

## Development of Special Education in Moldova: Paradoxes of Inclusion

**Authors :** Liya Kalinnikova Magnusson

**Abstract :** The present and ongoing research investigation are focusing on special educational origins in Moldova for children with disabilities and its development towards inclusion. The research is coordinated with related research on inclusion in Ukraine and other countries. The research interest in these issues in Moldova is caused by several reasons. The first one is based upon one of the intensive processes of deconstruction of special education institutions in Moldova since 1989. A large number of children with disabilities have been dropping out of these institutions: from 11400 students in 1989 to 5800 students in 1996, corresponding to 1% of all school-age Moldovan learners. Despite the fact that a huge number of students was integrated into regular schools and the dynamics of this data across the country was uneven (the opposite, the dynamics of exclusion was raised in Trans-Dniester on the border of Moldova), the volume of the change was evident and traditional special educational provision was under stable decline. The second reason is tied to transitional challenges, which Moldova met under the force to economic liberalisation that led the country to poverty. Deinstitutionalization of the entire state system took place in the situation of economic polarization of the society. The level of social benefits was dramatically diminished, increasing inequality. The most vulnerable from the comprehensive income consideration were families with many children, children with disabilities, children with health problems, etc.: each third child belonged to the poorest population. In 2000-2001: 87,4% of all families with children had incomes below the minimum wage. The research question raised based upon these considerations has been addressed to the investigation of particular patterns of the origins of special education and its development towards inclusion in Moldova from 1980 until the present date: what is the pattern of special education origins and what are particular arrangements of special education development towards inclusion against inequality? This is a qualitative study, with relevant peer review resources connected to the research question and national documents of educational reforms towards inclusion retrospectively and contemporary, analysed by a content analysis approach. This study utilises long term statistics completed by the respective international agencies as a result of regular monitoring of the implementation of educational reforms. The main findings were composed in three big themes: adoption of the Soviet pattern of special education, 'endemic stress' of breaking the pattern, and 'paradoxes of resolution'.

**Keywords :** special education, statistics, educational reforms, inclusion, children with disabilities, content analysis

**Conference Title :** ICSNE 2020 : International Conference on Special Needs Education

**Conference Location :** San Francisco, United States

**Conference Dates :** June 05-06, 2020