



Transition to Adult Life Disabled People



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Abstract

Considering all the listening-ins and experiences with this audience, I was motivated to thinking, structuring and implementing proposals to help people with intellectual disabilities in their self-image process as adult, and the general community to review prejudices, expanding the future possibilities of the group in question. The identity carries with itself the perception of an active subject. The construction of identity is a continuous and dynamic process of self-knowledge in relation to personal, social, cultural and professional aspects, being both symbolic and social. However, people with disabilities, especially if we focus on intellectual disabilities, are not always able to be active subjects of their own lives. So, it brings us to the discussion of the idea of how individuals diagnosed with intellectual disabilities perceive themselves, their influence and consequent effects on the transition to adulthood.

Keywords: Identity; Transition to active life; Individual differences

Opinion

Although it is a traditionally predictable process, the transition to adult life is marked by many challenges for young people, in different contexts. Taking the lead in your own life is an arduous task. However, for people with intellectual disabilities this period is not seen as simple, nor are there predictable markers, seen as the particularities and social representation regarding this group still prevails, demanding particularized attention.

The discrediting inflicted by the social imaginary in relation to the disabled expands when we talk about the field of cognition, in which still dominates the view of disability and inaptitude. For centuries this group held in society a place of discredit and prejudice, which is rooted deep in the mind of our culture and affects personal, social and work relationships, and, by consequence, affects the entry process in adulthood life, being the infantilization of people with intellectual disabilities one of the main barriers to their transition to adulthood.

Viewing the person with disabilities according to their age prevents them from always being watched from a childish perspective. Commonly, it is attributed to them a "mental age" different from the chronological one, denying them the opportunity to grow, mature and develop, contributing to a state of dependence, physical and emotional, and as consequence, the social context never visualizes an adult, thus forming a vicious circle, in which the identity as a person and as a social being can be affected.

Effectively, this group has similar development paths to any other person of the same age, demanding, according to their specific, more or less mediations and support, needed for a facilitating role in this process. As Dantas points out [1], for young people with intellectual disabilities, this period is shown to be complex, seeing the historical disadvantages and stigma they bring, as well as the lack of preparation and prejudice of the environment where they'll come to play the role of an adult.

Although they may have a delay in relation to the cognitive dimension, their life experience, their learning processes, as well as their identity construction, develop in their own way, and therefore they need better knowledge, that doesn't bring in advance the judgment of a difference. The great challenge is to enable this young person to sustain his choices, preparing him for consequences, sometimes positive and sometimes negative, but always valued as a success towards the conquest of autonomy. The life trajectory of an individual, regardless of being a person with disabilities or not, brings challenges to overcome, as these are steps on the path to real life.

The idea of how individuals diagnosed with intellectual disabilities perceive themselves and their influence and consequent effects on the transition to adulthood, makes it important for us to think about what kind of knowledge can lead the best way through this process of transition. The transitions are processes in which there are discontinuities, there is turbulence and scales, and the

stabilized thought about other periods adult life has difficulty to adapting to these turbulences/transformations.

Among these perspectives, the most used one understands the transition to adulthood as the adoption of new roles in society, which characterizes people as adults. This new identity is closely associated with two great movements, simultaneously or not: the entry into the job market and the constitution of a new family, acquiring economic and social independence. However, the negative evaluation of disability, allied to the disbelief in occupational and social capacity, in which the right to work, to affection, to vote, to sexuality, among many others, are often denied, constitutes a barrier to the person with intellectual disability.

A new concept, of emerging adulthood, brought by Arnett [2], brings out a proof of the heterogeneity of the human being, by characterizing this period as different from adolescence, but also not fully assuming, all the responsibilities of adult life. Considering it as a phase of understanding identity, demanding experiences that can support their future life, it has provoked different studies, motivating a new dialogue about the person with intellectual disability and their transition to adulthood.

Reflecting the speech of Ponciano [3] “the greater the culturally promoted freedom, the more individually and less

socially determined are adolescence and transition to adulthood “. The reverse is also true because, usually, people with Disability, especially with intellectual impairment, are educated in a framework from which other people decide what, how and when they need to learn. In contrast, typical children already learn skills and develop attitudes that help them to be agents of their lives, experiencing skills such as making choices, solving problems, making decisions, proposing and achieving goals or defending yourself.

Aspects such as the right to exercise autonomy, must be present and need to be evaluated in the care for people with intellectual disabilities. To give them opportunities of experiences/ situations that enable them to perform the power over their life and to advocate for their own interests, reaffirming the need for planning in their transition to adulthood is a challenge for professionals and families, and involves a social transformation.

References

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