

Diversity in the Community - The Disability Perspective

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Abstract : From the perspective of people with disabilities, inequalities can also emerge from spatial segregation, the lack of social contacts or limited economic resources. In order to reduce or even eliminate these disadvantages and increase general well-being, community-based participation as well as decentralisation efforts within exclusively residential homes is essential. Therefore, the new research project "Index for participation development and quality of life for persons with disabilities"(TeLe-Index, 2014-2016), which is anchored at the Technische Universität München in Munich and at a large residential complex and service provider for persons with disabilities in the outskirts of Munich aims to assist the development of community-based living environments. People with disabilities should be able to participate in social life beyond the confines of the institution. Since a diverse society is a society in which different individual needs and wishes can emerge and be catered to, the ultimate goal of the project is to create an environment for all citizens-regardless of disability, age or ethnic background-that accommodates their daily activities and requirements. The UN-Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which Germany also ratified, postulates the necessity of user-centered design, especially when it comes to evaluating the individual needs and wishes of all citizens. Therefore, a multidimensional approach is required. Based on this insight, the structure of the town-like center will be remodeled to open up the community to all people. This strategy should lead to more equal opportunities and open the way for a much more diverse community. Therefore, macro-level research questions were inspired by quality of life theory and were formulated as follows for different dimensions: •The user dimension: what needs and necessities can we identify? Are needs person-related? Are there any options to choose from? What type of quality of life can we identify? The economic dimension: what resources (both material and staff-related) are available in the region? (How) are they used? What costs (can) arise and what effects do they entail? •The environment dimension: what "environmental factors" such as access (mobility and absence of barriers) prove beneficial or impedimental? In this context, we have provided academic supervision and support for three projects (the construction of a new school, inclusive housing for children and teenagers with disabilities and the professionalization of employees with person-centered thinking). Since we cannot present all the issues of the umbrella-project within the conference framework, we will be focusing on one project more in-depth, namely "Outpatient Housing Options for Children and Teenagers with Disabilities". The insights we have obtained until now will enable us to present the intermediary results of our evaluation. The most central questions pertaining to this part of the research were the following: •How have the existing network relations been designed? •What meaning (or significance) does the existing service offers and structures have for the everyday life of an external residential group? These issues underpinned the environmental analyses as well as the qualitative guided interviews and qualitative network analyses we carried out.

Keywords : decentralisation, environmental analyses, outpatient housing options for children and teenagers with disabilities, qualitative network analyses

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