

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION THROUGH SPORT EDUCAZIONE INCLUSIVA ATTRAVERSO LO SPORT

Mattia Caterina Maietta¹
University Online “Pegaso”
mattiacaterina.maietta@unipegaso.it

Francesco Tafuri
University “Niccolò Cusano”
francescotafuri1994@libero.it

Abstract

The following work proposes a reflection on the topic of the inclusion of children with disabilities or children with difficulties and foreigners with difficulties not only as training but as psychological accompaniment and orientation. It is now indisputable the significance of work with respect to the dimensions of self-realization and identity and personal maturation: it is, in some way, made "powerful" (Empowered) through the possibility of choosing and making sense of the flow of experiences in which you are immersed through comparisons, selections, differences and interpretations (Piccardo, 1992; Caldin, Friso, 2012). As a result of important welfare, cultural and regulatory processes, adults with disabilities or frail people have been able to abandon, gradually, the protectionist logic of social exclusion to break down or, better, build new frontiers of employment (Friso, 2017). About a decade ago, the professional figure of the Disability Manager was born, proposing strategies, within the corporate organization for the welfare and maintenance of people with disabilities, in the workplace. Through sport, the use of this management approach, can certainly create positive effects with the possibility of starting already at school.

Il seguente lavoro propone una riflessione sul tema dell'inclusione degli alunni con disabilità o bambini con difficoltà o stranieri, non intesa solo come mero addestramento ma come accompagnamento psicologico e orientamento. E' ormai indiscutibile la pregnanza del lavoro rispetto alle dimensioni dell'autorealizzazione e della maturazione identitaria e personale: si viene, in qualche modo, resi "potenti" (empowered) attraverso la possibilità di scegliere e di dare un senso al flusso di esperienze in cui si viene immersi attraverso confronti, selezioni, differenze e interpretazioni (Piccardo, 1992; Caldin, Friso, 2012). A seguito di importanti processi di welfare, culturali e normativi, le persone adulte con disabilità o fragili hanno potuto abbandonare, gradualmente, le logiche protezionistiche dell'emarginazione sociale per abbattere o, meglio, costruire nuove frontiere dell'inserimento lavorativo (Friso, 2017). Nasce, nei decenni scorsi, la figura professionale del Disability Manager che propone strategie, all'interno dell'organizzazione aziendale per il benessere e il mantenimento delle persone con disabilità, nei luoghi di lavoro. Attraverso l'attività sportiva, l'uso di questo approccio gestionale, può certamente creare effetti positivi con la possibilità di partire già a livello scolastico.

Keywords: Inclusion , Disability Management, Sport Activity

Parole chiave: Inclusione, Gestione della Disabilità, Attività Sportiva

¹ Entrambi gli autori hanno partecipato egualmente alla stesura dell'articolo

Introduction

In the field of education, the concept of inclusion is now part of the educational project, also in Italy it has been possible to create an inclusive culture, through the use of tools that allow to follow children with disabilities involving more professional figures and families. The construction of the new P.E.I. (Individualized Educational Plan), for example, involves professionals such as teachers, educators, support teachers, parents, child neuropsychiatrists, physiotherapists and speech therapists; all with their professionalism contribute to the ultimate goal, which is to structure a path, starting from school, sewn on the needs of the person and based on his skills and abilities, not taking into account only its limitations; What we still have to work on is surely the transition from the educational project to the most far-sighted project of life. The fact that it has been included in the Individualized Educational Plan has not corresponded in practical terms to an increase in the recruitment of people with disabilities or better to the maintenance in service of them, especially if they are women. Placing in the labor market is an important driver for the inclusion of people with disabilities, yet still today due to the economic crisis and the impact of the pandemic from Covid-19, people with disabilities are more excluded than in the past. Specifically, the assumption of a role is a valuable variable for the determination of an authentic autonomy (Zappaterra, 2012), which moves around the domains of the Quality of Life (Giacconi, 2015). Even students of foreign origin or with learning difficulties are accompanied during the school career by ad hoc projects or the PDP (personalized teaching plans) but this does not guarantee that after school life there will also be support in working life. In this climate the professional figure of the Disability Management is outlined, that is the staff with company profile able to ensure that people with disabilities/ difficulties have equal opportunities in the workplace; improving employment prospects for people with disabilities by facilitating recruitment, re-entry into the labour market, job retention and opportunities for progression. The D.M. promotes a safe and accessible workplace, through the removal of architectural barriers; also ensures that the employer's costs are reduced to a minimum (costs for health care and insurance); maximizes the contribution that workers with disabilities can make to the company (Friso, 2018,p.127). D.M. should guarantee a positive social aspect, a sense of belonging without losing sight of the economic aspect. With regard to the economic aspect, we must stress another weak point regarding the recruitment of people with disabilities; Often companies aiming for maximum productivity penalize precisely those people who consider inadequate to achieve high economic revenues. The economic world is changing and with the pandemic emergency the change is accelerated therefore the spaces of confrontation and co-planning of life projects must be reconfigured to "engage" the potentials of the new scenario. Recent perspectives on the relationship between work and sustainability in a pedagogical perspective highlight the need for a strong and new vision of sustainability, which can critically support a theory of human development, in order to promote capacity to deal with the world in a direction that is not exclusively economic, efficient, skilled and competitive (Alessandrini, 2020). The link could be precisely the sports sector and its increasingly economic activities. Attention is focused on the idea of learning the future as a central aspect of the development process to be promoted (Giovannini, 2014). In recent decades a wide international literature has recognized in mega sport events, including the Olympics, and in the bid procedures, an important topic of research and study. Several authors have turned their attention in the analysis and measurement of the effects that these types of events, alike the design and organization of an official candidacy itself, are capable of producing in terms of development and economic, territorial and social revaluation (Brown et al., 2012; Glynn, 2008; Hiller, 2000; Kasimati, 2003). It is observed, in fact, that sport, over time, is increasingly structured according to corporate criteria with profit objectives, through managerial organizations, and extending the logic of the market to activities previously set according to completely different criteria. There has been increasing investment, so that over time the relationship

between sport and the economy has become increasingly close, to the point of suggesting that almost all sporadic activity will in future be organized according to economic and market rules, despite the continuous contrast between the symbolic and social aspects that the sports system retains and the constraints resulting from the needs of budgets. The increasingly strong link between the sports sector and the economy has made it necessary to adopt the main dictates of the managerial culture of the company in order to manage the sporting activity in a performing way from all the different points of view that characterize it. This implies, at school level, the change towards sport structured in a more corporate way, but this must not necessarily represent a negative factor because it makes the activity more inclusive in order to attract the greatest number of participants.

The profile of Disability Management

D.M. is a figure born in recent decades in America and that is growing in our country thanks to the skills useful for the quality of life especially for disadvantaged people and in difficulty. D.M. can itself be a person with a disability who pays attention to the needs of disabled people and their families, maintains relationships between the different actors involved in the life project and manages to direct people to the bodies responsible for helping; It also deals with the elimination of all forms of discrimination and architectural barriers. This profession was born in order to help people with disabilities, no longer considering the difficulties but their potential or people able to be productive and economically functional. The D.M. is the link between the company and the worker, the person responsible for the realization of the subject with disabilities within a working group, not adapting it to standards but adapting the work to the person. The underlying theoretical construct presupposes that work is not only an economic requirement, but also an indispensable mode of personal and social identity. The professional figure of the D.M. therefore has interdisciplinary psychological, administrative, economic and managerial skills. The difficulties in achieving a socio-occupational identity are generated by social isolation often due to the inability to understand the real needs of the disabled person who aspires to a job (Roncallo, Sbolci, 2011). The introduction of this professional figure is part of the commitments of the Italian State has ratified with the UN on the rights of people with disabilities, Law 3 March 2009, n.18 which provides for the obligation to adopt reasonable accommodation not only in the area of education, training and employment, but also in areas such as accessibility, justice, personal mobility. In this historical moment so fragile at the economic and health level, the figure of the D.M. certainly represents a means to implement inclusive strategies. There is a tendency for interest in the employment of people with impairment to refer to the project of life and the possibility that, especially for those with a complex disability, an independent life is guaranteed, that is fully recognized as an adult (Cottini,2003,2016; Pavone, 2009,2014; Goussot,2009; Cottini, Fedeli, Zorzi, 2016; Caldin, Friso, 2016; Bocci, Guerini, 2017; Friso 2017; Marchisio, Curto,2018; Guerini, 2020). If we think about the continuity between school and social contexts in the dimension of the implementation of inclusive processes, we do so not in the perspective of actions aimed at including someone in a world thought for others, but in the idea of transforming contexts inclusively so that everyone can benefit from them (Bocci, 2015,2016;2019b; Goodley et al., 2018). Article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN,2006) establishes the right to work and employment of persons with disabilities and affirms the recognition of the "to maintain themselves through the work they choose or freely accept in a labor market and in an open working environment that promotes inclusion and accessibility for people with disabilities". The Italian Constitution imposes "the removal of all obstacles determining situations of social inequality in order to guarantee all citizens the right to employment in line with their inclinations and possibilities". We read again in D. Lgs. 151 of 2015 "Provisions for streamlining and simplifying procedures and obligations for citizens and businesses and other provisions on employment relations and equal opportunities", pursuant to Law no. 18 of 10 December 2014.

Arriving then in 2017 where we find, within the "Two-year action programme for the promotion of the rights and integration of people with disabilities " the following indications: "companies are offered initiatives such as the establishment of the Observatory and the disability manager" with the aim of promoting the inclusion of workers with disabilities in the workplace" (p..58). We can critically add what Friso said in 2018 that "the legislative documents introducing the action of disability management have not yet been accompanied by specific acts and guidelines that help to have a clear picture of the definition and content"; a delay, already highlighted the previous year, of the definition of the tasks and competences of the disability manager by the National Observatory on the condition of people with disabilities (MPSL, 2017). The implementation of diversity policies depends essentially on the definition adopted by each organization and the training of the person responsible for the practices of the D.M. There is a training path to achieve Certified Disability Management Professional™ (CDMPTM), the first DM certification developed and recognized worldwide in different countries including Germany (Rosenthal, Hursh, Lui, Isom, Sasson, 2007). Since 2009, Italy has not lacked numerous educational proposals activated by different institutional subjects, such as Educational Institutions and Universities, especially to respond to the growing training needs coming from companies (Mattana, 2016); Regarding the skills to be acquired, management, pedagogical, problem solving, communicative and conflict resolution are declared important (Friso, 2017).

The sport for inclusion

Let's take a brief look at sports legislation and legislation on disability. On 21 November 1978 Unesco approved the International Charter for Physical Education and Sport, which states: "the practice of physical education and sport is a fundamental right for all. Every human being has the right to access physical education and sport, which are indispensable for the development of personality". And again: Pursuant to art. 1 of Law no. 88 of 7 February 1958, physical education is compulsory in all schools and secondary schools. But, in art. 3 of the same law provides: "The head of the Institute grants temporary or permanent exemptions, partial or total, for proven health reasons, at the request of the families of the pupils and after performing the appropriate medical checks on the physical state of the pupils themselves." In August 2009, the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) published the Ministerial Circular on "Guidelines for the school integration of pupils with disabilities". The Circular defined school integration as an "irreversible process", which "cannot rest on disengaged practices that empty the pedagogical, cultural and social sense of integration, transforming it from a process of growth for pupils with disabilities and for their companions to a procedure only attentive to the formal correctness of bureaucratic formalities". D.M. 597 of 10 August 2015 of the establishment of the Permanent Observatory for the integration of students with disabilities, this institute has advisory, proactive, experimentation and methodological innovations teaching, the aforementioned body is further articulated in a Consultation of Associations and in a Scientific Technical Committee, with the task of deepening the issues, drawing up operational proposals on disability and with research tasks. The Committee is composed of Directors of the MIUR, teachers representing the various school orders, university teachers of pedagogy, psychology, neuropsychiatry, and sees among its members also a representative of the Italian Paralympic Committee to confirm that sport and physical education are recognized by the Ministry of Education as important tools in the inclusion of young disabled students. By directing the focus of interest towards pupils with disabilities, we could see how the perception of their own school experience positively or negatively affects the process of inclusion, In fact, since childhood, the disabled person experiences a series of difficulties in daily life that are often experienced as situations of failure and frustration; it is therefore understandable that the disabled person should develop a negative assessment of their abilities, and structures a negative self-image as a person, a sense of powerlessness

resulting from a negative path over the years that can turn, through a vicious circle, into further difficulties and failures. The risk that new tasks and situations are experienced with a strong insecurity for the fear of failure, recalls the importance of the body-motor dimension that can represent a chance of success for both the cognitive disabled and the motor-disabled sensory. The first, in difficulty on the cognitive level of abstraction, has the possibility of a lived experience, immediate and concrete, the second has the opportunity to acquire new skills. Young people with disabilities who are denied the opportunity to participate in sports activities alongside their able-bodied peers, tend to isolate themselves, to mature poor social skills (Richardson et al. 2001). For this reason the inclusive action must be calibrated on participation, that is, on everything that goes beyond simply "doing", but it exalts the relationship, the friendship, the social interaction and the game (Stahmer et al. 2003). School physical education can play an important role in the inclusion of disabled children (Goodwin and Watkinson 2000), without negative effects on disabled peers (Faison-Hodge & Porretta, 2004; Obrusnikova et al., 2003) This has a positive effect on the growth of both (BAALPE, 1996). In the same way, the practice of sport leads to giving confidence to all people in whatever condition they find themselves, to get back into the game finding in sport a means of valorization and expression (Michellini, 2010). In the beginning, athletic competition was forbidden to disabled people, as their physical condition "did not meet the standards of harmony". In fact, the first disabled people who were given the opportunity to participate in the competitions, in specially prepared categories, were the deaf and dumb in the 1920s. The war was a pretext to start the competition also other types of disability, in fact, at the end of World War II, the considerable number of invalids pushed the English neurosurgeon Sir Ludwig Guttmann of the rehabilitation center "Spinal Injuries Unit" by Stoke Mandeville to propose a sports activity to the injured medullary as therapy. This initiative was an example to the rest of Europe and in Italy the first to see sport as therapy was Dr Antonio Maglio, thanks to whom in 1960 the first Paralympics were held in Rome. Maglio had intuited that different sports, such as swimming, basketball, wheelchair racing, etc. They were able to extend the life expectancy of patients, to ensure a better state of health and to promote the social integration of disabled people, allowing them to rediscover their identity. Initially in Italy it was the INAIL to promote, supporting the work of Maglio, the sport for the disabled, until 1974 when the National Association of Italian Paraplegic Sports (ANSPI) was established In order to promote sport as a means of recovery and health for every individual, a new understanding of sport as a right for all disabled citizens is emerging. In 1978 the ANSPI was established as the Italian Federation of Handicapped Sports (FISHa) and in 1981 it obtained membership in the CONI. Subsequently, other federations such as FICS (Federazione Italiana Ciechi Sportivi- Italian federation blind sports) and FSSI (Federazione Sportiva Silenziosi Italiani- Italian sports federation silent) were formed, and in 1990 they joined in a single federation, FISD (Federazione Italiana Sport Disabili- Italian Federation of Disabled Sports). Thanks to this amalgamation, physical, sensory, intellectual and relational disabilities received equal dignity. This succession of events led to the birth of the C.I.P. (Italian Paralympic Committee) in 2005 as a confederation of Paralympic sports federations. The role of paralympic sport assumes the dignity and recognition of public body in August 2015. Physical activity is certainly a fundamental tool for the improvement of residual potential in all degrees of disability: in serious situations: improves autonomy in travel and recognition/ awareness of data sense-perceptions inherent in the motor conducts put in place; in situations of medium severity: facilitates the acquisition of elementary motor skills and their proper use in school life, relationship and preparation for sport; in less serious situations: allows the acquisition of more complex motor skills that can allow the practice of sports activities. Children who have regular physical activity (group or individual sports, outdoor games, physical-motor activity), in fact, show greater confidence in their possibilities, are led to greater self-esteem, ease in social relations, to a greater tolerance of stress, and are in a sense more "sheltered" from any propensity to disorders such as anxiety and depression (Giuliani et al., 2005). Carraro (2004), in fact, states that «Moving towards inclusiveness means

allowing all those who approach motor and sports practice to reach a basic level of technical skills, to enjoy the commitment and effort produced and not to be excluded as "less suitable"». In this sense, the introduction to motor and/or sports practice of subjects with intellectual and/or mental disabilities, in public and private environments, aims to promote their social integration, self-esteem, prevent the risk of obesity and improve the quality of life. Fostering the development of Life Skills in the school context, through active methodologies, such as cooperative learning and peer group, requires a restructuring of the common idea of the class and, Above all, a review of the approach of the teacher and the class with respect to the meaning of schooling. Today we know that to operate in a group it is necessary to adopt a positive emotional state. In other words, we must foster a positive climate in which there is respect for one another so as to allow the sharing of a reciprocal emotion. The acquisition of Skills is based on a type of learning centered on the active participation basic principle thanks to which in the School children and young people are involved in a dynamic process of teaching and learning. Strategies used to facilitate the active involvement of pupils include, for example, work in small groups, brainstorming, role play, games and debates. Sport promotes participation and the intent of motor and sports activity is precisely to help the meeting between people different in skill, age, culture and social class through positive action by discovering skills enhancing them, empowering them, enhancing them; motor activity can help, can support, can increase and can increase the levels of autonomy and self-esteem of any subject, even and especially disabled or in a situation of social difficulty (Altavilla, Tafuri & Raiola, 2014; By Palma & Tafuri, 2016; Holt, 2016).

Conclusions

According to UNESCO (2017), «education is a human right and is the basis of more just, inclusive and cohesive communities». The objectives to be achieved in the coming years, in compliance with the 2030 Agenda, are to «provide quality education, fair and inclusive, and learning opportunities for all» «To build and adapt school facilities to suit children's needs, disability and gender differences and to provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all» (Agenda 2030, Objective 4.a). It is based on the premise that an inclusive education system takes the form of a subset of an inclusive society, that is, a society in which diversity among people is recognized, welcomed and valued and in which the phenomena of marginalization are countered (Dovigo, Pedestrian, 2019). The Constitutional Charter (1948), art. 3: All citizens have equal social dignity and are equal before the law, without distinction of sex, race, language, religion, political opinions, personal and social conditions. It is the task of the Republic to remove economic and social obstacles which, by restricting citizens' freedom and equality, impede the full development of the human person and the effective participation of all workers in political organization, economic and social of the country». Since schools play a fundamental role in the growth and formation of young people, it is within them that the fight against prejudice and stereotyping must be rooted through direct and continuous contact between "different" people this is not to break down cultural barriers but to prevent these barriers from even being built and perceived as normal. Disability/diversity, however, must not only be attributable to the world of education, but must be considered in a whole range of other contexts to foster the full inclusion in society of the disabled/ fragile person. For this to happen, the role of sport must not be underestimated. It is the sport in fact the place where everyone is primarily athletes of a team, which faces in a game without distinction or discrimination another team. The sports field is the place that mediates the meeting between different people and makes them all equal in front of the opponent. In this sense, it can be considered a land without borders and free access to all, where there are neither differences nor prejudices and everyone takes to the field to give the best of themselves, overcome their limits and demonstrate their skills. The practice of sports helps the disabled/ fragile person to build a physical and mental relationship with their body, to know their potential and to overcome their limitations. It is necessary, that skilled pupils be informed about the difficulties of

their companion to better understand the actions and reactions of this. A negative assessment of disability could therefore be given by a lack of knowledge that inevitably leads comrades to have relational fear. An environment is inclusive when everyone knows the strengths and weaknesses of the other and tries to overcome the difficulties together. It takes place in motor and sports activities where disabled people can enhance the remaining potential, achieving technical results unimaginable to most people. Highlighting people's potential draws attention back to them and allows prejudices and stereotypes to be brought down more easily. Physical and sporting activity also aims to develop in disabled people the habit to get involved, the self-effectiveness, to evaluate and dominate themselves, providing the possibility of building a relational dimension that is very important for future social inclusion. (Rosa – Colella 2004). The Disability Management model is the means by which to pursue social and economic objectives, starting from the school world, through sport and remaining constant in the working world as a result, through its efficient policy management feature. It is necessary to place as central elements of the educational relationship listening, dialogue, common research and the use of active methodologies and animation techniques that can develop critical skills to ask questions, to learn to put themselves in the shoes of others, to activate networks of discussion, to get out of the box, to be creative and divergent.

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