International Perspectives on Inclusion Research

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Overview

- Within an international perspective:
- What defines inclusion?
- What is the basis for inclusive policy?
- What are elements defining implementation of inclusion?
- What counts as evidence of inclusion?
- What are considerations for inclusion as a universal agenda in early childhood intervention?

What defines inclusion?”

- "A common agreed upon definition of inclusion does not exist, and in fact the terminology has changed over the years" (Odom & Diamond, 1998).

- ......and continues to evolve..

What defines inclusion?”

- Evolving definitions:
- " ...supporting children with disabilities in everyday settings, or natural environments.." (Sukkar, 2013)-Australia
- " inclusive classes offer children with SEN the opportunity to learn together with their peers, to learn in heterogeneous groups (note: a part of social learning), to engage in education in a way that suits their skills and needs, in a safe environment that enhances their self-esteem and confidence. (Bendova et al, 2014.p.1015)- Czech Republic

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What defines inclusion?”

- " inclusion of children with disabilities in typical neighborhood and community activities.." (Ljubesic & Simlesa, 2016 p.195) – Croatia
- " ..the right of children with disabilities to access and participate in ECEC(preschool and childcare) settings was acknowledged to be the foundation of inclusion" (Kemp, 2016, p. 180) - Australia

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What is the basis for inclusive policy

- Public laws, beginning with Education for all Handicapped Children Act- EHCA in 1975, to the most recent Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act-IDEIA in 2004 have defined key issues in the development of inclusive policy:
- 1. Categories of children eligible for special education
- 2. Key principles framing inclusive policy
  o Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
  o Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
  o Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- 3. Responsibilities of states to implement policies

Progressive emergence of inclusion

- Implementation of the three principles (FAPE, IEP, and LRE) across states resulted in progressive stages of inclusive education
- In the 1970's, special education primarily delivered in separate classes and schools
- With Regular Education Initiative in 1985, emergence of "mainstreaming"- integrating students into regular school activities for part of the day
- In the 1990's, emergence of various forms of "inclusive education" for students with disabilities as implementation of LRE

What are elements defining implementation of inclusion?

- "..mainstream schools should work towards becoming 'schools for all' including children with special needs full-time or part-time wit a variety of for forms of support…a 'three-tier system'- inclusive, mixed and special- would be developed but with no hard boundaries between them" (Radoman et al, 2006, p 161) –Serbia & Albania
- "Integration is seen as a personal effort of the person with disability (e.g. by means of … adaptations) to be able to participate in mainstream structures or within settings. However, inclusion is seen as a quality relating to the system that enables education for all" (Pretis,2016 p.190)-Austria

What are elements defining implementation of inclusion?

- "..including children with disabilities in early childhood programs, together with their peers without disabilities; holding high expectations and intentionally promoting participation in all learning and social activities, facilitated by individual accommodations; and using evidence-based services and supports to foster their development (..) friendships with peers, and sense of belonging" US DHHS,DoE, 2016 p 50)- United States

What are elements defining implementation of inclusion?

- ". for inclusion programs: full inclusion (I of typi.e., individual inclusion of a child with special needs with a preschool of typically developing-TD- children .. all day, often accompanied by one to one support; partial inclusion (i.e., inclusion with TD children for part of the day/week, but most time is spent with children with special needs); and specialized programs i.e., a setting with children having similar developmental functioning and special needs)".Al-Yagon et al 2016 p.207) -Israel

What should count as evidence of inclusion?

- Four goals have been operationalized for inclusion: access, accommodations and feasibility, developmental progress and social integration of child (Guralnick & Bruder, 2016)
- Need to differentiate evidence for means (access & accommodations/feasibility) and ends (developmental progress & social integration)

What counts as evidence of inclusion?

- Access Goal: Differential engagement and interactions of children with disabilities with adults and peers found to vary as a function of access to type of activity and whole-group lessons (Hu et al, 2016)- China

- Accommodation/Feasibility Goal: Use of a logic model to systematize the process of inclusion of children with disabilities found to impact short, medium and long term outcomes for children and their caregivers. (Clapham et al, 2017)- Australia

What counts as evidence of inclusion?

- <u>Developmental Progress Goal</u>: Language skills of peers in inclusive environment found to predict language growth of children with disabilities (Justice et al, 2014) -USA

- <u>Social integration Goal</u>: Social acceptance of children with disabilities by typically developing peers in inclusive environment predicted by youger age and severity of disability but not by measurements of program quality and adult-child relationships *Aguiar et al, 2010)- Portugal

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What counts as evidence: example

- Data source- 38 Annual Report to Congress on IDEA http://www.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/osep

- Children with disabilities ages 3-5 served under IDEA in US
- Implementation of inclusive policy defined by percent time/day in regular class:
  - (a) at least 10 hours/week (majority there without disabilities)
  - (b) at least 10 hours/week (majority elsewhere)
  - (c) less than 10 hours/week (majority there without disability)
  - (d) less than 10 hours/week (majority elsewhere)
  - (e) other environments (separate class, separate school, residential facility, home, service provider location)
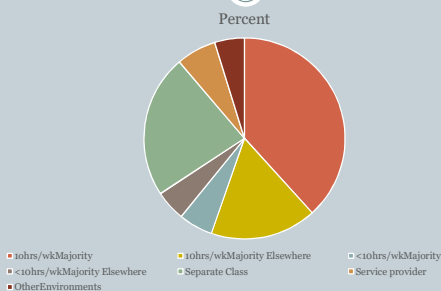

Children ages 3-5 served under IDEA

Disability categories

- Seech Lang.Imp
- Developmental Delay
- Other Disabilities
- Autism
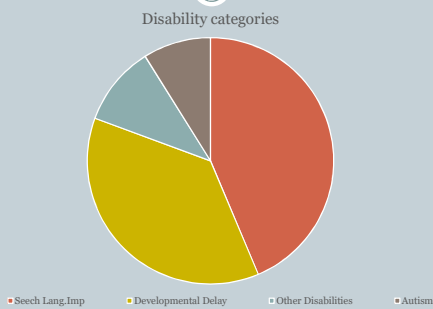
Children ages 3-5 served under IDEA Part B: vari (highest5 states /lowest 5 states)

Percentage of children served under IDEA by educational environment –Fall 2014

Percent

- 10hrs/wkMajority
- 10hrs/wkMajority Elsewhere
- <10hrs/wkMajority
- <10hrs/wkMajority Elsewhere
- Separate Class
- Service provider
- OtherEnvironments

Inclusive policy: issues

- Problem of defining inclusion as time in "setting"
- No definition of "full inclusion"
- Low rates of inclusion of students with more severe disabilities, greater needs
- Evidence of inclusion effectiveness related to assumptions very limited;
- Need for evidence of academic outcomes, matched to pedagogical practices in inclusion (Florian,2014)

Inclusive policy- issues

- Given that the term "inclusion" is variously defined, inclusive policy has evolved in the field as progressive application of the "least restrictive environment" principle
- In the absence of an agreed upon, specific model , a variety of models have been proposed and implemented in practice
- Synthesize existing knowledge in the development of a universal model of inclusion, incorporating relevant theory and framework for evaluation

Implications for advancing inclusive policy

- Develop conceptions of inclusion that reflect essential elements of the policy: assumptions related to the interaction on the child with the environment and social learning theory.
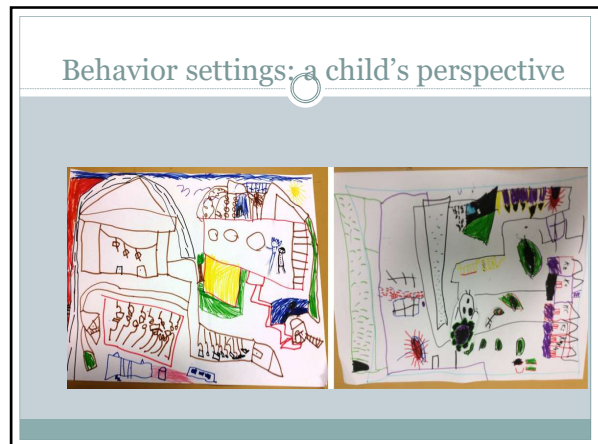- Develop models encompassing complexity of social, instructional and family elements of inclusion

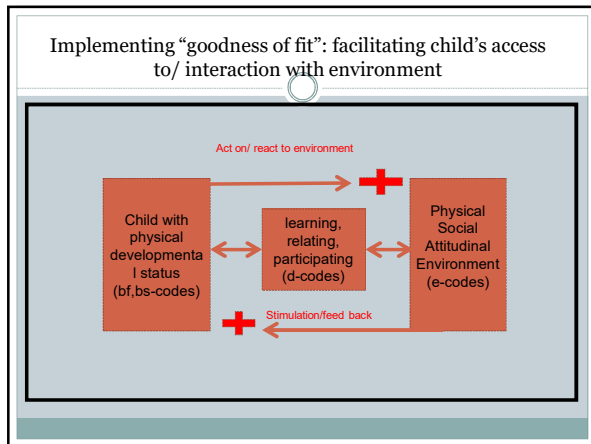## Inclusive policy: implications for research

- Develop models encompassing complexity of social, instructional and family elements of inclusion
- Implement and evaluate evidence- based strategies in regular pre-school environmental setting
- Delivery of differentiated specialized instruction in inclusion
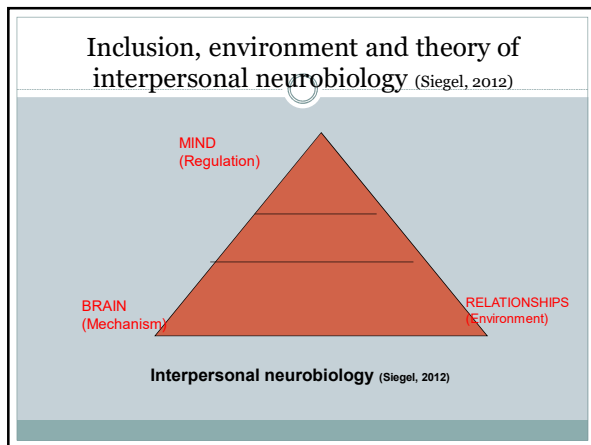- Develop appropriate forms of evidence for documenting inclusion

Modeling child-environment transactions (Sameroff)
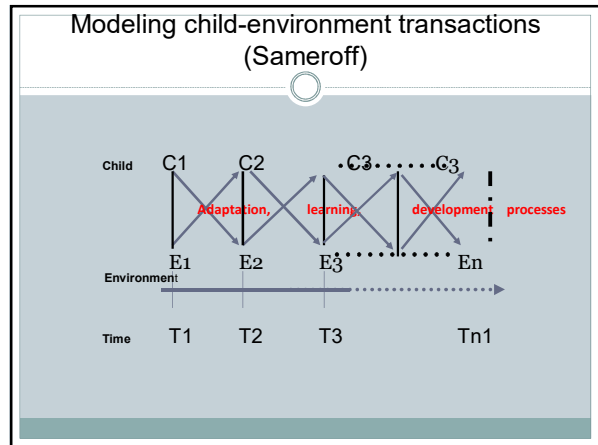
Environment and inclusion: ecobehavioral science

- Behavioral setting theory (Barker, 1965)
  - Behavioral settings - behavior-milieu phenomena
  - "a specific set of time, place and object props, and an attached standing problem of behavior" (Scott, 1980)
  - Behavioral settings - (eg. store, picnic, classroom..)
- Behavior objects-extra-individual units (eg., toys, books, furniture..)
  - part of the non-psychological milieu
  - located within behavior settings

Behavior settings: a child's perspective

Implementing "goodness of fit": facilitating child's access to/ interaction with environment

Act on/ react to environment

Child with physical developmental status (bf,bs-codes)

learning, relating, participating (d-codes)

Physical Social Attitudinal Environment (e-codes)

Stimulation/feed back

Implementing "goodness of fit": matching environment and child characteristics (Lawton, 1999)

- Adaptation level reflected by degree of match between child's compentence in meeting demands (press) of environments
- Environment docility hypothesis: "the less competent the person, the greater the influence of the environment on the outcome of behavior"
- Environmental proactivity hypothesis: "the higher the competence of the person, the better able the person would be to utlize the resource of any environment in the service of personal needs"

Inclusion, environment and theory of interpersonal neurobiology (Siegel, 2012)

MIND (Regulation)

BRAIN (Mechanism)

RELATIONSHIPS (Environment)

Interpersonal neurobiology (Siegel, 2012)

Inclusion, environment and theory of interpersonal neurobiology (Siegel, 2012)

- "Emergent process of energy and information flow within bodies and relationships is one important aspect of mind".
- "Development is a product of the effects of experience on the unfolding of genetic potential".
- "Experience, gene expression and gene regulation, mental activity, behavior and continued interactions with the environment (experience) are tightly linked in a transactional set of processes. "
"Experience-expectant and experience-dependent maturation are part of even the basic sensory systems of our brains". (Siegel, 2012)

Universal implementation of inclusion

- Improve Level and quality of clinical implementation of inclusion
- Improve rigor of clinical research how inclusion makes treatment more effective or efficient
- The environment is crucial in implementation of inclusion, need for systematic documentation

Universal implementation of inclusion

- Defining and assessing participation continues to be a challenge, particularly as related to role of environmental factors
- Documentation of environmental factors is an important priority; what factor should be assessed and how should their role be factored into indicators of a child's access and participation
- Continued interdisciplinary focus to implement environmental factors in inclusive settings

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THANK YOU