THE PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF IMPLEMENTING SPECIAL AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

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Abstract: The democratization of Ukrainian society is increasingly spreading the ideas of educational and personal priorities humanization. The market economy and the democratic system of socio-political development in Ukraine put forward new requirements for the education system, especially for the education of people with special needs. First and foremost, it is about guaranteeing all citizens, without exception, equal opportunity for education and further active participation in public life. Ukraine's integration into the global educational space requires constant improvement of the national educational system, searching for effective ways of improving the quality of educational services and real equal access to high-quality education for all citizens, including children with special educational needs. The implementation of inclusive education ideas today is evidence of positive changes in providing national education development. This article **aims** to analyze the practical aspects of special and inclusive education, reflected in the scientific and pedagogical literature, as well as to study in practice the features of these types of educational processes in general secondary education institutions. **Methodology.** The article was written using data from international studies, scientific publications, and the results of a survey conducted in general secondary education institutions, where special and inclusive types of the educational process are used. **Results.** We have identified certain features of inclusive and special education systems in general secondary education institutions. As a result, the features, shortcomings, and the most important and urgent aspects of working with children with special educational needs were determined by questioning teachers and parents of children with special educational needs.

Keywords: inclusive education, special education, children with special needs, educational process, remedial services.

1 Introduction

The relevance of the raised issue lies in the fact that the ongoing reform and modernization of the educational process under the conditions of social change today requires compliance with global challenges. One of these challenges is to provide the young generation with a high-quality education based on a new philosophy, which is vital for providing opportunities for human endeavor, full of life, and a rich spiritual world. That is why there is an urgent need to address the problems of satisfying needs and identifying individual features as fully as possible to reveal opportunities and potential.

When society has reached a certain level of civilizational development, it begins to care not only about an ordinary citizen in general but also about each individual, admitting his/her individuality and inimitable personality traits. Therefore, there is a problem of inclusion both in the modern world and in the Ukrainian educational system, in other words, joint education of children with special needs together with their able-bodied peers.

The participation of a child, including a special need one, in public life has great importance for the realization of his/her dignity, the justification, and realization of his/her rights. The experience of many countries shows that the education of children with special needs can best be provided in inclusive

schools, where all children from a particular neighborhood or community are welcome. All children with special educational needs can achieve the best results in learning and social adaptation under such conditions.

2 Literature review

Many educational scientists, such as Donohue D., Bornman J., Tatianchykova I., and Shyrina A., cover various aspects of teaching and educating children and youth with special educational needs (Donohue & Bornman, 2018), (Tatianchykova & Shyrina, 2021).

When considering studies of speech remedial activities in an inclusive classroom, researchers find that inclusion is, first and foremost, a properly chosen method of teaching that takes into account each child's abilities. The important thing is how happy and successful is the child while learning and how open and friendly the education applicant is, rather than what grades the child gets (Yan, Deng & Ma, 2021).

Scientists have noticed that the most effective assessment is the accumulating process of comprehensive information about the child during the learning process in inclusive education. This information can be used to identify students' strengths and those areas where they are underperforming and need support. The goal of the assessment process is to determine the current level of personal development so that appropriate curricula and activities can be planned (Magumise & Sefotho, 2020) (Subba, 2019).

Over the past few years, educational seekers, including children with SEN, can build practical skills through a cloud-based learning environment deployed on MOODLE or CANVAS platforms, where it is possible to create their distance learning course and fill it with useful material (Butakor, Ampadu & Suleiman, 2020).

The MOODLE and CANVAS platforms courses are tools to facilitate teaching and learning. These are easy, open, friendly, and secure platforms successfully used by education seekers from kindergarten and high school to university. That is because the platform is aimed at different groups. It simplifies the provision of educational information, promotes and enables active communication between pupils, monitors student progress and reporting, is designed to empower teachers and students, helps focus efforts on the creative process, and facilitates teaching and learning. However, a teacher is still the biggest influencer on students with special educational needs, or rather the manifestation of the teacher's personality: it's not just what you say, but what you think, whether you love your work, and if you see a mission in it (Kuyini, Desai & Sharma, 2020).

When analyzing the practical directions of the educational process under inclusion conditions, scientists have defined the following most important aspects as preconditions for effective logopedic work:

1) organization of the remedial environment in speech therapy practice and classes (high-quality equipment in the room with mirrors, tools, toys, aids, etc.).
2) planning and carrying out individual lessons, where work is done on the articulation motor skills, phonemic understanding, and the correction of impaired functions, taking into account the abilities of each child.
3) planning and carrying out collective courses that involve children with the same speech impairment. The effective joint work of children is aimed at enriching the active vocabulary, developing coherent language, and sound automation (Messiou, 2017).

The work with parents of such children is an equally important aspect of inclusive education implementation, especially student-centered education. The parents of children with disabilities are usually more active than in families where able-bodied children develop. At the same time, parents of children with disabilities are informed insufficiently about the development prospects of their child. As a consequence, the educational environment often does not realize the full potential of this child (Chhetri, Spina & Carrington S., 2020).

By involving parents in the educational process, it is possible to create an individualized educational plan for their child that is suitable for everyone involved in their child's education (Perdana, 2022).

An important point is that the school involves different communication and interaction types between families and teachers. Some parents want to communicate via written communication, while others need face-to-face meetings. As families gradually gain educational experiences, this improves children's knowledge and skills and increases their self-esteem.

As Vanderpuye I., Obosu G., Nishimuko M. have noted, when families deny the need for special attention to their child, the school must be persistent and consistent, encouraging them to participate in the educational process. In this case, certain teaching methods and their consequences should be stated. Also, certain assessments and conclusions should be avoided (Vanderpuye, Obosu & Nishimuko, 2020).

The experience of teaching children in inclusive school environments shows that school teachers can help parents in many ways, such as starting conversations about topics that families hesitate to talk about. In particular, sometimes, parents of children with special needs at first hide anger, frustration, and despair. When they see that the teacher understands their background, they are willing to come into contact. It is possible to view parents as experts on their children and teachers as experts on their children's development and education. Once teachers and parents actively work together, their knowledge and resources are doubled, which has an overall positive impact on child development (Junaidi, 2019).

The use of information and communication technology in education is an important feature of the modern educational process. The use of ICT in inclusive and special education is important for many children with special needs because it allows them and their teachers to perform various activities within the curriculum and promotes equal opportunities for their development (Kurniawati, 2021).

The special training and retraining of teachers to work with children with special needs in an inclusive education context has been identified as one of the most important ways to implement the inclusive education concept.

By summarizing the work of scientists on the implementation of inclusive education, we have identified several directions for improving the level of specialists' training to work in inclusive spaces, namely:

- training of subject specialists whose professional duties include leadership that is directly related to the organization of work with children with special educational needs;
- the creation of conditions for the acquisition of inclusive competence by all future teachers (no matter what is their discipline/specialization)
- self-education and systematic professional development for inclusive education teachers (Dorji, Bailey, Paterson, Graham & Miller, 2018).

3 Aims

This study aims to analyze the opinions of teachers and parents of children with special needs on the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of special and inclusive education, the shortcomings of the current system of education and training process in general secondary education institutions with inclusion, and the desired development directions of these educational types to achieve better results for children with special educational needs.

4 Materials and methods

The research on effective areas of inclusive and special education was conducted by interviewing 14 teachers from the Mosaica School for Children with Special Needs, located in Brovary, Kyiv Region, Ukraine, as well as 62 parents of children who attended the school. The survey was conducted in February 2022.

The respondents were asked to determine the importance of certain survey categories for them as a percentage from 0 % to 100 %. After that, the average score for the group was calculated.

5 Results

This survey allowed the priority areas assessment where transformations are most needed right now to create a more effective learning process.

Many transformations are needed within educational institutions to work effectively in an inclusive environment, namely:

- arranging school facilities to meet the needs of inclusive learning;
- providing the workplaces of specialists (speech pathologists, speech therapists, psychologists, teacher assistants, social workers) who work with children with special needs with the necessary equipment, furniture, and tools;
- ensuring the staffing of classes with inclusive education according to the regulatory and legal framework;
- introduction of special remedial classes and courses for children with special needs (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Assessment of special and inclusive education aspects that require priority transformations, %.
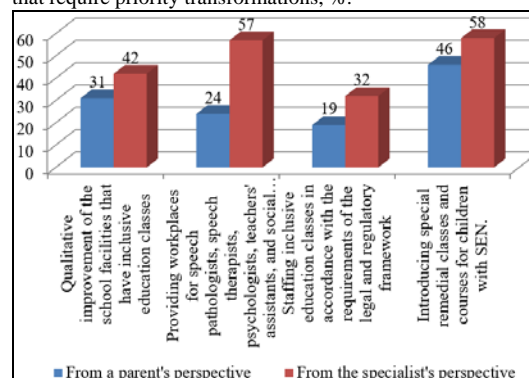
As we can see from Figure 1, providing jobs for specialists and introducing special remedial classes and courses for children are the priority areas of work from the perspective of teachers and educators working with children. Meanwhile, parents consider the aspects of room arrangement and introduction of the latest techniques and types of special remedial classes to be in the greatest need of change.

Since the speech therapy classes are one of the most effective types of work in the special and inclusive education process, the problem of disadvantages of this type of work with children with special needs is extremely important.

To increase the effectiveness of speech therapy activities, a formal assessment of all types of classes was conducted. The

following areas of speech therapy activities to be optimized were identified:

1) organization of the remedial environment in the speech therapy room (to equip the room with the necessary number of tools, toys, aids, etc.);
2) planning and conducting individual classes;
3) planning and conducting subgroup classes;
4) to fill out a speech chart for each child, a chart of individual progress, to determine the most effective ways and methods of working with children (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Speech therapy areas that require optimization, %.
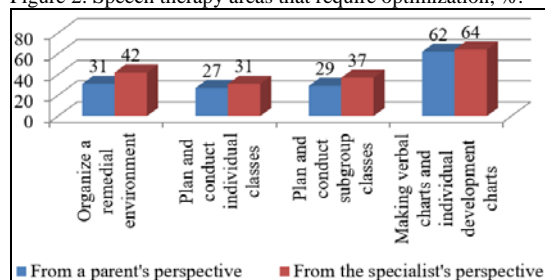
The respondents named the most effective forms of work with children to improve their listening and verbal skills:

- psychogymnastic exercises;
- relaxation activities;
- game activities to develop fine motor dexterity;
- activities that include vocal and breathing exercises;
- game-based exercises to develop listening and verbal skills (Figure 3).

Figure 3: The most effective work methods for improving the verbal and listening skills of children with special needs, %.
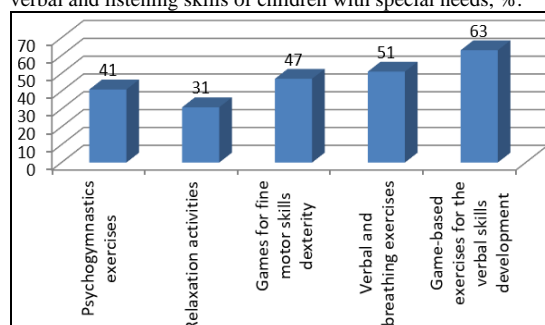
While analyzing the results of work with children during the educational process, parents and teachers were invited to express their priorities for the optimization of education in institutions of general secondary education that use special and inclusive education forms (Figure 4).

As can be seen from Figure 4, respondents consider the updating the methodological support of inclusive education, attracting newly qualified professionals and raising their professional level, providing quality corrective and developmental services to children with SEN to be in the highest demand for optimization.

6 Discussion

While studying the successful practice of inclusive education, Dorji R., Bailey J., Paterson D., Graham L., and Miller J. pay attention to the conditions that need to be created to organize the educational process of children with special needs in an educational institution. These include the availability of buildings and facilities, use of appropriate forms and methods of education work, psycho-educational support, and cooperation with parents or persons acting on their behalf (Dorji, Bailey, Paterson, Graham & Miller (2018).

Instead, Kantavong P. emphasizes that the organization of inclusive education necessarily involves the provision of psychological and educational support to children with special educational needs. Therefore, remedial classes should be held in a separate room, which can be arranged for learning, play, sensory, and recreation areas (Kantavong, 2018).

Figure 4: High-priority areas of educational optimization in general secondary education institutions that use special and inclusive forms of education, %.
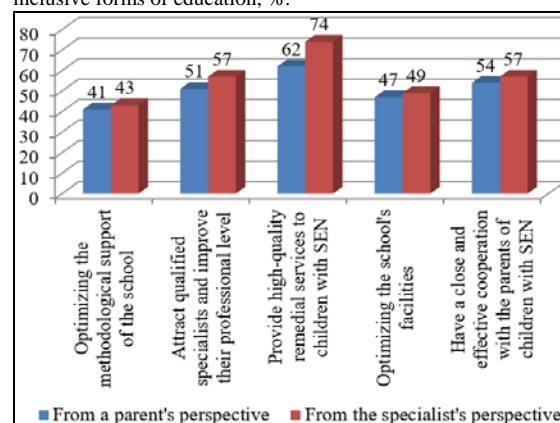
Analyzing the conditions for the effectiveness of inclusive education, Prodius O. notes that to ensure the educational process efficiency, the number of children in inclusive classes should be no more than 20 students, including one to three children with intellectual or locomotor disabilities or with visual or hearing impairments, or with mental developmental disabilities, etc. (Prodius, 2019).

Subban P. and Mahlo D. agree with the above viewpoint, emphasizing that there can be no more than two children with hearing or visual impairments or those with severe speech or developmental disabilities (significant hearing, seeing, or musculoskeletal, combined with an intellectual disability or intellectual development disorders), children in wheelchairs to work effectively in the classroom (Subban & Mahlo, 2017).

Friesen D. and Cunning D. emphasize the importance of participation of parents of children with special needs in support of school life, their willingness to promote understanding and communication of all students in school considering the special educational needs of each student to assist them as much as possible (Friesen & Cunning, 2020).

A study of current trends in inclusive and special education has shown that traditional learning in educational institutions today is undergoing significant changes at all stages of the educational process (Sailor, 2017). Exploring the trends of inclusive education, scientists have noted that mixed learning, namely the combination of traditional forms of teaching educational materials with the use of information and communication technologies, allows building an individual learning path for each applicant for education (Shulha, 2019), has recently become increasingly popular.

Thanks to modern technology, all forms of learning can be done both in the classroom and remotely but using different methods. In many countries around the world, especially in the United States, many institutions offer blended or exclusive distance learning, believing that it offers a complete education, while at the same time is more convenient for students because of its flexibility, as students can choose convenient times to study, select available learning materials, have the opportunity to take the course several times (Stepaniuk, 2019).

7 Conclusions

The conducted analysis of the current state of inclusive education allows us to conclude that the implementation of general pedagogical, preventive, recreational, rehabilitative, social tasks and results requires coordination of efforts of all persons involved in a holistically structured, multi-level social and educational system, for integration into the educational space and socialization of children with special needs.

Thus, an analysis of the scientists' works and practical tendencies in the sphere of special and inclusive educational space showed that the educational concept reflects one of the most crucial democratic ideas of our time – all education seekers, including children with special educational needs, are valuable and active society members. Effective education of these children in inclusive schools is extremely important both for children with special educational needs and for children with typical developmental needs, their family members, and society in general.

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