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Title:

Persons with disabilities and chronic diseases in Greek Orthodox society.
A Comparative approach of values and issues concerning social inclusion, in Orthodox Christian tradition and contemporary secular trends and practices

Author:

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Abstract:

Living in a contemporary country with a strong tradition, it is unavoidable to experience a dichotomy: the 'galloping' of secularism, which is expanding, and the strong resistance of a rooted tradition. This dichotomy affects several aspects of life, including the disability sector. Although this sector concerns about 16% of the total population, in fact it has also an impact on their families, professionals related to disability, and the wider society, in which persons with disabilities are, or intend to be included.

To compare the secular and the Orthodox approach, this thesis attempts a comparative analysis at the theoretical level; it also applies grounded theory, deriving from phenomenological interviews and ethnography. The field of research includes family, education, employment, health and social services, as well as spiritual and liturgical life. The deeper concern of the researcher was to discover which approach contributes towards a better equilibrium or harmony of the persons

with a disability, within Greek society.

The general result of the research is that contemporary secular trends and practices concerning disability are materialistic and technocratic, which is useful in everyday matters, but its values seem to be inadequate. On the other hand, the Orthodox tradition offers a spiritual perspective which is very important at the existential and the ontological level, but missing at the practical level. Therefore, the conclusion of this thesis is that a combination of both approaches is more effective than the application of only one of them.