PSYCHOLOGICAL, PEDAGOGICAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT IN THE PRESCHOOL EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS ORGANIZATION

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The article highlights the theoretical and practical analysis of the necessity to create an inclusive educational environment and to enhance the professional competence of all participants in the educational process, including educators, teaching assistants of preschool education institutions, which will allow to implement all the education principles, upbringing and development of children with special educational needs. The paper shows that the main task of inclusion is to respond to a wide range of educational needs in pre-school institutions and beyond. There are characterized the inclusive education basic principles and tasks, that include theoretical analysis, practical and research approaches. The authors also point out the problem of teachers' professional training to work with children with special educational needs, define the advantages and disadvantages of work, pay attention to the need to develop the professional skills and abilities that are necessary in working with such children.

Keywords: *children with special educational needs, inclusive environment, inclusion, norm, deviation from norms, «children with disabilities», «special children».*

Introduction

The modern education system in Ukraine is based on the principles of democracy, equality and personal approach. Therefore, nowadays, one of the public policy priorities in the field of education is to create conditions for the full education of the society all categories, in particular children with disabilities, without breaking from the usual social environment, family, friends, in other words children with special educational needs. Topical issues in modern education systems are *inclusive education* that involves the joint inclusion and stay of children developed by different people and their healthy peers. As practice shows the inclusive education in your country is

spontaneous, requires the dispatch of the scientific and theoretical main components used in the institution, and it is its initial link. After all, at the preschool age there are the prerequisites for the modern development, education and training. This is why thorough research is necessary to reduce and eliminate deficiencies in working with children with special educational needs.

Analysis of the recent researches and publications show that it is the period of preschool age that plays an important role in the formation of the individual and is sensitive to the formation of his or her primary outlook, self-consciousness, and development of social properties. At this very time, the prerequisites for the future educational activity of the child are laid; there is an active development of its cognitive abilities. As practice shows, preschoolers with special educational needs are better adapted to life in mainstream educational institutions than in special ones. Particularly noticeable is the difference in their social experience. E.M. Kalinina's research defines that at disabled preschool age, the psycho-physical development inclusive education promotes the normalization of life cycle and education according to individual opportunities and educational needs, self-confidence and future, opportunities together with their healthy peers to reach a common opinion, as well as bringing up the tolerance in parents and children according to joint learning with children who have different types of disabilities (Kolupaeva, 2009, p. 82). The necessity to include children with developmental disabilities in the environment of ordinary children was also pointed out by L.S. Vygotskyi (1983, p. 369): «It is extremely important from a psychological point of view not to anomalous children into special groups, but it is possible to practice their communication with other children more broadly; the rule that we, for the sake of convenience, select homogeneous groups of special children for the sake of convenience. We are not only against the natural tendency in the development of these children, but, more importantly, we are depriving the mentally retarded child of collective cooperation and communication with others, strengthening rather than facilitating the immediate underlying cause expansion of its higher functions». In Ukraine, I. Biletska (2007), L. Budyak (2009) also studied this issue, who emphasized that the lack of inclusive education at preschool age leads to a loss of time, which is necessary for giving fast comprehensive care to a child in a sensitive period of its development (Budyak, 2009, p. 92). However, it is worth noticing that the experience of national researchers often relies on international experience in the preschool education doctrine, in particular T. Loreman, J. Deppeler, D. Harvey (2010, p. 296) and others.

The purpose of the article is to theoretically substantiate the organization peculiarities of the educational environment in the institution of preschool education and to identify / analyse the peculiarities of the teacher's work with children with special educational needs.

The main material

Inclusive education is a system of educational services based on the principle of the children basic right to education and the right to obtain it at their place of residence, which provides for the education of a child with special educational needs in a general educational establishment.

The current problem of education in our time is the lack of recognition of the rights of the child with special educational needs, their interests, needs, assistance in the process of socialization and choice of professional activity. Therefore, inclusive learning acquires great importance, creating a type of inclusive environment that assumes co-existence of children with disabilities with their healthy peers.

Inclusion is the process of increasing the participation of all citizens in social life. This is a policy and process that enables all children to participate in all programs.

Inclusive education is based on an ideology that eliminates any discrimination against children, which ensures equal treatment for all people, but creates special conditions for children with special needs.

Inclusion is focuses on the concept of «normalization», which is based on the idea that the life and everyday existence of people with disabilities should be as close as possible to the conditions and lifestyles of the entire community. The principles of «normalization» are established in a number of modern international legal acts: the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Mentally Retarded (1971), the Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (1975), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and others. In particular, the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Mentally Retarded is the first legal instrument for recognizing persons with psychophysical development as a socially complete minority requiring social and legal protection (Luhovyy & Talanova, 2013, p. 240).

The most important principles of inclusive education are:

- all children should study together whenever possible, despite the difficulties or differences that exist between them;
- educational institutions should recognize and take into account the diverse needs of their students by agreeing on different types and rates of learning;

- providing qualified education for all by developing appropriate curricula, organizing activities, developing teaching strategies, utilizing resources and partnering with their communities.

Children with special educational needs should receive any additional help they may need to ensure that the learning process is successful. Equally important is the so-called inclusive approach i.e. the creation of conditions, in which all participants in the educational process have equal access to education, including children with special educational needs, who are enrolled in preschool and secondary schools.

It is also worth mentioning the benefits for children with special educational needs, such as:

- thank to the purposeful communication with peers, cognitive, motor, speech, social and emotional development of children is improved;
- peers play role of models for children with special educational needs;
- mastering new skills and abilities is functional;
- training is conducted with the focus on the strong qualities, abilities and interests of children;
- children have opportunities to build friendly relationships with healthy peers and participate in social life for other children;
- children find out naturally to perceive and tolerate human differences;
- children learn to establish and maintain friendly relationships with people who are different from them;
- children study to cooperate;
- children train to behave outside the box, to be resourceful, and the compassion to others.

It is also worth mentioning the benefits for educators and professionals:

- pre-school teachers and assistants of inclusive groups have a better understanding of the children individual characteristics;
- educators master a variety of pedagogical techniques, which enables them to effectively support the development of children, taking into account their individuality;
- specialists (doctors, special education teachers, other specialists) begin to perceive children more holistically, and also learn to look at life situations through the children's point.

If we analyze the practice abroad, it shows that inclusive education is first and foremost an opportunity for children with explicit psychophysical disabilities. These are, in particular, some forms of mental retardation, certain speech abnormalities, decreased hearing or vision, uncomplicated musculoskeletal disorders, disorders of the emotional and volitional sphere.

If such children have preserved intelligence, self-care, and adequate contact with peers, and family support, then, under the condition of professional psychological and pedagogical support, they may well absorb cultural experiences in the healthy peers environment. According to the Concept of Development of Inclusive Learning in Ukraine, active search and implementation of effective ways of social interaction of children in the necessity of psychophysical development correction with their healthy peers is being carried out. The first to notice the problems and difficulties in the development of the child are parents, pediatricians, educators. Therefore, it is very important that they do not delay, wait for the spontaneous elimination of the defect, and appoint to specialists. Consultation on the early development of the child, the creation of the necessary conditions for him/her, if necessary, as well as help, can be obtained in psychological, medical and psychological consultations. Parents do not need any directions or permissions for this. They can visit the PMPC on their own initiative. The sooner the child receives the necessary help (pedagogical, psychological, medical), the easier the structure of its defect, the better it will develop. It is important that preschool educators notice problems of children behavior, learning difficulties and advising parents to visit specialists in a timely manner. They will help to determine what caused difficulties or disabilities in the child's development, which led to problems in learning: advise what conditions to create in the family, pre-school institutions; will provide correctional assistance or advise a specialist institution to do so. The parents, together with the specialists of the preventive psychological, pedagogical and medical commission, have to decide on the institution for the child with psychophysical disabilities.

There are many factors to consider, including: the category of abnormal development; age of the child; specific diagnosis; presence of concomitant deviations; somatic health status; intellectual level of the development; features of mental and physical development and needs and opportunities of the child.

That is, it is necessary to recommend the institution, considering the purely individual characteristics of the child's development and family needs. The psychological and pedagogical characteristics of the child written by the kindergarten teachers where he/she was attained are of great importance for the correct diagnosis, the choice about the form of the training organization, the implementation of the individual approach. After all, in the process of systematic education and upbringing a child, its abilities, problems and difficulties are most clearly shown. A psychologist may also be involved in gathering the document if he or she has worked systematically with the child. Summarizing the above, the educator can state the assumption about

the reasons that cause the child's developmental disabilities, difficulties and gaps in the development of the preschool program. However, the educator does not make any diagnoses, even in the form of assumptions, because the child has a blemish, the specific clinical diagnosis is determined collectively by the staff of the preventive psycho-pedagogical and medical commissions on the basis of a thorough study of the personal file materials, the card of the child's development, medical documents, drawings of the child, the psycho-pedagogical characteristics and the results of the child's examination. If correctional educators, practical psychologists specializing in correctional work are competent to work with such children, preschool educators often have neither psychological nor methodological readiness for inclusion. Therefore, pre-school educational institutions should provide special training for teaching staff. The experience of the neighboring countries convincingly proves that for the specialists who have already worked in educational establishments, there are effective courses of advanced training, theoretical and practical seminars, trainings, etc. That is why the content of such education should be the basics of correctional pedagogy and psychology, with certain methodological aspects.

Preschool educators should be competent in such areas as:

- approaches of the state and society to the organization of the children's education with disabilities;
- peculiarities and regularities of development of persons' different categories with different kinds of defects and disorders;
- comprehensive psychological and pedagogical study of children;
- differentiated and individual mechanisms and techniques of education and children bringing up with different disorders starting from preschool age;
- content and methods of work with the pupils' families.

For implementation of the inclusive education, teachers should be able to:

- timely notice and identify deviations and disorders in the development of preschool children and under the guidance of a correctional teacher to participate in the implementation of proper psychological and pedagogical support for children that need the corrective development;
- to carry out an individual and comprehensive approach to pupils with special educational needs;
- to formulate the willingness of healthy preschoolers to cooperate positively with their peers, who need to provide them with special educational needs;
- to work with parents to provide them with truthful information about preschoolers experiencing various types of abuse.

Undoubtedly, the competence of the pre-school teachers, assistants is the most important for the effectiveness of preschool education organization. The results of many scientists studies show that the mental, emotional and social development of children with special educational needs depends directly on their positive attitude towards them, their understanding and acceptance by teachers, parents and healthy children (Experience of implementing inclusive education in a comprehensive educational institution, 2009, p. 15). An enabling social and developed surrounding is one of the starting conditions for inclusive education. Therefore, providing such an environment is one of the tasks of psychological and pedagogical support for children in need of educational services. Teachers of preschool education institutions should first of all form a positive attitude of healthy pupils to children with psychophysical disabilities; introduce methods of adequate interaction, empathy.

That is why, in our opinion, work with this category of children should be carried out using such methods as: conversations, persuasion, encouragement, consideration of problematic situations, story-role, directorial games, watching specially selected videos, cartoons, etc.

As a child of preschool age is also the family reflection, it is important to consider appropriate work with the parents of children who do not have any disorders or defects, forming a positive attitude towards being in a group of children with special educational needs (Kolupaeva, 2012, p. 302). Therefore, inclusive education in the preschool is one of the realities of our lives. However, it should be remembered that its effectiveness depends on many conditions, the main of which is complex psychological and pedagogical support. In order to organize the right educational environment, a number of measures should be implemented, including psychological and pedagogical support for pre-school children who are studying in inclusive education, which include a number of stages, in particular: diagnostic, which involves:

- diagnosis of the children development level: identification of individual characteristics of mental, physical, intellectual improvement; the level of mental processes development;
- diagnostics of social maturity, intelligence, style of teachers and parents interaction with the child;
- testing and surveying the teachers and parents for inclusive education readiness;
- study of the family characteristics where the child is raised;
- psychological and pedagogical observation of the social interaction peculiarities of children in groups and classes with inclusive education. This stage leads to next level, the essence of which is to prepare documentation

for the implementation of child psychological and pedagogical support with special educational needs i.e. with their data on the features of hidden and existing violations; their individual development, the social status of the family and the conditions in which the child is raised, and their observation in the context of the normal educational process.

The next stage is the development and approval of training and improving programs individually for each child, with recommendations for educators and parents, implemented with the participation of various specialists (doctor, psychologist, social teacher, pedagogue, speech therapist, assistant educator).

It is also advisable to create your own training, methodological and information base with subsequent performance monitoring, which involves the use of methods of didactic, educational, managerial and social and psychological observations.

After identifying and anticipating possible problems that may be associated with internal and external conflicts with parents and educators, children and educators, it is appropriate to work out ways to correct the potential negative consequences that may arise during the educational process.

Equally important and advisable are the tips and guidelines of the educators in group where the child is learning and the special needs; we'll identify the main ones:

1. Learn to tolerate «special children» but in no case focus on the child's disadvantages or disorders.
2. Promote that every child feels acceptable and the same as the rest.
- 3 Foster an atmosphere of kindness, justice and tolerance for one another in the children's group.
4. Provide individual support, but not separate children with special educational needs from the main group of children.
5. Try to bring the educational tasks closer to the needs and opportunities of such a child.
6. Collaborate with other educators (speech therapist, psychologist, doctors) and parents in one team.

It is also advisable to consider an equally important aspect of the psycho-pedagogical characteristic that must meet such requirements as the summary of observations; selection of facts; systematization of the teacher's facts and conclusions; the nature of the presentation; the child positive aspects; individual work with the child; the amount of characterization that should be short but still compelling.

For children with special educational needs, the so-called «support team» stands out. Who will be in it and what functions will be performed by

teachers, tutors and assistants. It is advisable to consider the provisions on the team of psychological and pedagogical support (hereinafter – Support team) of children with special educational needs in institutions of general secondary and preschool education determines the procedure for providing psychological and pedagogical, and correctional and developmental services to children with special educational needs environment.

According to the Regulations on the team of psychological and pedagogical support for children with special educational needs in pre-school institutions, the support team, depending on the individual needs of the child, includes:

- permanent participants: educational work deputy director / tutor-methodologist, tutor or teacher, teacher's assistant / teacher's tutor, practical psychologist, social teacher and parents of a child with special educational needs, etc.;

- specialists involved (including specialists of the inclusive – resource center: defectologists depending on the type of developmental disorders of the child with special educational needs, medical worker of educational establishment, family doctor, child's assistant, specialists of social protection service, specialists in children's affairs etc.).

It is important to identify the functions that the educator or other teacher should perform when working with children with special educational needs:

- providing of educational process of a child with special educational needs;

- informing all participants of the Support team about the peculiarities of the child's educational and cognitive activity, its strengths and needs, about the results of the child's implementation of the educational program;

- providing guidance to pedagogical staff on technologies that have demonstrated effectiveness in the educational process;

- controlling the provision of psychological and pedagogical services to a child with special educational needs;

- preparing an individual curriculum or an individual curriculum;

- determining, in conjunction with other teaching staff, the level of achievement of the final goals of education and training, which are planned and envisaged at the beginning of each six months;

- creating of appropriate moral atmosphere of relationships in the group (tutor-child, child-child, etc.);

- advising parents on the state of learning the educational program for a child with special educational needs.

It is also appropriate to define the functions that the assistant or pre-school-teacher should perform:

- assistance in organizing the educational process of a child with special educational needs;
- participation in the preparation of an individual curriculum or an individual educational program;
- adaptation of educational and training materials, considering the individual features of educational and cognitive activity of a child with special educational needs;
- observation of the child in order to study its individual characteristics, inclinations, interests and needs;
- implementation of psychological and pedagogical support of a child with special educational needs;
- assessment jointly by the tutor, the assistant of the tutor about the level of achievement of the training final goals provided by the developed program;
- preparation of information on the results of observation of the child about his / her individual characteristics, interests and needs;
- advisory assistance to parents, pedagogical staff, or other authorized persons.

Researchers dealing with inclusion issues (Hastings & Graham, 1995) point out that the placing children with special educational needs in general educational institutions will eliminate negative stereotypes, and personal contacts will help to create a positive attitude towards people with special needs. Among the difficulties that may emerge in the path of inclusive education is the likelihood that children will not be sufficiently prepared to accept their peers with special educational needs. Moreover, the treatment of children with all kinds of disabilities can be even worse than children with physical disabilities (Townsend, Wilton & Vakilirad, 1993).

Equally important is the fact that educational institutions with an inclusive form of education and upbringing solve the following tasks, in particular:

- 1) creation of a single psychologically comfortable educational and training environment for children who have different initial opportunities;
- 2) insurance the diagnosis of the effectiveness of the correction processes, adaptation and socialization of children with special educational needs at the stage of pre-school education, upbringing and development;
- 3) organization of the system of effective psychological and pedagogical support for the process of inclusive education and upbringing through interaction of diagnostic-consultative, corrective-developmental, medical-preventive, social-labor directions of activity;
- 4) compensation for the disadvantages of the so-called «home» development;

5) overcome the negative features of the emotional and personal sphere through the inclusion of children in successful activities;

6) gradual enhancement of the child's motivation based on his/her personal interest and through a conscious attitude towards positive activity;

7) protection and strengthening of physical and neuro-mental health of children;

8) social adaptation of children with special educational needs;

9) change of public consciousness and thoughts considering children with special educational needs (Samsonova, Prochukhaeva, 2010, p. 240).

Pre-school education with inclusive education allows children to gain knowledge of human rights (although not specifically taught), and this reduces discrimination as children learn to communicate with each other, learn to recognize and accept difference.

The most important features of an inclusive preschool are:

1) clear understanding of the inclusion of kindergarten staff and parents in the form of a program declaration;

2) processes that ensure the participation of all children in the institution main activities;

3) regular interviews and consultations with parents in order to take their opinions into account when organizing the institution;

4) conducting regular trainings on the practice of inclusion of preschool education workers;

5) adequate selection and adaptation of materials to meet the special needs of each child's needs separately;

6) the presence of processes that ensure the active participation of all children in the life of preschool education.

It is worth highlighting the main goals of pre-school inclusive education:

1) creating a barrier-free environment in education and upbringing:

a) openness and accessibility for both children and adults (the more participants in the educational process as follows the education management, methodological centers, general, special and higher educational institutions, postgraduate pedagogical education institutions, parental and public organizations, etc. – the more successful the child will be);

b) technical equipment of pre-school educational establishments;

c) development of special training courses for teachers aimed at improving their interaction with children with special educational needs;

d) special programs aimed at facilitating the process of preschool children adaptation in need of developmental guidance in pre-school institutions;

- 2) specific factors understanding on which the effectiveness of inclusion for children with special educational needs depends;
- 3) understanding of the role of individual teacher's assistants;
- 4) recognizing the need and effectiveness of small individual conversations with the child.

Equally important for children with special educational needs should be the following conditions:

- financial and legal support of the educational process provided by regulatory legal documents;
- personnel resource of inclusive pre-school education institution specially prepared for work with «special» children;
- material and technical base for creating a barrier-free environment (ramps, lifts, specially equipped toilets, physiotherapy rooms, psychomotor correction, rooms for speech and correction classes, sports hall, etc.);
- adapted curricula of subjects, drawn up by specialists, educators;
- necessary handout and didactic material for lessons with children (Artyushenko, 2010, p. 23).

When organizing work in pre-school institutions, the following principles should be implemented:

- 1) recognition of the fact that each child is a personality;
- 2) ensuring the personalization of individual development programs, that is, drawing up programs according to the needs of an individual child within the framework of joint active activities and the general goals of the institution of pre-school education;
- 3) accumulation of valuable methodological experience to support children in learning, development and active participation in kindergarten life;
- 4) appropriate differentiation of learning strategies to ensure access to a general curriculum appropriate to the child's age;
- 5) ensuring constant adaptation of pre-school institutions to the needs of the child.

In the institution of preschool education planning of psychological and pedagogical work with children with special educational needs requires knowledge of the following factors:

- features of children with developmental disabilities;
- social factors of development;
- forms, methods, techniques of physical, mental, ethical, labor, aesthetic, environmental education;
- normative indicators of functional and mental development of the child;

- basics of individual approach to children, taking into account their motivation, abilities and inclinations;
- the ground of psychotherapeutic work, regularities of holistic pedagogical process, modern psychological and pedagogical technologies, technologies of correction and developmental training (Luhovyy, Talanova, 2013, p. 17).

The theoretical substantiation of the organization problem of inclusive education in the preschool education institution suggests that the pre-school inclusive education in Ukraine should be the centers of development of the child, which should have significant potential, in particular:

- highly qualified personnel who have up-to-date teaching methods and technologies (correctional educators, psychologists, speech therapists, social workers and others);
- a small number of children in groups, which will allow an individual approach to each individual;
- experience of socialization and adaptation of children who need to provide them with special educational needs in society.

Conclusions

Having analyzed the above, we can draw the following conclusion. Everyone, regardless of health status, physical or intellectual disability, has the right to receive education that does not differ from the quality of healthy people education. That is why a well-organized educational environment creates for each child favorable conditions to acquire the most valuable and experience of emotional and evaluative relationships, interaction, mastering various ways of activity in daily life. However, the most important is that in inclusive education, children, parents, and educators have to learn to perceive everyone as they really are, because collaborative learning creates the preconditions for a new society that is built on tolerance, the ability to understand and accept everyone. In this regard, there is a need to organize a special kind of pre-school education institution where inclusive education would be implemented. Resulting in the development of the child's personality, the recognition of the concepts norm relativity, deviation from the norm, compensation for special needs, the creation of a support system for the training organization, as well as involvement of all participants in the educational process should be stated. It is worth noting that all this requires psychological and pedagogical and social education among all participants in the educational process, as well as their parents. Thus, all measures aimed at the full education, upbringing and development of children with special

educational needs will facilitate their socialization and daily life and understanding that they are the same as others.

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