

Is the Education System What it is Cut Out to be?

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There are three theories that explain disability prejudice within the education system: normative, scapegoat, and Bogardus social distance theory. Normative theory is a theory that suggest that peer and social influences encourages tolerance or intolerance. Normative theory says that as human individuals we are the ultimate source or ground of normative value (Lyon, 2022). Meaning no matter who you are, other humans influence what you do. In education there is a curriculum that a teacher has to teach. There is no set way of how a teacher has to teach it as long as the students are retaining the information that is needed. Teachers often influences each other and how they teach. There are websites as well as video that teachers use to influence how they teach certain things. Many times teachers who teach the same subject will get together and brainstorm ways to teach the material the same way.

Scapegoat theory is one theory that can be used to explain disability prejudice within the education system. Scapegoat theory is where an individual will believe that they are society's victims and place the blame onto others. Throughout education individuals who have disabilities are often secluded because they are often placed into different environments. Students in elementary school will place the blame of them being taking out of class or put in special needs class on the teacher who teaches them or takes them out. Children will grow up and continue to place blame on the one teacher. Although it is not one's fault a blame

will be placed. Scapegoat theory can cause an individual to have different behaviors based on who's around them (Cheung, Chan, Lee, Cheung, Chan, & Lee 1999).

Bogardus social distance theory is a theory refers to how close we as individuals feel to one another. The American education system is designed to separate people specially those that have any sort of cognitive disability or disability that refrains them from retaining information like a “normal” individual. Many students throughout their elementary age are tested vigorously by anyone in the education system that may see any symptom that would qualify them to be placed into special education classes. This often refrains students within the special education classes to be able to connect with their classmates outside of those classes. Special education class are not always looked at as a good thing. Like Bogardus social distance theory it creates a huge barrier that is not often knocked down.

Within the education system there are tons of are hostility, ambivalence, and paternalism being manifested. Hostility is being hostile toward someone. Within education hostility can look like an individual maintaining their disability to gain benefits from it. It can be very easy to manifest hostility in within the education system. Those who get accommodations in education can be looked at as having a

privilege. Hostility is manifested through socially acceptable conditions. This can look like play both sides on the fence (Worchel, 1957). For example, one day an individual's disability is very severe, and they may need many accommodations. Another day they need no accommodations when other people are around.

Ambivalence is having multiple feelings toward something or someone. Disabilities test our humanity while goes against ambivalence. Within education parents can be an ambivalence. Parents questions teachers whether they are doing good or bad. Many times, teachers go based off how the child acts within the classroom and does not account for how they act at home. This can frustrate parents and cause them to have a huge push back on teacher.

Paternalism is the limitation put in place by a system, principle, or practice that manages a behavior. One way paternalism is manifested within education is specialty classes for reading, math, or English in elementary school. If an individual scores a certain score on a test or their teacher thinks they need to go, they have to. The student has no say on whether they go or not. The whole education system is built off of paternalism. We all must got to school if not our parents and/or guardians will get penalized. No matter if our future careers do not require a high school diploma it is a must that you attend school. Today we have

attendance policies that are put in place to ensure that we go to school. These attendances policies track how many days a student misses.

Reasonable accommodations are one way that discrimination takes within education. Reasonable accommodation is anything the school changes to help a person with a disability retain educational information (Bock, 1999). This can range from a someone reading a test to them to an individual needing more time on a test. Reasonable accommodation can be very helpful but also cause problem for an individual with a disability especially children. These accommodations can cause other students to pick on the child, causing the child to feel isolated.

One way that reasonable accommodation is a form of discrimination is it can be put on children who do not need them. For example, a student that has dyslexia may just need five extra minutes on a test not to be taken to a different room. Within our education system the child will be taken out. This can cause children to feel trapped in a way that they cannot get out (Bock, 1999). This can cause teacher to modify their information when the child just may need a little more time on it causing the child to miss out on that information (Bock, 1999).

Accessibility resources is another example of discrimination takes within education. The Americans with Disabilities Act forces every public space to be accessible to everyone with disabilities (Jackson, 2014). There are certain spaces

within a school that can be very difficult for those who have disability for example an individual in a wheelchair. An individual in a wheelchair may have to wait for an elevator but individuals may use the elevator making it hard for them to make it on class. Often individuals who have a disability can find themselves with not enough accessibility. The accessibility of special education class can be very discriminatory (Jackson, 2014). Often, they force you into a category that an individual does not want to be in. They take away an individual's individuality. (Jackson, 2014).

One policy that applies to individual with disabilities within education is Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The IDEA is a law that requires that public education be accessible to children with disabilities all over the United States (Azizoglu, 2019). The IDEA ensure that we have special education class. Another policy that applies to individual with disabilities within education are individualized education program (IEP). IEPs is a plan that is designed for a specific student to ensure that their special education needs are met. Each IEPs are set up by a group of individuals which usually include a parent(s), teacher, special education teacher, a school administrator, and possibly the child (Etscheidt, 2003).

One good thing about IDEA is that it does ensure that all children no matter their disability has a right to a public education (Azizoglu, 2019). This ensure that

everyone has equal opportunity to a free and public education (Azizoglu, 2019).

The IDEA also give access to other services within the school for example a speech language pathologist. On downfall that I have seen with the IDEA is there are a low expectation of those who fall under the IDEA. Often individuals with disabilities who fall under the IDEA are stuck in special education class at the lower level even if they are capable of high-level special education. Another downfall of IDEA is not all disabilities fall under the act. So individual lack the resources they need because it is categorized under the IDEA.

One good thing about IEPs is that they are specific to the student. This could mean that the student has accommodations in one class but not another. IEPs also does not limit the student and their abilities. One downfall of IEPs is that the parents must advocate heavily for their child (Etscheidt, 2003). It can often be difficult if the parent is the only person on the child's side. It can be difficult for the parent to expose their child in such a vulnerable way. It can also be humiliating for the child to sit through and understand. It can be difficult for the child to remember which classes they get accommodation and which ones they do not.

Education is one institution that affects everyone. Those who have disabilities are especially affected throughout their education. Many accommodations are made to help individuals whose disability affects their

education. Some accommodation may help individuals while other may hinder them.

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