

PREPARING SPECIALISTS FOR WORK IN AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract: Article's purpose is to describe the features of professional training of specialists in inclusive education at the T.H. Shevchenko National University "Chernihiv Colehium". To achieve this goal, a set of general scientific methods was used: analysis and generalization of works of Ukrainian and foreign scientists to characterize the development of inclusive education, creating an inclusive educational space and training specialists in inclusive education at the second (master's) level of higher education; systematization and generalization to understand the practical context of the problem and present the results of the study. The article analyzes the educational program "Inclusive Education. Correctional Pedagogy", which is implemented at the T.H. Shevchenko National University "Chernihiv Colehium" and is aimed at training specialists for psychological and pedagogical support of children in an inclusive educational environment. It is emphasized that an inclusive educational environment is needed to socialize, develop, and educate children with special educational needs. Professional training of specialists who provide psychological and pedagogical and socio-pedagogical support to participants in the educational process in an inclusive environment, is carried out since 2018 at the T.H. Shevchenko National University "Chernihiv Colehium" under the educational program "Inclusive Education. Correctional Pedagogy". Its purpose is to train a competent competitive specialist in inclusive education, able to provide socio-pedagogical support of the educational process and provide psychological and pedagogical assistance to children with special educational needs in an inclusive space.

Keywords: Correctional pedagogy, Inclusive education, Inclusive space, Support.

1 Introduction

The entry of Ukrainian education into the European educational space, its anthropocentric orientations imply that the development and education of children with special educational needs (SEN) and promoting their integration into society is an urgent demand of pedagogy, which is realized through the widespread introduction of inclusive education. Inclusion implies the involvement of all children in the educational space, regardless of their individual differences, the adaptation of the educational process to the needs of students with special needs in physical and mental development. The creation of inclusive educational space and the functioning of inclusive education institutions in Ukraine can take place under the condition of effective professional activity of specialists with competencies related to social adaptation and socialization of children with special educational needs, their development, learning, communication with peers, behavior correction. Therefore, professional training of specialists in inclusive education and correctional pedagogy is an urgent task of Ukrainian higher education institutions.

In modern Ukrainian pedagogy, a significant number of works have been published, which analyze the problems of socialization, development, and education of children with special educational needs in general education institutions. In particular, these are studies by Vasylenko, Gavrilov, Ilyashenko, Kolupaeva, Mironova, Migalush, Sofia, Taranchenko, etc., concerning the development of inclusive education and the organization of inclusive classes in the institutions of general secondary education. The works of Bondar, Grechko, Zasenko, Kolupaeva, Sinyov, Tarasun, Shevtsov, etc., which are devoted to the design of various pedagogical models and technologies of inclusive education of children with different nosologies, should be especially noted. Talanchuk, Schneider, Yarmoshuk, and others study the socio-pedagogical conditions for the introduction of inclusive education. At the same time, the problems of professional training of specialists in inclusive education remain insufficiently studied.

In this context, the experience of the T.H. Shevchenko National University "Chernihiv Colehium", which trains specialists in the educational program "Inclusive Education. Correctional Pedagogy" is extremely important [1].

The purpose of the article is to describe the features of professional training of specialists in inclusive education at the T.H. Shevchenko National University "Chernihiv Colehium".

2 Materials and Methods

To achieve the set goal, a set of general scientific methods was used: analysis and generalization of works of Ukrainian and foreign scientists to characterize the development of inclusive education, creating an inclusive educational space and training specialists in inclusive education at the second (master's) level of higher education; systematization and generalization to understand the practical context of the problem and present the results of the study. In frames of the empirical part of research, survey method was applied.

3 Results and Discussion

A survey of employees of educational institutions where children with special educational needs study and are brought up was conducted in February 2020. Employees of the pre-school education institution No.32 in Chernihiv, the general secondary education institution No.11 in Chernihiv, and the Chernihiv Training and Rehabilitation Center took part in the survey.

The purpose of the survey was to determine the opinion of specialists of these institutions on their need for knowledge and competencies related to the organization of the educational process and the creation of an educational environment for children with SEN in educational institutions of different levels. 18 participants took part in the survey.

The first question determined the age of the respondents; 17% of respondents were aged 20-30, 17% – aged 30-40, 55% – aged 40-50, 11% – over 50.

The second question was devoted to determining the pedagogical experience of respondents. 28% of respondents have pedagogical experience of up to 10 years, 22% – from 10 to 20 years of pedagogical experience, 44% have pedagogical experience of more than 20 years, 1 survey participant (6%) has pedagogical experience of more than 40 years.

The purpose of the third question was to find out whether the respondents studied the psychological and pedagogical features of children with special needs while studying at a higher education institution in the process of mastering courses in pedagogy and psychology. 89% of participants gave an affirmative answer, 11% said that they did not receive such knowledge.

The fourth question clarified whether the respondents studied the general basics of inclusive and remedial pedagogy while studying at a higher education institution. 56% of respondents answered in the affirmative, 44% answered that they were not taught such disciplines.

To the question: "Do you need knowledge in your pedagogical activity related to the organization of the educational process for children with special educational needs?" 100% of respondents answered – "Yes".

All participants in the survey (100%) answered in the affirmative to the question: "Do you need knowledge in your practical pedagogical activities related to adaptation, socialization and creating an educational environment for children with special educational needs?"

In response to questions about the need for educational institutions of specialists with competencies determined by current trends in inclusive education, all respondents (100%) were unanimous and gave an affirmative answer.

In the eighth question, we determined whether the participants in the survey need the formation of an individual educational trajectory as specialists in inclusive education and correctional

pedagogy to work with children with SEN. 89% said they need and 11% said they do not need to form an individual educational trajectory.

Thus, the vast majority of respondents (55%) aged 40-50 years, 2 respondents (11%) aged over 50 years, the majority of respondents (44%) have a teaching experience of more than 20 years, one of the respondents (6%) has a teaching experience of more than 40 years.

The vast majority of respondents (89%) gained knowledge about the psychological and pedagogical characteristics of children with special needs while studying in higher education, but only 56% of respondents said that they learned the general basics of inclusive and remedial pedagogy while studying at higher education. This gives grounds to consider appropriate and timely implementation of the educational program "Inclusive Education. Correctional Pedagogy".

All participants in the survey (100%) were unanimous in their opinion on the need for their practical knowledge and competencies in organizing the educational process and creating an educational environment for children with special educational needs in educational institutions. Such knowledge and competencies are formed in the process of learning the educational program "Inclusive Education. Correctional Pedagogy".

In addition, the vast majority of respondents (89%) expressed the need to form an individual educational trajectory as specialists in inclusive education and correctional pedagogy to work with children with special educational needs.

A survey of stakeholders in institutions where children with special educational needs study and are brought up was conducted in February 2020. Employees of the Department of Education of the Chernihiv City Council took part in the survey; teachers and educators of general secondary and preschool education, specialists of educational and rehabilitation centers.

The purpose of the survey was to find out the opinion of the specialists of these institutions to what extent they are satisfied with the level of professional and scientific training of graduates (basic professional knowledge and skills, application of knowledge in practice, ability to work in a team); whether they are interested in hiring graduates of OP "Inclusive Education. Corrective Pedagogy"; how relevant is the content of professional training of undergraduates in the context of modern problems of inclusion in education. 20 respondents took part in the survey.

In response to the first question, 70% of respondents said that they are completely satisfied and 30% are generally satisfied with the level of professional and scientific training of graduates of OP "Inclusive Education. Correctional Pedagogy".

In the survey for stakeholders, in answer to the second question, 82% of stakeholders appeared to be very interested and 28% were interested in hiring specialists in inclusive education and collection pedagogy. For 90% of stakeholders, it is quite relevant and for 10% of stakeholders the content of professional training of undergraduates in the context of current problems of inclusion is relatively relevant (3rd question in questionnaire).

Regarding the 4th question on the assessment of knowledge and skills of master's graduates, 70% of stakeholders identified the general level of basic professional knowledge and skills as very high, 30% - developed; ability to apply knowledge in practice 74% described as very high, 26% - developed; ability to work in a team 80% assessed as very high, 20% - developed; the level of mastery of information and communication technologies was evaluated by 80% of respondents as very high, 20% assessed it as developed.

In general, the stakeholder survey showed a high assessment of the quality of training of graduates of the master's degree of

educational program (EP) "Inclusive Education. Correctional pedagogy" specialty 011 "Educational, pedagogical sciences".

Involvement of the child in public life and participation in it are of great importance for the formation of personality, its dignity, as well as for the establishment and realization of the child's rights. The experience of many countries shows that the education of children with special educational needs is best done in inclusive general secondary education institutions that accept all children in a particular district or community. Namely in such conditions, children with special educational needs can achieve the highest results in education and social adaptation.

The term "Children with Special Needs" is widely used in international legal instruments and state social legislation in many countries. This terminological definition implies a shift of emphasis from the shortcomings and violations of children, deviations from the norm to fix their special needs. In this context, "speaking of peculiarities, we start from a person in general, and not from a norm, from a person with certain peculiarities peculiar only to him. The peculiarity implies difference, dissimilarity, perhaps, uniqueness, individuality". Accordingly, the scientist considers children with special needs to be "children with disabilities, children with minor health problems, social problems, gifted children" [5, p. 45-46].

The widespread use of this concept was initiated by the Salamanca Declaration, published in 1994. It defines its main component – "special needs". It applies to all children and young people whose needs depend on various physical or mental disabilities or learning difficulties. Many children have learning difficulties and, therefore, special educational needs at certain stages of their schooling.

The Salamanca Declaration states that each child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs, and that education systems and curricula should be developed accordingly, taking into account the wide variety of these characteristics and needs. According to the Declaration, persons with special needs should have access to education in regular schools, which should create conditions for them, using pedagogical methods focused primarily on children to meet these needs. The Declaration states that ordinary schools with such an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating a friendly atmosphere in communities, building an inclusive society and providing education for all.

The appeal to all governments states that the priority in terms of policy and budget allocations should be to reform the education system, which would cover the education of all children, despite individual differences and difficulties. It is stated as necessary to legislatively recognize the principle of inclusive education, which means that all children are in regular schools, except when it is impossible to do; to encourage in every possible way the exchange of experience with countries with inclusive education systems; to promote the participation of parents, communities, public organizations of persons with disabilities in the planning and decision-making processes to meet special educational needs; to promote the development of strategies for diagnosing and identifying special needs of children, as well as to develop scientific and methodological aspects of inclusive education; Considerable attention should be paid to training teachers to work in the system of inclusive education [4, p. 20].

According to well-known European scientists (Lefrancois, Lepowcky, Raiswaik, etc.), all children, despite significant differences in individual development, mostly have normal or average indicators of development, in particular, learning abilities that are fixed in the process of learning at school. However, a certain number of children are different from the average, and, accordingly, from a pedagogical, social, medical point of view, these children are characterized as having special needs [4, p. 12].

The most common and acceptable standard definition of "special educational needs", in particular in the European Community, is

given in the International Standard Classification of Education: "Special educational needs are inherent in people whose training requires additional resources. Additional resources can be as follows: specialists (to assist in the learning process); materials (various teaching aids, including support and correction); finances (budget allocations for additional special services)" [4, p. 12].

Inclusion provides person-centered learning methods based on an individual approach to each child, taking into account all his characteristics: abilities, developmental characteristics, temperament types, gender, family culture, etc. [2, p. 11]. Every child "must live a full and dignified life in conditions which ensure his or her dignity, foster self-confidence and facilitate his or her active participation in society" [7].

Well-known Ukrainian researchers Kolupaeva and Taranchenko believe that in modern conditions "inclusion acquires adequate shapes and becomes a fundamental category of didactics" [5, p. 43]. Inclusion is based on the recognition and respect of individual human differences and preserves the relative autonomy of each social group, and the perceptions and behaviors of the traditionally dominant group must be modified on the basis of pluralism of customs and opinions. Fundamental feature in inclusive approaches is that it is not the individual who should adapt to social and economic relations, but on the contrary - society should create conditions to meet the special needs of each individual. At the same time, the peculiarities should not be perceived "as an exceptional, doomed phenomenon", the presence of a violation does not determine the marginality of human life. The focus of this model of social behavior is autonomy, participation in public activities, creation of a system of social relations, acceptance of everybody by society without restrictions, and acceptance of each individual [5, p. 44].

In such conditions, the task of creating an inclusive environment in educational institutions, in which all participants in the educational process feel confident and comfortable and have opportunities for comprehensive development, comes to the fore. Inclusive education involves the creation of educational environment that meets the needs and capabilities of each child, regardless of the peculiarities of psychophysical development. An inclusive environment is a set of conditions, methods, and means of their implementation for joint learning, education, and development of students taking into account their needs and capabilities [6].

Therefore, we need specialists who are able to create such an inclusive educational space and work in it. The training of such specialists is provided by the educational program "Inclusive Education. Correctional Pedagogy" at the T.H. Shevchenko National University "Chernihiv Colehium". It was launched in 2018 due to regional needs and public demand for inclusive education professionals. The educational program provides an opportunity for professionals to develop general and professional competencies that include the ability to apply generalized and analytical knowledge of modern inclusive education and correctional pedagogy, social and socio-educational processes and critically evaluate possible ways to optimize them in the process of forming inclusive space [3].

The purpose of the educational program "Inclusive education. Correctional Pedagogy" is the training of a competent competitive specialist in inclusive education, correctional pedagogy in the field of "Education, Pedagogy", able to provide socio-pedagogical support of the educational process and provide psychological and pedagogical assistance to children with special educational needs in inclusive space [1].

The educational-professional program is aimed at training a specialist in inclusive education and correctional pedagogy, who is able to solve both professional (correctional-rehabilitation, therapeutic, organizational psychological and pedagogical support, supervision, and mentoring) and applied research tasks in working with children in the field of inclusive education. Disciplines and modules included in the program (for example,

compulsory subjects "Inclusive education", "Pedagogical systems and technologies in inclusive education", "Organization of inclusive education", "Psychological and pedagogical support of children with special educational needs") are focused on current areas of inclusive education [1].

In training specialists in inclusive education, the emphasis is made on broad generalization and deep knowledge of modern inclusive education and correctional pedagogy, organization of activities in frames of inclusive education.

The peculiarity of the educational program is that it provides for the integration of theoretical and practical training through lectures and practical classes on the basis of the university and educational, rehabilitation, and inclusive institutions, rehabilitation centers. Among the educational components of the program, there is a sufficient list of selective subjects, which allows the applicants to form their own learning trajectory and participate in academic mobility programs. Among the selective educational components that contribute to the formation of professional competencies of future specialists in inclusive education, there are the following: "Supervision and mentoring in inclusive education", "Socio-pedagogical work with families raising children with special educational needs" [1].

Learning technologies in the educational program "Inclusive education. Correctional Pedagogy" are developed on the basis of student-centered approach, interactive and exploratory research methods with the right to choose the research topic. Training is carried out in the form of lectures, practical classes, discussion platforms, elements of training and distance learning technologies, internships, individual consultations, including writing a master's degree study [1].

In the process of training future specialists in inclusive education and correctional pedagogy, they form an integrated competence in the ability to solve complex specialized problems and practical problems in education, pedagogy, inclusive education, correctional pedagogy and in organizing the educational process for children with special educational needs, which involves the use of certain scientific theories and methods and is characterized by complexity and pluralism of conditions [1].

4 Conclusion

Professional competencies and program learning outcomes provided by the educational program relate to the creation of an inclusive educational environment, psychological and pedagogical support, accompaniment of children in it. Thus, future specialists in inclusive education develop the ability to choose the most effective forms and methods of work, to ensure their variability, structure, consistency, and integration, ability to carry out and coordinate the process of development and implementation of social and psychological-pedagogical technologies in professional activities. They become able to apply effective organizational forms in general secondary and preschool education institutions in an inclusive educational space, form the ability to provide assistance to pedagogical staff of preschool and general secondary education institutions, parents (or one of the parents) or legal representatives of children with special educational needs regarding the peculiarities of providing psychological and pedagogical, correctional and developmental services to such children. Such specialists are capable of organizing educational space and implementation of necessary adaptations and modifications of the educational process taking into account the index of inclusion; they have the ability to take into account general, specific (for different types of disorders) patterns and individual features of mental and psychophysiological development, features of regulation of behavior and activities of the child at different ages in an inclusive educational environment, ability to increase the level of orientation of abilities, knowledge, skills, aspirations, concentration of volitional and creative efforts of children with special educational needs to realize their interests, goals and ideals. They can develop a pedagogical model and determine the optimal conditions for the formation of social activity of children with special educational needs [1].

Therefore, for the socialization, development, and education of children with special educational needs, it is necessary to create an inclusive educational environment. Professional training of specialists who provide psychological and pedagogical and socio-pedagogical support to participants in the educational process in an inclusive environment, is carried out since 2018 at the T.H. Shevchenko National University "Chernihiv Colehium" under the educational program "Inclusive Education. Correctional Pedagogy". Its purpose is to train a competent competitive specialist in inclusive education, able to provide socio-pedagogical support of the educational process and provide psychological and pedagogical assistance to children with special educational needs in an inclusive space.

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