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STUDY OF READINESS OF TEACHERS OF INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN WITH COMPLEX DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The article highlights the problem of the readiness of teachers of general secondary education institutions with inclusive education to work with children with complex developmental disorders. The research included three stages: preparatory, diagnostic, analytical. The main research method was a questionnaire. 30 teachers of general secondary education institutions with inclusive education took part in the ascertainment experiment. The results of the study showed that almost half of the interviewed teachers have a positive attitude towards the implementation of inclusive education. Most respondents believe that children with complex developmental disabilities are not eligible for inclusive education. About half of the respondents have relatively correct ideas about complex developmental disorders. Only a quarter of the respondents answered that all teams of psychological and pedagogical support for children with special educational needs take part in drawing up an individual development program. Teachers have partial ideas about adaptations and modifications, they do not know how to implement them in their work. Educators indicated the factors that prevent the quality implementation of inclusive education in the institution of general secondary education. Most of the interviewees indicated the expediency of training teachers to work in inclusive classes with the help of various forms of scientific and methodological work. The analysis of the results of the

questionnaire indicates a significant deficit of the competencies of pedagogical workers in the field of inclusive education of children with complex developmental disorders. A promising direction of research is the development of measures, the implementation of which will contribute to the formation of the inclusive competence of teachers, and the writing of methodological recommendations for teachers on working with children with complex developmental disorders.

Key words: teachers, institutions of general secondary education, inclusive education, children with complex developmental disorders, children with special educational needs.

1. INTRODUCTION

Statement of the problem. For many years in a row, the priority direction of education in Ukraine has been the implementation of inclusive education in preschool and general secondary education institutions, the creation of a new concept of state policy regarding children with special educational needs

It has become a challenge for many teachers of institution of general secondary education, who, without special education, must find effective ways to organize the educational process for children with special educational needs, create a favorable educational environment for them and ensure their rights to quality education. Therefore, it is extremely important to prepare teachers of institution of general secondary education to work with children with special educational needs, in particular, to develop in them: the skills of establishing positive contact with children with special needs and creating a favorable educational environment for them; the ability to assess the child's capabilities through the prism of his psychophysical characteristics; the ability to choose the optimal path for successful learning in combination with corrective work; the ability to work in a team with other specialists in the psychological and pedagogical support of pupils with special educational needs and to cooperate with parents.

Today, teachers of institutions of general secondary education with inclusive education often have difficulties in working with children with complex developmental disorders. That is why it is extremely necessary to train teachers of inclusive institutions to work with this category of pupils.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The preparation of teachers to work with children with special educational needs in the conditions of an inclusive institution is the subject of research by such scientists as M. Buynyak [1], V. Kovalenko [2], A. Kolupaeva [3], O. Martynchuk [4], S. Myronova [5], O. Chopik [6] and others. Peculiarities

of the organization of the educational process of children with complex developmental disorders and the essence of corrective and developmental work with them were investigated: H. Blech [7], I. Bobrenko [7], N. Hladkykh [8], I. Hladchenko [7], K. Hlushenko [8], O. Myakushko [7], I. Sukhina [7], S. Trykoz [7], O. Chebotareva [7] and others. They emphasize that when developing an individual educational trajectory of a child with complex developmental disorders, the peculiarities of his psychophysical development, age and level of development should be taken into account. It is also important to clearly understand how the method of work chosen by the teacher will contribute to the development of the pupils and the formation of his personality.

However, studies conducted both in Ukraine and abroad show that the readiness of teachers of institution of general secondary education to work with children with special educational needs is insufficient. With this in mind, the topic of our research was chosen.

The purpose of the study: to determine the level of readiness of teachers of inclusive classes to work with children with complex developmental disorders and to analyze the difficulties that arise in the process of practical implementation of an inclusive form of education in general secondary education institutions.

2. THEORETICAL BASICS OF RESEARCH

The majority of pupils with complex developmental disorders cannot master the educational programs of institution of general secondary education, have difficulty adapting to a new educational environment, and have difficulties in establishing social relations with classmates. This becomes a real challenge for teachers who work with this category of pupils. Since they have a need for a detailed study of a complex psychological and pedagogical assessment of the development of schoolchildren with complex developmental disorders and the determination of their educational opportunities, in the development of educational measures for the purpose of their socialization etc [8].

H. Gladkikh, K. Glushchenko singled out the barriers that cause difficulties in organizing work with children with complex developmental disorders [8]:

1. Absence of a clear legal framework that would regulate the procedure for providing educational and other services to pupils with complex developmental disabilities and their families. This creates obstacles to the organization and provision of assistance, violating the interests and rights of children and their families.

2. There is an insufficient number of institutions where children with complex developmental disorders can receive early corrective care. As a result, children develop secondary disorders that prevent the compensation of impaired functions.

3. The feasibility of developing educational programs for children with complex developmental disorders. Educational programs for pupils with special educational needs, approved by the Ministry of Education and Science, are focused on the leading disorder and they cannot fully ensure the implementation of the corrective component of education for children with complex developmental disorders. Today, in accordance with the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers dated 09/15/21 No. 957 [9], the training of pupils with special educational needs in the conditions of institution of general secondary education is carried out according to the educational program of the educational institution, taking into account their special educational needs and the personally oriented direction of the educational process, as well as adaptation and/or modification of educational subjects or integrated courses. This greatly complicates the process of inclusive education of pupils with complex developmental disabilities.

4. The difficulties of formulating uniform approaches to education, upbringing and development of children with complex developmental disorders are associated with the diversity of the structure of disorders, as well as the nature of their manifestations.

5. Insufficient methodological support and diagnostic techniques, taking into account the individual characteristics and compensatory capabilities of children with complex developmental disorders.

6. The need for complex psychological and pedagogical support by various specialists in the development, education and upbringing of a child with complex developmental disorders both in the conditions of a preschool and general secondary education institution.

Despite all the difficulties of organizing inclusive education for children with complex developmental disabilities, many scholars believe that these pupils are usually able to master educational and practical activities, but only if the content of the curriculum is adapted or modified to take into account the individual capabilities of children, a careful approach to the selection of tasks, systematic psychological and pedagogical support, and the constant requirements for them [7].

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

There are currently 14 classes with inclusive education in the Yampil united territorial community, in which 18 pupils with special educational needs are studying.

A third of these pupils need the fourth and fifth levels of support (these are children with intellectual disabilities combined with sensory and speech disorders). That is why we considered it appropriate to study the readiness of teachers to work with children with complex developmental disabilities.

To conduct the study, we developed a methodological toolkit that included both diagnostics and methods of quantitative and qualitative analysis of the empirical data.

The study was conducted in three stages:

1. Preparatory stage – included the selection of questions and the formation of a questionnaire for teachers in Google form, as well as the formation of a research sample.

2. Diagnostic stage – included a survey of teachers of general secondary education institutions.

3. Analytical stage – included processing the data obtained, analyzing them and drawing conclusions based on the study.

The questionnaire included both closed and open-ended questions to which teachers had to give extended answers in order to better understand the state of the problem under study.

In total, 30 teachers of teachers of institution of general secondary education took part in our experiment.

4. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The analysis of the survey results shows that 43.3% of respondents have a positive attitude towards inclusive education; 33.3% of respondents are undecided; 6.7% of teachers answered as follows: *“In general, it's okay, but we don't have enough knowledge and time and money for self-education when difficult children come, and the state, without asking us, just put us in front of the fact, so the quality of care is appropriate in state institutions”*, etc.; 6.7% of respondents said it was positive, but not for all categories of children; 10% of respondents gave the following answers: *“depending on the nosology”*, *“all included children feel comfortable with us, socialization is good”*, *“I believe that regular schools cannot provide good academic knowledge to children with severe visual and hearing impairments”*, etc.

The answers to the question “Which categories of children, in your opinion, are not subject to inclusive education?” were varied: *“with mental disorders”*, *“with complex developmental disorders”*, *“children with mental disorders, behavioural disorders”*, *“intellectual disabilities of severe severity, profound visual and hearing impairments”*, *“children with intellectual disabilities and complex developmental disabilities”*, *“children with intellectual disabilities (IQ 30 and less)”*, *“children with complex mental disabilities”*, *“children without special needs”*, *“children of the 5th*

level of support”, etc. 6.7% of respondents answered as follows: “*all children have the right to education, but teachers of regular schools are not ready to provide quality knowledge to some categories of children (lack of typhlopedagogues, sign language teachers)*”, “*everyone is eligible, but they only need knowledge and good material for work*”. 30% of respondents either answered “*I don’t know*” or simply did not answer this question.

When assessing the possibility of teaching children with complex disabilities in an inclusive classroom, the majority (63.3%) of teachers said it was impossible or very difficult; 10% of respondents believed that it was possible, but it was very difficult for teachers and ineffective for children; 13.3% of specialists gave an affirmative answer; 13.3% of respondents said “*in terms of inclusion in society – yes, but I don’t understand why such a child should attend all subjects according to the class schedule if he or she cannot master the basic ones*”, “*we have children who cannot read and write in Ukrainian, and they should attend English and French with the class, because the program is the same, only the expected results change*”, etc.

83.3% of specialists pointed to the following obstacles to the successful education of children with complex developmental disabilities in an inclusive classroom: “*individual characteristics, insufficient number of specialists*”, “*lack of necessary materials, psychological barriers*”, “*resistance from parents and other children*”, “*lack of cooperation between members of the support team*”, “*little knowledge and experience*”, “*workload of teachers (as it is not the main job, but as an additional workload, which is very difficult to combine)*”, “*which is very difficult to combine*”, “*payments for work are small and delayed, which is antimotivation*”, “*lack of equipment and materials for classes*”, “*difficult children can be literally difficult, and it undermines women's health, they need to involve men, and they cannot feed their families on such salaries*”, “*lack of experienced professionals*”, “*unreadiness of teachers*”, “*in a modified program, not only the expected results should be changed, but perhaps some topics should be removed, because a child with a moderate degree of intellectual disability cannot learn them*”, “*lack of specialists in the psychological and pedagogical support team, funding*”, “*very complicated program, few labour training lessons, little social and domestic orientation*”, “*teacher’s unwillingness to work with such a child, lack of awareness, interaction with parents, teacher's assistant/educator*”, “*lack of material resources, trained specialists*”, “*insufficient attention to this issue*”, etc. By the way, the lack of specialists is evident in most of the answers. 16.7% of respondents did not answer this question, which may indicate a lack of experience in working with such children.

Regarding the individual development program for a child with special educational needs, most teachers know what this document is and what its

purpose is. However, the answers to the question of who draws up an individual development program in their educational institution are quite diverse: only 26.7% of specialists said that all members of the psychological and pedagogical support team are involved in drawing up an individual development program; 10% – a psychologist and the deputy director for educational work; 33.3% – a teacher together with a teacher's assistant; 13.3% – a teacher's assistant; 16.7% – a class teacher (Fig. 1).

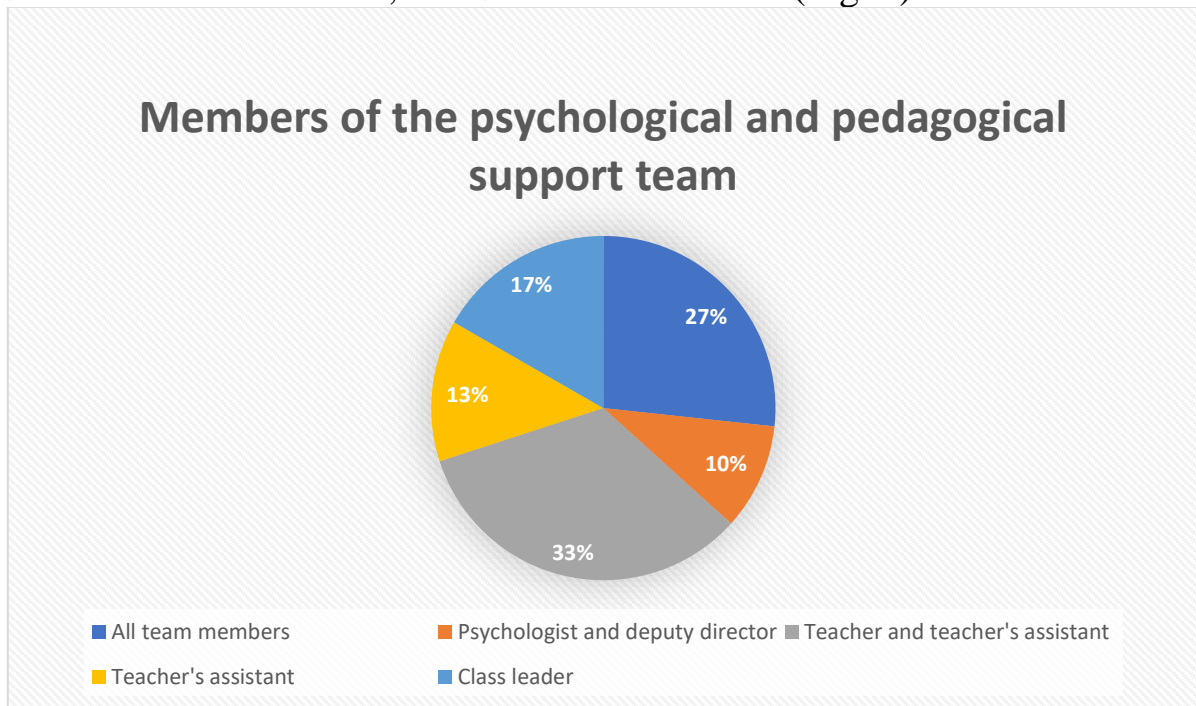


Figure 1. The role of members of the team supporting children with special educational needs in the development of an individual development programme

When asked what an individual curriculum is, all respondents answered in the affirmative, but only half of them had ever drawn up one. In addition, to the question “With whom do you coordinate the individual study plan?” only 10% of respondents answered “we coordinate with the deputy director and parents”; 16.7% – “with the deputy director for educational work”; 10% – “develop and approve with the team of psychological and pedagogical support”; 6.7% – “all plans are coordinated with the an inclusive resource center and the deputy director for educational work”; 6.7% – “I do not coordinate with anyone”.

A significant proportion of respondents (76.7%) answered the question “With whom do you cooperate with in providing psychological and pedagogical support to pupils with special educational needs, and how?” the following answers were given: “with the assistant, psychologist and subject teachers”, “with teachers and psychologist we discuss progress, problems and what each of us can do to solve this issue”, “with psychologist,

assistant, school management”, “with the principal, deputy principal, psychologist, class teacher, teacher's assistant, subject teachers. We have meetings 4 times a school year, and more often if necessary”, “I interact with the class teacher, psychologist and assistant on a regular basis”, “with a psychologist, speech therapist”, “with all members of the psychological and pedagogical support team through round tables, seminars, individual consultations”, “with specialists, consultations of an inclusive resource center”, “with a psychologist and social pedagogue”, etc. However, there were also those (23.3%) who said they did not cooperate with anyone.

When asked about the adaptations that should be used in working with children with complex disabilities, the experts answered as follows: *“adaptation of the learning environment, teaching materials, teaching methods, assessment, psychological and pedagogical adaptation”, “it depends on the situation”, “division of tasks into simpler ones, simplified instructions, additional time”, “increasing the time for completing a task, reducing the number of tasks, assistance, visualization”, “adaptation of the environment, materials, assessment”, “replacing reading text with audio texts or videos, replacing a written task with a test or oral answer, etc.”, “adaptations for a child with special educational needs must be carried out in parallel in several directions: 1) adaptation of the environment; 2) psychological and pedagogical strategies; 3) teaching materials and tasks; 4) assessment system and criteria”. 30% of respondents said they did not work with such children; 10% of teachers answered “I don't know”.*

As for whether the curriculum for children with complex disabilities should be modified, 83.3% of respondents gave an affirmative answer. Teachers argued that *“it allows children with complex developmental disabilities to fully participate in the educational process”, “of course, because the existing programs are not suitable at all, because children are special, and those programs are for normative children”, “it is necessary, but not in the way it is done now. Modification means not only changing the expected results, but also the program should be different from the classroom program, because it is unrealistic for a child with complex disabilities to learn it”, “different children have different capabilities”, “it is necessary to simplify the program according to the child's capabilities”, etc. 16.7% of respondents answered as follows: “if necessary”, “with intellectual disabilities – yes, with preserved intelligence – no”, “not for everyone, we take into account the individual characteristics of the child”.*

100% of teachers agree that cooperation with parents is an important component of the inclusive process: *“of course, I use all possible forms of cooperation”, “conversations, consultations, trainings”, “I have conversations with parents, consultations, I can hold an open lesson. I show what we have already achieved and what we need to work on at home. When parents are motivated, the results are much better”, “in the form of constant*

communication and periodic consultations, in the form of parental observation of the types of work for independent study with the child”, “cooperation with parents is an extremely important element in inclusive education. The forms we use are: counselling, parental training, mutual information”, etc.

90% of respondents noted that there are a number of barriers to the quality implementation of inclusion in institution of general secondary education, including the following: *“rapid changes in modern education – introducing new content, new educational and information technologies, new strategies of pedagogical interaction”, “barriers related to the peculiarities of child development, social (resistance from parents), systemic (lack of proper material and technical base)”, “frequent changes in education”, “imperfection of the regulatory framework”, “low and untimely remuneration of correctional teachers, lack of qualified specialists, lack of a position of a child's assistant”, “lack of funding”, “insufficient technical and didactic support of the educational process”, “lack of specialists”, “material base in line with the requirements for teaching such children”, “lack of trained personnel”, etc.* 3.3% of professionals said that *“our institution accepts all children. All children feel comfortable, have friends and are included in society. The main goal of inclusion has been achieved. But the learning outcomes are much better for children with preserved intelligence”*. 6.7 % of respondents refrained from answering.

83.3 % of respondents said that an inclusive classroom teacher should have the following competences: *“a sufficient level of knowledge and skills necessary to perform professional functions in inclusive education”, “knowledge of the developmental characteristics of children with different special educational needs, the ability to create an inclusive learning environment, communication skills, documentation”, “necessary knowledge and stable mental health”, “ability to analyze the psycho-emotional state of the student, individual approach, sensitivity to the needs of the student”, “should have all the competencies of the new Ukrainian school, and at least the basics of correctional pedagogy”, “psychological and professional readiness”, “sufficient level of knowledge about the peculiarities of a child's development, knowledge about the area of immediate development, knowledge about effective methods and techniques of work”, “understanding of inclusion and respect for each child, knowledge about the peculiarities of development, ability to work in a team, continuous professional development”, “know the peculiarities of working with children with special educational needs, be motivated, capable of reflection”, “language and communication”, “an inclusive class teacher should be able to work in a team and have the following competences informational, communicative, productive, moral, psychological, subject, social”*.

86.7 % of respondents indicated the expediency of such forms of

methodological work to prepare teachers to work in institution of general secondary education with inclusive education as: *“microlearning, communities of practice”, “in-service training courses”, “effective webinars by qualified teachers with special education and effective experience in special institutions or institutions of general secondary education with inclusive education”, “workshops, practical seminars, trainings. There is always a need for quality assistance”, “practical exercises, exchange of experience”, “study of methodological literature, manuals”, “trainings, seminars with a practical component”, “courses, trainings, master classes”, “individual consultations, study of best practices”, “round tables, trainings”, “self-education of teachers, familiarization of teachers with modern pedagogical innovations”, etc.*

One teacher said: *“If we are approached by parents of a child who cannot see or hear, even with a hearing aid, our teachers will not be ready to provide such a child with quality knowledge. And the courses cannot teach what correctional teachers have been teaching for years in higher education. Our teachers can handle other situations, and they already have this experience. I believe that we should always think about the interests of the child. For some, inclusion is better, and for others, a special institution is better”*.

10% of respondents said that they did not need any methodological assistance, which is not always an indication of a person's full awareness, but rather an unwillingness to acquire new knowledge.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The results of the study showed that almost half of the surveyed teachers have a positive attitude towards the introduction of inclusive education, one third – positively, but depending on the nosology, the rest – undecided.

The majority of respondents believe that children with severe intellectual disabilities, mental disorders, complex disabilities, and severe sensory disabilities are not eligible for inclusive education.

Half of the respondents have a relatively correct understanding of complex developmental disorders, while others include intellectual disabilities, speech disorders, autism spectrum disorders, and “children with disabilities”, which is unreliable, as not all children with disabilities have special educational needs, and not all children with special educational needs have disabilities.

The answers to the questions about drawing up an individual development program and cooperation with other members of the support

team indicate that the problem of team interaction is very relevant. Since only a small number of respondents said that drawing up an individual development program is a team effort and there is cooperation between members of the support team, there is little mention of cooperation with an inclusive resource center.

As for the issue of adaptation and modification, teachers have a partial understanding of it, but, as practice shows, they do not know how to implement it in their work. Therefore, this issue is particularly relevant.

Teachers noted that there are many factors that impede the quality implementation of inclusive education in general education institutions: lack of relevant specialists, inadequate funding, lack of knowledge and practical skills in working with children with different categories of disabilities, insufficient material and technical support, difficulties in teamwork, etc.

The majority of respondents indicated the expediency of preparing teachers to work in inclusive classrooms through such forms of work as workshops, trainings, advanced training courses, coaching, and individual consultations.

The analysis of the survey results indicates a significant deficit in the competencies of teachers in the field of inclusive education of children with complex developmental disabilities. This problem is caused by both objective factors (insufficient provision of educational institutions with methodological materials and technical means) and subjective factors (low level of emotional and methodological readiness of teachers to work with such pupils in inclusive education).

In view of this, we believe it is advisable to plan a number of measures that will contribute to the development of teachers' inclusive competence and develop methodological recommendations for working with children with complex developmental disabilities.

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Author's contribution

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ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ГОТОВНОСТІ ПЕДАГОГІВ ІНКЛЮЗИВНИХ ЗАКЛАДІВ ДО РОБОТИ З ДІТЬМИ ЗІ СКЛАДНИМИ ПОРУШЕННЯМИ РОЗВИТКУ

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У статті висвітлено проблему готовності педагогів закладів загальної середньої освіти з інклюзивним навчанням до роботи з дітьми зі складними порушеннями розвитку. Дослідження включало три етапи: підготовчий, діагностичний, аналітичний. Основним методом дослідження було анкетування. У констатувальному експерименті взяли участь 30 педагогів закладів загальної середньої освіти з інклюзивним навчанням. Результати дослідження показали, що майже половина опитаних педагогів позитивно ставляться до впровадження інклюзивного навчання. Більшість респондентів вважають, що інклюзивному навчанню не підлягають діти зі складними порушеннями розвитку. Про складні порушення розвитку відносно правильні уявлення мають половина опитаних. Лише чверть респондентів відповіли, що у складанні індивідуальної програми розвитку беруть усі учасниками команди психолого-педагогічного супроводу дітей з особливими освітніми потребами. Педагоги мають часткові уявлення про адаптації та модифікації, не знають, як втілити їх у роботі. Фахівці вказали чинники, які перешкоджають якісному впровадженню інклюзивного навчання в закладі загальної середньої освіти. Більшість опитаних вважають доцільною підготовку педагогів до роботи в інклюзивних класах за допомогою різних форм науково-методичної роботи. Аналіз результатів анкетування свідчить про значний дефіцит компетентностей педагогічних працівників у сфері інклюзивної освіти дітей зі складними порушеннями розвитку.

Перспективним напрямком дослідження є розробка заходів, реалізація яких сприятиме формуванню інклюзивної компетентності педагогів, та написання методичних рекомендацій вчителям щодо роботи з дітьми зі складними порушеннями розвитку.

Ключові слова: педагоги, заклади загальної середньої освіти, інклюзивне навчання, діти зі складними порушеннями розвитку, діти з особливими освітніми потребами.