



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION CONCEPT AND ITS HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes the essence of the inclusive education concept and its historical development. The main principles, unique characteristics, and stages of development of inclusive education are discussed. Additionally, the practices of inclusive education in various countries and the measures taken for the improvement of the inclusive education system in Uzbekistan are examined. The article presents the theoretical and practical foundations of inclusive education, as well as the necessary management mechanisms and pedagogical approaches for its effective organization.

KEY WORDS

Inclusive education, historical development, pedagogical approaches, special educational needs, integration, education system, management mechanisms, inclusive environment, Uzbekistan, experience of developed countries.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of inclusive education is developed with the aim of creating equal opportunities for all members of society, including children with special educational needs. The essence, historical development, and practices of this approach define the level of inclusion in the education system. The issue of educating children with disabilities is one of the most pressing matters today[1]. Currently, the inclusive education system has been implemented in Uzbekistan, which allows children with special needs to receive education in both special and general education systems based on their level of development, abilities, quality, and talents. The Law on Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan states: "No one shall be discriminated against on the basis of sex, language, age, race, ethnicity, religion, religious beliefs, social origin, type of service, social status, place of residence, or length of stay in the country." In addition, Article 15 of this law mentions inclusive education: "Inclusive education means providing education in educational institutions on the basis of equal opportunities, regardless of physical, intellectual, sensory, or mental disabilities"[2]. Furthermore, in Annex 3 of the Resolution No. 391 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan on "Further Improvement of the Activities of Preschool Educational Institutions," the organization of inclusive education and the rules for filling groups are detailed[3]. The most significant aspect is that the new edition of the Constitution of Uzbekistan directly includes inclusive education, which demonstrates the relevance of our research today. Article 50 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan guarantees inclusive education and upbringing in educational institutions for children with special educational needs[4].

The history of the development of inclusive education. The emergence and development of inclusive education took different paths in various countries. However, its origins can be traced back to ancient times. The educational views of famous Eastern scholars such as Ibn Sina, Imam Bukhari, Abu Nasr Farabi, and Alisher Navoi, which emphasize the goals of education for the development of each child's personality, serve as the methodological basis for the development of inclusive education. The ideas of inclusive education are based on socio-cultural theories. Psychologist L. Vygotsky (1896-1934) is considered the founder of the ideas of inclusive education, and through his theory of social constructivism, he emphasized that children learn most effectively in a social environment. According to Vygotsky, the development of higher cognitive functions begins with social interaction and later becomes individual. Therefore, the social partner is always an important tool for development and learning. He also emphasized that education comes before development. Adults can facilitate the learning process for children by focusing on skills or knowledge in their "zone of proximal development." Vygotsky defined the "zone of proximal development" as the area in which children must be with a skilled person who helps them perform tasks or understand things they already have some knowledge of or can do by themselves. Vygotsky's theory of socio-cultural development clearly defines the role of the teacher[5]. We need to actively communicate with our children to better understand them and identify their learning activities in the "zone of proximal development." Since children primarily learn through social interaction, we, as teachers, should increase the time children spend interacting with other children and adults. A noisy (but not loud), lively (but orderly) group is a typical setting for a preschool classroom. In many countries, all types of educational practices have demonstrated the validity of this theory. Research shows that children with special needs often achieve better educational results when learning alongside their peers. All children benefit from inclusive educational practices. Children with special needs often position themselves alongside their developing peers, trying to imitate them, interact with them, and develop social skills. Developing children better understand the challenges faced by those with special needs. They become more sensitive to the needs of others and better understand differences. They learn that all people can overcome significant challenges and achieve success. This is also beneficial for teachers, as when there are children with special needs in the group, they develop skills to observe differences in learning styles. They can also assess the strengths of their children's individuality with more confidence by identifying areas that require support. This allows teachers to identify the strengths and needs of each child, which helps improve teaching methods and ensure that all children are educated. Inclusive education means recognizing that children have differences, and these differences are not barriers but valuable resources. The diverse educational needs and abilities of children, as well as their rates of development, can be met through the individualization and differentiation of teaching strategies. The primary goal of inclusive education is to create equal educational opportunities for all children, including those with disabilities or unique needs. The development of inclusive education worldwide has undergone several phases. For instance, the "Inclusive Approaches in Education" international conference held in Salvador, Brazil in 1994 established the main principles of inclusive education. Later, in 2006, the UN adopted the "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities," which strengthened the legal foundation of inclusive education.

Development of inclusive education in Uzbekistan. The development of inclusive education in Uzbekistan took significant steps after gaining independence. In 2013, the

Presidential Decree No. PK-4860 was adopted, and in the Presidential Decree of October 13, 2020, "Measures to further improve the education system for children with special educational needs" was issued, along with Decree No. PK-4860 [6]. Based on these documents, measures were developed to further improve the education system for children with special educational needs. In recent years, inclusive education in Uzbekistan has undergone significant changes. A concept for the development of inclusive education in the general education system for 2020-2025 was approved by a decree, as well as the "Roadmap" for its implementation in 2020-2021. The "Measures to further improve the education system for students with special educational needs" program is being implemented in Uzbekistan, covering the years 2020-2025 [7]. This program outlines the following key tasks: organizing individualized education for children with special educational needs, providing educational institutions with necessary technical and methodological resources, and improving teacher qualifications. For the effective implementation of education, medical approaches, management mechanisms, and the educational environment are of paramount importance. Research is being conducted in Uzbekistan to develop inclusive education, improve educational approaches and management mechanisms, as well as study the suitability of the educational environment.

CONCLUSION

The concept of inclusive education and its historical development hold great significance in Uzbekistan's education system. Integrating children with special educational needs into the general education system, based on the principles of human rights, equality, and social justice, plays a crucial role not only in education but also in the development of society. The government of the Republic of Uzbekistan has adopted a number of normative-legal documents aimed at developing inclusive education, and their effective implementation will help ensure quality changes in the education system. This process is being successfully carried out in Uzbekistan, but for further efficient implementation, it is necessary to improve management mechanisms. In the future, it is necessary to create opportunities for quality education for children with special needs and take measures aimed at fully integrating them into society. At the same time, for the creation of an inclusive environment in the education system, more modern educational and psychological approaches need to be applied, ensuring equal opportunities for all students. Uzbekistan is standing at one of the most important stages of developing inclusive education, social stability, and progress, and there are great opportunities for the full realization of this system.

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