

## PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE WORK OF MODERN PRESCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS

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**Abstract:** The article deals with the issues of training educators to accomplish their professional activities in the context of implementing inclusive practices in the system of preschool organizations. The authors attempted to study this issue from the point of view of the professional readiness of a future educator in accordance with the requirements of modern society to the system of preschool education.

**Keywords:** Creativity, Critical thinking, Inclusive education, Preschool organization, Professional readiness.

### 1 Introduction

The President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev (1) notes in his message the need for a cardinal improvement in the quality of preschool education: “the emphasis in education is shifting towards the 4C model: the development of creativity, critical thinking, communication skills, and teamwork.” Such strategies of preschool education in Kazakhstan are fully justified. These are the competencies that a future educator of the preschool system should possess in order to perform his or her functions professionally.

Psychological and pedagogical dominants of the development of children of preschool age are as follows: the development of speech, thinking, memory, attention, emotional and volitional sphere, the formation of self-esteem, initial moral ideas, etc. Professional personnel needs to own four C to mentor preschool age children.

Inclusive education as a new social and educational phenomenon becomes the subject of practical and theoretical research and requires meaningful clarification of concepts, as well as defining strategies for the effective implementation of the idea of inclusive education. One cannot but agree with the position of those authors who talk about the strategic direction of the development of modern education as a successful solution of socialization problems determined by the conditions of the organization of the educational space. (2, p132) It should be noted that these tasks are a high priority.

In pedagogical theory and practice, the term “educational space” is interpreted ambiguously:

- structured system of pedagogical factors and conditions of personality formation (3);
- a “place” existing in a society where sets of relations, connections, and special activities of different systems related to the development of an individual and his or her socialization are subjectively defined and carried out (4), as well as the most important socially demanded key competences are formed (5);
- an integrative unit of society and of the world educational space, normatively or spontaneously structured and having its own system of coordinates, which determine the possibilities for self-development and self-change of a person at different stages of its formation (6,7);

- one of the leading factors of social education of the younger generation (8-10);
- a holistic single entity consisting of interdependent and interacting lines-spaces, stages, layers, and “environments” of social-educational situations that provide activity, initiative, creativity, and potential in the process of subject-subject and subject-object relations, where an environment in space is an input element (5, p7);
- a system of hierarchically interrelated components, each of which has its own specifics determined by the content and level of complexity of the pedagogical tasks solved in a sector of the educational space (2, p135).

It is obvious that researchers, in general, are united in the understanding of the educational space as an integrative phenomenon with a component structure and performing certain functions. Researchers attribute organization, length, structure (interconnection and interdependence of elements), and content to the universal characteristics of the educational space. The extrapolation of the above items allows to define the “inclusive educational space” as an integrative unit of social space represented by a system of structural components and blocks that determine the specificity of its content, in which educational and interpersonal relations are realized, personal and social development opportunities, socialization, self-development and self-change are provided for each participant. Inclusive educational space has both general characteristics (organization, length in time and space, pithiness and structuredness) and specific ones: accessibility, poly-subjectness, variability (meaningful, temporary, and organizational one). The principles of organizing an inclusive educational space include:

- socializing principle of the educational process (socialization is considered the most important result of education);
- principle of individualization and personification of the educational space (organization of an inclusive educational space, taking into account the characteristics and needs of each student);
- principle of integrative support of subjects of an inclusive educational space (the result of a concerted joint activity of a child support group: teachers, educational psychologists, parents, educational defectologists, etc.);
- principle of value and tolerant attitudes towards the subjects of the educational process, their activities in an inclusive educational space.

The effectiveness of an inclusive educational space is ensured by the strategy of the accounting and the interaction of external and internal factors determining it, as well as of its components.

### 2 Materials and Methods

Currently, issues related to the implementation of inclusive education in the work of preschool organizations of Kazakhstan are relevant since the need of children with special educational needs to include them in society as full members is still unmet. The term “inclusive” education is used to describe the process of teaching children with special needs in general education (mass) schools (kindergartens), i.e. their inclusion in such institutions. It is based on an ideology that excludes any discrimination against children, ensuring equal treatment of all people and creating special conditions for children with special educational needs. The process of implementing inclusive education into the practice of preschool organizations depends on several factors:

- logistics capacity of a preschool institution (its capability of ensuring free access to premises for preschool children with special educational needs, etc.);
- readiness of teaching staff (competent in the implementation of education of preschoolers with special educational needs);

- readiness of peers and their parents to “accept” a preschooler with special educational needs in the children's team as a full member of society.

If the first factor is officially registered in the standards, i.e. noted in the rules and regulations for the inclusive practices in educational organizations, the next two factors directly depend on the level and the preparedness of teachers of preschool

education to carry out their professional activities. To determine the professional competencies of a specialist of a preschool organization, the authors conducted an analysis of the primary document of the Educational Program concerning the specialty 5B010100 (Preschool education and mentorship). (11) As a result of the analysis, the following data were obtained (see Table 1).

Table 1. The Key Competencies of the Bachelor's Specialty 5b010100 (Preschool Education and Mentorship Implying the Possibility of Implementing Inclusive Education)

Names of competencies	Content of competencies implying the possibility of inclusive education
Social and ethical competencies	- ability to provide a high level of pedagogical culture and pedagogical ethics; - use of adequate methods of effective interaction with persons of different socio-economic groups; - developing and adaptation of approaches that take into account sociocultural differences. - knowing about the methods of establishing contacts with representatives of educational institutions (family, public, and media) with taking into account their influence in their professional activities.
Communicative competencies	- use of the media for pedagogical education and the formation of effective interaction between kindergarten, family and the public; - ability to listen to partners in interaction without prejudice, developing tolerance in relationships; - ability to differentiate between adequate and inadequate, verbal and non-verbal components of communication;
Interpersonal competencies	demonstration of ethics
Pedagogical competencies	- knowing the patterns of development and social formation of the personality of a preschooler as well as basic of anatomical, physiological and mental development of preschool age children; - knowing the scientific and theoretical foundations of psychodiagnosis and the psychological readiness to school; - ability to create a substantive and developing environment for independent, cognitive, and creative activities of preschool age children; - formation of the key competencies of preschool age children (cognitive, health saving, communicative and linguistic, social, and creative ones).
Constructive competencies	- indicators of competence development of children from one year to six years; - ability to identify and develop the makings, inclinations, abilities, and talents of each child on the basis of an individual approach, taking into account the development and state of health.
Organizational competencies	- knowing the innovative forms and methods of the parents' involvement in the educational process of preschool organizations; - ability to organize learning and cognitive activities.

As it can be seen from the table of key competencies of the bachelor's specialty 5B010100 (Preschool education and mentorship), the presented professional qualities are common and universal for all pedagogical specialties, and specific, perhaps even specialized qualities are not distinguished. Most of the competencies, as evidenced by the educational program, are indirectly related to the content, idea, and principles of inclusive education. Insufficient attention is paid to the issues of diagnostic work, during the training of which the special skills necessary for the implementation of inclusive education in preschool organizations are formed. So, with the use of psychodiagnostic methods, individual psychological and pedagogical peculiarities of a child with special educational

needs as well as optimal pedagogical routes provided by individual support of each child in a preschool organization can be identified. In addition, diagnostics allows to evaluate the dynamics of development and the effectiveness of corrective work.

The scientific and practical developments of S.D. Z Abramna, I.Y. Levchenko, Y.A. Strebeleva, M.M. Semago, T.A. Drygina, G.G. Korchevskaya, N.L. Tataurova, I.A. Tirskaya, S.I. Shelipova, B.Z. Nogaybekova, G.K. Maksutova, and others can be used as sources of diagnostic tools. Diagnostics in the process of inclusive education should be focused on the main areas of the child's mental activities such as emotional, cognitive, behavior, and motor functions with highlighting quality indicators in each area (see Table 2). (12)

Table 2. Indicators of the Development of Child Mental Sphere

Emotional sphere	Activistic sphere	Cognitive sphere and motor functions
child contact peculiarities; emotional reaction to a survey situation; reaction to a commendation; reaction to failures; emotional state when performing tasks; emotional mobility; communication peculiarities; reaction to a result.	presence and persistence of interest in a task; attention peculiarities, understanding of instructions; task independence; nature of activities (focus and activeness); pace and dynamics of activities, features of regulation of activities; performance; help organization.	peculiarities of perception, memory, thinking, and speech; motor function peculiarities.

Particular attention in the organization of inclusive education should be given to the factor of readiness of peers and their parents to “accept” a preschooler with special educational needs in the children's team as a full member of society.

### 3 Results and Discussion

The diversity of the individual characteristics of children affects the communication between children, “building” intra-group relations. It is necessary to establish a positive atmosphere of

acceptance and support. When co-educated, taking into account the individual characteristics, children get experience in reconciling their interests with the interests of others.

The organization of children's life in an inclusive group relies on the following tasks:

- creating a community of children and adults based on respect and interest in the personality of each member of the group, in his or her individual characteristics;
- formation of the ability to establish and maintain relationships with different people (younger, peers, older, adults);
- formation of the ability to support each other;
- development of communication skills and a culture of communication, creating a positive emotional attitude;
- enhancing the ability to choose, plan their own activities, negotiate with others about joint activities, assign roles and responsibilities;
- development of skills of gaming, cognitive, and research activities;
- development of self-regulation and self-service skills.

The compulsory condition for the development of children, i.e. the interaction in microgroups with other children, is the formation of social skills of communication and interaction. Educators facilitate such an interaction via the organization of gaming, design and research activities. Additional developmental programs may be used. During the cooperation on solving problems and conflicts, children learn the skills to coordinate their actions. With the help of an adult, they learn to take into account the differences in the interests, abilities, and skills of each other.

The work with parents of healthy children should include a cycle of activities aimed at developing tolerance. Parents of healthy children often fear that their child's development may be delayed by the presence of those who require significant support. A situation in which parents of healthy children do not want inclusion is quite typical because they are afraid that children with disabilities will have some kind of negative impact on their healthy children. The main reason for fear, in this case, is the stereotypes and barriers arising due to lack of information. (13) It seems that when working with preschool age children, some techniques from the scope of remedial work can be used, for example, the lekotek. The first lekotek in Kazakhstan was founded in 1994 in the National Scientific Practical Center of Remedial Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Almaty). The first head of the Center, doctor of pedagogical sciences, professor R.A. Suleymenova was the initiator of its creation. Annually, remedial assistance in the form of educational toys is provided to almost 450 children.

Lekotek is a form of providing remedial developmental education for children with disabilities via stimulating toys. It combines psychological and educational experience in the selection and use of educational toys that are adequate to the needs of a child. An analysis of scientific sources has shown that the best results of remedial and developmental education for children with disabilities can be achieved only with creative and individual use of developing toys.

The Kazakh model of the lekotek is considered in the context of the implementation of the following activities:

- the selection of toys is carried out by experts with the participation of a lekotek manager;
- the use of toys is a didactic condition for the examination and correction of the child's development;
- the unity of the process of selecting and using toys determines the role of the lekotek in remedial developmental education of children with disabilities.

Educators help children with developmental disabilities by using the lekotek. They form prerequisites for learning activities, support the development of children's personality, and provide psychological and educational assistance to parents. The

education is conducted in the form of a game. The lekotek educators are confident that adults raising a child with special needs should perceive the game as a vital necessity for young children. After all, this is the main source of knowledge, skills and good mood. Parents should be ready to play any situation. The actions of adults should be expressive, soft and adequate to the capabilities of the child. (14)

As part of testing the elements of the lekotek when working with preschoolers with special educational needs, the authors of this article organized experimental work in the Remedial School No. 1 in the city of Kokshetau. In this experiment, three main activities of the Kazakh lekotek model were taken into account:

- storage of toys, including the systematization, handling, and placement of toys in accordance with the functional content, monitoring the compliance of developing toys with the needs of children with disabilities;
- provision of toys, including the targeted selection and use of developmental toys in remedial developmental education;
- methodological support, including the updating of methods and techniques for the use of educational toys, analysis of the results of the use of educational toys, taking into account the pace and characteristics of the child's psychophysical development.

In the process of games with the use of lekotek toys, the same toy can be used several times for different children and for different remedial purposes. The authors had the opportunity at any time to get the necessary educational toys for classes.

The game material was in open access, the opportunity to choose exactly those toys that were designed for the specific child was given as much as possible, according to his or her age and psychological characteristics, taking into account the level of actual development or in accordance with the child's individual developmental training program.

The authors note the great developmental potential of the lekotek for healthy children, allowing them to use it freely in the process of implementing inclusive practices into the preschool education system.

Over the past decades, the number of children with impaired development in a wide variety of manifestations has increased in Kazakhstan. Parents more often began to raise such children in the family and not to abandon them or pass them to closed State institutions. In the end, this led to a sharp increase in the number of children left without the opportunity to receive an education and families deprived of socio-psychological assistance because of the lack of preparation of either legislative or remedial educational practices. In this regard, the child was isolated from society and gradually lost the chance to adapt to life in an ordinary social environment. (15)

Until recently, children were divided into educable and uneducable ones. At the same time, the child, who was considered "uneducable," was forced out of the educational system into the health care system, which could not solve the problems of mental development, but only aggravated them.

Today, world experience shows that the effectiveness of the rehabilitation of a child remaining in the family is much higher than that of a child placed in a boarding school. Therefore, the main task is to provide the family with the necessary assistance in the development and education of the child, to guarantee him a decent future, i.e. provide opportunities and realize the mutual integration of society and all its members. This is possible only with equal rights, and especially the right to education. (16)

Practice shows that the development of inclusive education is a complex process involving scientific, methodological and administrative resources. The educators and the administration of general education schools, which have adopted the idea of inclusive education, are in dire need of assistance in organizing the pedagogical process, in working out the mechanism of

interaction between all participants in the educational process, where the child is at the center. Inclusive space implies openness and accessibility not only for children but also for adults. The more partners educational institutions have, the more successful students will be. Taking into account the peculiarities of the development of children with disabilities, the knowledge of special psychology and remedial pedagogy is of particular importance for teachers of educational institutions. Many mass school teachers will need to revise the main provisions of the methods of teaching their subjects, master the techniques of remedial educational work, apply the didactic principles of individual and differentiated approaches, developing and visual teaching.

Here are the principles for the development of inclusive education (17):

- scientific nature: development of the theoretical and methodological foundations of inclusive education, program-methodical tools, analysis and monitoring of results, assessment of the effectiveness of the technologies used, independent expertise;
- systematic approach: early help - preschool education - general secondary education;
- remedial orientation: modular organization of educational programs, the inclusion of modules from special remedial programs into the basic program of education and mentorship;
- individual approach: the use of personality-oriented and differential approaches;
- family-oriented assistance: psychological and pedagogical assistance of the family, family-oriented psychotherapy, parent-child groups, i.e. active involvement of parents in each stage of the pedagogical process;
- child's independent activity: ensuring the child's independent cognitive activity, namely additionally developing programs (foreign language, clay modeling, drawing, etc.);
- interdisciplinary integration and social partnership: the joint work of a speech therapist, a psychologist, and a defectologist in the preparation or modification of the development program, as well as the joint work of various agencies and social services to optimize the process of educational integration of "special" children.

There are the following types of inclusion in an educational institution:

- combined integration: 1-2 children with a level of development corresponding to the age norm and close to it study in mass classes with an individual approach, while receiving remedial help from specialists;
- partial integration: 1-2 "special" children join mass classes only for part of the day (for example, at school for certain lessons such as design and technology, drawing, singing, and learning about the world; and for half a day in kindergartens);
- temporary integration: all children of a special class are joining with healthy children for various educational activities;
- full integration: a "special" child attends school on a par with his or her peers while receiving specialized assistance in remedial centers.

For the practical implementation of inclusive education, it is necessary to solve problems related not only to the logistics capacity but also to the teachers' unwillingness to carry out their professional activities in the new environment. Therefore, it is necessary to make changes in the process of training future teachers. Each specialist has to have a certain level of inclusive competence in the field of education.

The motivational component of teachers includes personal interest, a positive orientation in the performance of professional activities in the context of the inclusion of children with disabilities.

The cognitive component is defined as the ability to think pedagogically based on the system of knowledge necessary for the implementation of inclusive education.

The reflective component is manifested in the ability to analyze one's own educational, professional activity in the context of inclusive education.

The operational component of future teachers is defined as the ability to perform specific professional tasks in the pedagogical process in the context of inclusion: the use of the approaches of independent and quick resolution of pedagogical problems and the implementation of research activities.

The model of the formation of inclusive competence of future teachers in the process of their professional training is based on the technology of contextual learning, which consists of information-oriented, quasi-professional and activistic stages. The information-oriented stage is aimed at forming a positive motivation for pedagogical activity in the context of inclusion and the acquisition of a knowledge system for its implementation. The quasi-professional stage is the acquisition of practical experience and the analysis of one's own educational and professional activities in the context of inclusive education. The activistic stage is aimed at the further development of the inclusive competence of future teachers and its application in practice. (18)

Teachers are people who meet the needs of students. When training teachers, particular attention should be paid to the socio-psychological aspect of inclusive education since the educational integration of a "special" child makes changes to the social and psychological portrait of a class. In the course of education, various conflict and stressful situations may appear that the teacher must prevent and adequately resolve. At the same time, the teacher needs to solve the problem of self-determination — how to treat a "special" child: as an equal or as a mentally retarded one; to help the child believe in his or her own strength or instill that he or she has a "ceiling" in development. A teacher can do a lot to create positive relationships between children. To do this, it must be remembered that every child is a unique personality, who has own characteristics, with considering which it is possible to provide optimal conditions for learning and adaptation. Efforts are needed to avoid requiring children to use a style optimal for the teacher. Meeting the needs of students is not a mistake. It is a mistake to believe that a teacher should spend more time on one student than on others, so a teacher must be fair to all and think about how knowledge and skills are assimilated. For this, it is necessary to think over and develop certain approaches in order to cope with difficult situations. Children with special needs must be taught at the pace in which they are able to perceive, remember, and demonstrate new information so that they learn what the teacher explained to them. The teacher is not able to force to learn more than children can do. The transition from what one knows to what one does not know should be gradual and the pace of this movement must be coordinated with the individual abilities of a student. (19)

According to the results of foreign studies, it turned out that the main strong feeling of teachers in inclusive education of children with developmental disabilities was fear. Most people are afraid not to cope with it and lose their jobs; they wonder how this situation will affect their career growth. They are afraid of responsibility and cannot fully control the situation. They have a fear to ask for help from others (students, parents, teachers), to admit that they do not have answers to absolutely all questions. In fact, teachers are afraid of facing imperfections since such children have always been thrown to the margins of society and have not been considered its equal members. In the beginning, of course, it will be uncomfortable and painful but the fears will go away. It all depends on the motivation of the teacher. However, some teachers, using the inclusive method, want, on the contrary, to raise their grades and hide or falsify the arising difficulties, indicators, and problems. As a result, the parents of children developing in a typical way express concern about the impact of the presence of the "special" students requiring significant support and attention on their children. World

experience shows that the performance of children developing in a typical way becomes better and higher in inclusive classes than in a simple mass school class. Schools that successfully teach children with special needs are also the best for all other students. With regard to behavior, social development and academic success, especially speaking, the achievements of students of an inclusive school or preschool organization is much higher.

At the moment, there are some barriers to implementing inclusive education:

- lack of flexible educational standards;
- discrepancy between the curriculum, the content of the mass school teaching, and special educational needs of a child;
- lack of special training of the pedagogical staff of an educational institution of a general type, lack of knowledge of the fundamentals of remedial pedagogy and special psychology;
- lack of awareness among teachers of mass schools about the peculiarities of the psychophysical development of children with disabilities, the methods and technology of organizing the educational and remedial process for such children;
- absence of additional tenures for medical workers, deaf-and-dumb educators, speech therapists, and educational psychologists in the job descriptions of educational institutions of general type.

#### 4 Conclusion

Thus, the implementation of inclusive education in modern preschool organizations requires the implementation of a whole system of special work on the formation of preschool children's readiness to adopt a peer with disabilities; on the formation of additional competencies necessary for inclusive education, as well as on equipping preschool institutions with an appropriate logistics capacity (including a lekotek). The compliance with these conditions will allow for the intensive implementation of inclusive education in modern preschools.

In order to realize in practice the idea of introducing a "special" child into society, it is necessary to create an effective system for its rehabilitation. A family that has decided to raise such a child in the family should see models of the life route that the child will follow (preschool, school, then a profession, and what leisure should be for such children). Parents should see the entire perspective of the life path of a "special" child because only with it a chronic social tension is removed from the family.

Instead of the concept of integration, i.e. creating special conditions for children with special needs in the framework of the existing system, without changing the system itself, now greater preference is given to the concept of inclusive education, the main goal of which is to change schools in accordance with the needs of all students. (20)

The "school for all" approach was outlined in the Salamanca Declaration adopted in 1994 by 92 countries. It contains principles, proposals, and promotion of legislative initiatives in the field of inclusive education. Moreover, it is still perhaps the most important fundamental international document on special education.

The Salamanca Declaration defines inclusion as a reform that supports and welcomes the differences and peculiarities of each student. Its goals are to avoid social discrimination resulting from differences in the sex, race, culture, social class, ethnicity, religion, and individual capabilities and abilities. However, this concept has not found the universal application.

In schools around the world, inclusion is often seen exclusively as the education of children with disabilities in general education schools with their peers. (17)

However, the main task is to make all schools and institutions more friendly to children with disabilities. One of the main activities on this path, i.e. the elimination of all kinds of barriers in education, is based on a social approach to disability. (20)

Europe entered an integrative period at the stage of development of the already established and legally enshrined norms of democracy and economic growth.

In the West, there are rich traditions of charity, a wide network of non-state special institutions and financial incentives for philanthropists. Thanks to the policy pursued by the countries via the mass media, the idea of equality of a "special" person with the rest of society has taken root in the public consciousness.

In Kazakhstan, integration is declared as the need for a humane attitude towards people with disabilities.

As part of an inclusive approach, each school or institution even at the stage of planning its activities, educational programs, etc. takes into account the expected individual needs of all students. The Disability Discrimination Act and other legislative acts in force require this approach from schools. For this purpose, in coordination with the founder and taking into account the interests of parents (legal representatives), compensatory education classes can be opened; education authorities, in coordination with the founder, may open special (remedial) classes for students with developmental disabilities in a general education institution. The transfer of students to special (remedial) classes is conducted by education authorities only with the consent of parents (legal representatives) of students according to the conclusion of a commission consisting of psychologists, medical workers, and teachers.

Schools need to keep records of all children with disabilities, as well as children with special educational needs. This will allow all school employees to know about the individual characteristics of each child, not to treat disabled children with less attention or respect, and to make the necessary adjustments in their work. It will also instill additional confidence in the parents, who will receive all the necessary information, being confident of an adequate and respectful attitude towards their children. (16)

One of the dangers that lie in wait when including a student with developmental problems in a class is the emergence of an atmosphere of condescension towards him or her. Teaching a child with special needs in a regular classroom is not a charity act. He or she studies in it, because the rest of the children study there, because this is the best approach to learning and because this is where children meet each other most often.

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**Primary Paper Section: A**

**Secondary Paper Section: AM, AN, AQ**