis of the discreet function showed that the people who attended support centers daily, showed higher levels of development in their adaptive behavior, than those who lived in inmates in institutions. In addition, younger adults showed greater choice autonomy and self-discipline in their daily activities and basic social skills, regardless of the IQ test scores they scored, or if they belonged, to high or low standard of living groups (affluent-less affluent). In addition, the IQ test score included the participation of high and low self-determination groups, in order to fully examine the differences, in terms of gender and age regarding self-determination, where differences based on gender were found. Women had higher self-efficacy outcomes than male participants. In conclusion, the findings of the research contributed to the emergence of additional factors that contribute significantly to the enhancement of self-determination of individuals, as well as their quality of life. In the emerging knowledge base related to the role of internal (psycho-spiritual) and environmental factors, in shaping self-determination and in improving living standards, the study reproduced findings on the relative contribution of intelligence to the self-determination of people with intellectual disabilities. adding some additional information (to the existing research literature) on the potential contribution of social skills while highlighting the potentially important role of providing individuals with opportunities to make free choices, as a particularly important aspect of achieving their self-determination (Notaetal, 2007).

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