TRAINING OF FUTURE TEACHERS FOR WORK WITH CHILDREN UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF PRESCHOOL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

FORMACIÓN DE FUTUROS DOCENTES PARA EL TRABAJO CON NIÑOS EN CONDICIONES DE EDUCACIÓN PREESCOLAR INCLUSIVE

FORMACIÓN DE FUTUROS DOCENTES PARA EL TRABAJO CON NIÑOS EN CONDICIONES DE EDUCACIÓN PREESCOLAR INCLUSIVA

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Abstract: The objective of this study is to identify areas of training of teachers, as well as a set of skills needed to work in inclusive institutions, taking into account the criteria of readiness of teachers. The study involved generalization, abstraction, grouping, and survey methods. Grouping the components of readiness of future teachers for preschool inclusive education allowed to identify several basic components: motivational, cognitive, value-content and operational-activity. Also was identified conceptual criteria for the readiness of future teachers, to assess the importance of each of them through a survey. The results of the study have several limitations, in particular insufficiently covered practical component of training of preschool teachers, as well as the limited number of research methods used in this article.

Keywords: Preschool educational institutions; inclusiveness; inclusive education; educators; teachers.

Resumo: O objetivo deste estudo é identificar áreas de formação de professores, bem como um conjunto de competências necessárias para atuar em instituições inclusivas, tendo em conta os critérios de prontidão de professores. O estudo envolveu métodos de generalização, abstração, agrupamento e levantamento. O agrupamento dos componentes de prontidão dos futuros professores para a educação inclusiva pré-escolar permitiu identificar vários componentes básicos: motivacional, cognitivo, valor-contêudo e operacional-atividade. Também foram identificados critérios conceituais para a prontidão dos futuros professores, para avaliar a importância de cada um deles por meio de uma pesquisa. Os resultados do estudo apresentam

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várias limitações, em particular a componente prática insuficientemente coberta da formação de professores de pré-escola, bem como o número limitado de métodos de investigação utilizados neste artigo.

**Palavras-chave**: Instituciones de educación preescolar; inclusividad; educación inclusiva; educadores; professores.

**Resumen**: El objetivo de este estudio es identificar áreas de formación de profesores, bem como un conjunto de competencias necesarias para actuar en instituciones inclusivas, teniendo en cuenta los criterios de prontidão de profesores. El estudio envolvió métodos de generalización, abstracción, agrupamiento y levantamiento. El agrupamiento de los componentes de prontidão dos futuros profesores para la educación inclusiva preescolar permitió identificar varios componentes básicos: motivacional, cognitivo, valor-conteúdo y operacional-atividade. También fueron identificados criterios conceituales para la prontidão dos futuros profesores, para evaluar la importancia de cada uno de ellos por medio de una pesquisa. Los resultados del estudio presentan varias limitaciones, en particular a componente práctica insuficientemente coberta de la formación de profesores de pré-escola, bem como o número limitado de métodos de investigación utilizados neste artigo.

**Palabras clave**: Instituições de educação pré-escolar; inclusividade; Educação inclusiva; educadores; professores.

1 INTRODUCTION

The modern globalized information society makes new demands on all areas of human humanitarian activity, including on education. The priority value plan of the educational paradigm includes the realization of fundamental human rights and freedoms, ensuring its social security and self-realization. A separate important issue that needs to be addressed is the education, socialization and self-realization of young people with disabilities. There were ongoing discussions about segregated, integrated and inclusive education for several decades; and since the early 1970’s there has been a consistent restructuring of vocational education based on an inclusive paradigm and competence approach (Kirillova & Faizrakhmanova, 2016). In this complex process, a special place belongs to the problem of reviewing the training of teachers of preschool educational organizations in an inclusive educational environment, as the development of inclusion and inclusive education is one of the urgent problems of our time.

They increasingly include the term “inclusive education” in the education system, which means the education of children with special needs in comprehensive schools (preschools), the exclusion of discrimination and the provision of favourable conditions for each child. The effectiveness of implementing an inclusive approach in the educational system depends primarily on the training of qualified teachers who are aware of the social significance of their profession, have high motivation to perform professional activities, know the age and psychological characteristics of pupils with various pathologies, are able to implement constructive pedagogical interaction between all subjects of the educational environment (Florian L., Beaton M., 2018; Palla L., 2017; Sayyed Ali Samadi, McConkey R., 2018).

Preschool education is an integrated process aimed at ensuring the comprehensive development of a preschool child in accordance with his inclinations, aptitudes, abilities, individual, mental and physical features, cultural needs; formation of moral norms in a preschool child, the acquisition of life/social experience (Nizet, I. & Meyer, F., 2015). The basic stages of physical, mental and social development of a child’s personality are the baby age, early age, preschool age. The concept of “inclusion” is one that provides certain opportunities in the education of all children, which implements an inclusive approach, through which all children with different needs have the same opportunities for learning and education (Florian L., 2015).
Most scholars define inclusive education as a system of educational services based on the principle of ensuring the basic right of children to education and the right to study at the place of residence, providing education for children with special needs in specially designed institutions (Dias P. C., 2015; Florian L., 2015). According to Göransson, K., & Nilholm (2014), inclusive education, involves the safety of a child with psychophysical development in a mass preschool group, the acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities together with healthy children; social, medical and pedagogical support of children; providing appropriate conditions for training, education, correctional and compensatory work (material, technical, personnel, financial support).

Sharma, U., Shaukat, S., & Furlonger, B. (2015) emphasize that the system of inclusive education creates an inclusive educational environment free of stigma and segregation, which is extremely important for children with special educational needs who stay and receive education in it. The fundamental principle of inclusive education is the principle of tolerance for the individual features of other children, but in the educational system of different countries around the world, this understanding did not form immediately. Inclusive education in America and Europe has a long-standing practice of implementation, they regard it as empowering children with special educational needs to be included in the educational and national space (Florian L., 2015).

Foreign scholars studied the willingness of teachers to work with children with special educational needs (SEN) mainly to identify teachers’ attitudes to inclusive education and the degree of its impact on social interaction of pupils with special needs at school (Kirillova & Faizrakhmanova, 2016; Spratt G., 2015). The data obtained in the course of these studies generally indicate a negative attitude of comprehensive school teachers to inclusive education, which is largely due to lack of knowledge about the individual features of teachers of children with special educational needs and lack of special skills for their training.

In the modern psychological and pedagogical literature, the problem of training teachers for work with children with special educational needs is revealed as multifaceted issue evolving over time and, therefore, requires constant attention of theorists and practitioners. Thus, inclusive education in its modern sense formed only at the end of the 20th century. According to the results of the review of modern research on inclusive education of preschool children, the researchers identify the following contradictions (Gauvreau A. N., 2019; Sants, A. P., & Ignatovich, E., 2015):

1) between the modern requirements of society to an effective system of inclusive education and insufficient development of its theoretical and methodological justification, as well as scientific and methodological support (Biktagirova G. F., 2016);

2) between the importance of social formation of a preschooler’s personality in the system of inclusive education and the lack of appropriate methods of organizing this process (Flumerfelt, S. & Green, G., 2013; Sadovaya, V. V., Khakhlova, O. N. & Reznikov, A. A., 2015);

3) between the importance of training professionals to help children with peculiar psychophysical development and their families and the inconsistency of the true state of mental and psychological pedagogical readiness of preschool teachers for effective practical implementation of this process with this provision (Sukhoterina, 2013).

Despite the significant importance of the development of inclusive education, there are still several significant barriers to development that foreign scholars emphasize:

1. Barriers that arise at the macrolevel. The main barriers at this level to the development of educational inclusion are the imperfection of the legal framework regarding children with special educational needs; non-compliance with international standards. In many countries there is also a lack of a law on special education, which would clearly determine the legal framework of the institution of inclusive education and
the principles of creating economic conditions for the implementation of inclusive approaches in the education of people with special educational needs (Smantser & Ignatovich, 2015).

2. Mesolevel barriers. At this level, the main barriers to the development of inclusion in education are cultural stereotypes about people with disabilities; unreadiness of the formed education system to meet the individual needs of each child; lack of special educational standards and varied programs for teaching people with special educational needs; lack of a legally enshrined opportunity to teach “special” pupils according to an individual plan, which allows using a standard educational program adapted to the pupil’s special educational needs and applying a competency-based approach to learning; lack of programs to support people with disabilities who study in a comprehensive school (Ketrish, E. V., Dorozhkina, E. M., Permyakov, O. M., Tretyakova N. V., Andryukhina, T. V., & Mantulenko, V. V., 2016).

3. Microlevel barriers. This level is associated with the activities of specific organizations and specialists, individuals. For inclusive education, this is the level of psychological acceptance by teachers of educational organizations of the very possibility of joint learning of people with disabilities, their professional attitudes, stereotypes and actions towards pupils with disabilities (Gauvreau A. N., 2019).

The problems of implementing inclusive education should also include the low level of motivation to implement inclusive education (Movkebaieva, Oralkanova & Uaidullakyzy, 2013). In personal orientations and values, educators noted the need for positive change in the world through kindness, mutual friendship and tolerance, focus on communication and interaction with all people regardless of gender, race, social class, and different physical defects etc., as well as the need to master the theory and methods of inclusive education. There is mainly a reproductive level of theoretical knowledge about the legal acts governing inclusive education, psychological and pedagogical patterns and features of age and personal development of children with special educational needs, methods of design, adjustment, forecasting and evaluation of inclusive education. At the lower, adaptive level, teachers develop basic technological knowledge: forms, technologies, methods, tools, and conditions of effective inclusive education of children (Sharma, Shaukat & Furlonger, 2015).

Investigating the problem of teachers’ readiness for work in inclusive education (Florian L., 2015; Göransson, K., & Nilholm, C., 2014), they focus on expanding functions of teachers and intensification of work in the field of education, which act as barriers to professional development of teachers. There is no doubt that overcoming the wary or negative attitude of teachers to inclusion requires a systematic approach to designing the educational environment at different levels, structuring the functionality of the support of pupils with disabilities. The condition is the organization of a team of specialists, because training of a single teacher for work with any category of children with certain special educational needs can only be indicative, which involves the formation of a general idea of inclusive education, correctional pedagogy and special psychology and, which is no less important — the establishment of a tolerant attitude towards children with different developmental disabilities (pupils with different levels of performance, preparedness and socialization).

The study attempted to resolve the contradictions that arise due to insufficient development of the system of training of future teachers for professional activities in preschools in an inclusive educational environment. Thus, this study intended to identify set of skills needed to work in inclusive institutions, taking into account the criteria of readiness of teachers.
2 METHODS AND MATERIALS

Many scholars and researchers deal with issues of inclusive education of children with special needs, training of teachers for work under the conditions of inclusive education with children with different disabilities. According to some reviews, many educators note their unwillingness to work in an inclusive environment due to lack of interest, fear of a new form of work and high responsibility. During the research, scientists used mainly general scientific methods of cognition. The most common methods are the method of abstraction and grouping. This research involved these methods in the study and grouping of skills of teachers in preschools. The method of generalization is also applied to the interpretation of survey results and the formation of components of the teachers’ readiness for work with children under the conditions of inclusive education.

The most common research method, and the most appropriate in case of inclusive education, is a survey. In this regard, we conducted a survey of teachers of preschool, secondary and higher educational institutions in order to assess the readiness of students and teachers to work with children with developmental disorders. According to the results of the survey, we identified key criteria that determine the degree of training of teachers for work in the field of inclusive education.

There were two successive stages of data collection. The first stage included structured in-depth interviews with participants. During the interviews, all components of the curriculum were taken into account (practical experience, reflection on experience, training courses and seminars). Then we analysed the interview and determined the main criteria. In the second stage, we asked respondents to reflect on the conclusions and results of the analysis. We selected students of pedagogical college and university, as well as employees of three preschool educational institutions (the representative sample n=150 people) for the study. We used a quantitative method of data collection. Participants’ responses were assessed on a 5-point scale according to the methodology used by Smantser and Ignatovich (2015) in their studies.

We calculated the representativeness error using next formula:

\[ \sqrt{0.5 \times 0.5 \times \frac{1}{N}} \times 200 \]

N – sample size

Was selected nine criteria of teacher readiness for inclusive pedagogical practice for evaluation using a five-point scale:

- 5 points — very important;
- 4 points — more important than unimportant;
- 3 points — more unimportant than important;
- 2 points — it doesn’t matter;
- 1 point — difficult to answer.

We asked each of the respondents about the attitude to a particular criterion and its importance in the formation of working skills in the implementation of the concept of inclusive education. We applied a one-dimensional distribution analysis for each questionnaire question. The one-dimensional distribution of answers to questions with nominal and ordinal scales is shown as a table with answer options and the shares
of respondents who chose each of the options. The SPSS program was used for data processing, this made possible to apply basic methods of statistical analysis to primary sociological information.

RESULTS

Inclusion in public relations and inclusion in education are currently being implemented as the leading ideology of treatment of people with disabilities in our country. Training teachers for inclusive education is one of the conditions for the implementation of inclusion itself. Now, the solution of this issue is difficult both organizationally and methodologically, because specialists who provide the educational process often do not understand the specifics of working with people with disabilities, do not know how to adequately assess the possible difficulties in implementing inclusive education, the level of their readiness to overcome them, which can significantly not only harm the further socialization of those children, but also pose a significant threat to their safety.

For the practical implementation of inclusive education, it is necessary to solve a number of problems related not only to the material base, but also to different opinions of members of society, and above all the unwillingness of teachers to carry out their professional activities in the new environment. Given that a child with disabilities has the right to freely choose an educational institution, every teacher must have a certain set of competencies needed to work in an inclusive educational environment. Criteria for assessing the level of development of inclusive competence of future teachers include (Hodkinson, 2010): motivational — the level of development of a set of motives adequate to the goals and objectives of inclusive education; cognitive — the system of knowledge necessary for the implementation of inclusive education, as well as the experience of cognitive activity; operational — acquired ways and experience of solving specific professional tasks of education and development of children in the process of inclusive education; reflexive — the ability to reflect cognitive, quasi-professional (simulation, role play), as well as professional activities in an inclusive learning environment.

The training of highly qualified specialists capable of working in a changed environment involves the use of a model of forming the readiness of future educators for work under the conditions of inclusive education, built on the basis of systemic, competency-based, activity and axiological approaches. It is very important to take into account the organizational and pedagogical conditions that ensure the formation of such readiness (Florian L. 2015). Teachers are full participants in the implementation of the “content of the correctional program”. At the same time, they must interact with other specialists of the preschool educational institution in the development and implementation of corrective measures. Therefore, future specialists of inclusive preschool education should:

- take part in carrying out psychological, medical and pedagogical inspection;
- on the basis of the identified special educational needs of children, provide comprehensive assistance to children with special educational needs, including their integration into the preschool educational institution;
- create special educational conditions (barrier-free environment of their life, use of special educational programs and methods of education and development, special methodical manuals and didactic materials, technical means of teaching, providing assistance and necessary help to children, delivering group and individual correctional classes) during the implementation of different types of children’s activities, regime issues, independent activities and interaction with families;
- in accordance with the recommendations of the psychological, medical, and pedagogical commission, correct mental and physical deficiencies in the assimilation of the educational program of the preschool educational institution;
- at the end of the school year, the teacher shall participate in preparing a description of each pupil of the group and an analytical report based on the results of correctional and pedagogical work.

But at the same time, we specify a number of features of realization of professional activity of teachers in groups of the combined orientation. In this regard, the future specialist should be able to (Ketrish et al., 2016):

- carry out the planning coordinated with the teacher-defectologist and other specialists, and the organization of direct educational activity with all group of children;
- adhere to the continuity of work with other specialists in the implementation of an individual program of work with children with special educational needs;
- provide an individual approach to pupils with disabilities, taking into account the recommendations of specialists;
- work with parents of children in the group on raising a child in the family;
- keep the necessary documentation.

Thus, based on the study of research in the field of inclusive education, we identified special professional competencies of the teacher, which are necessary for the implementation of professional activities under the conditions of preschool inclusive education:

1. Competence in assessing the peculiarities of the development of the educational program by children, for the timely identification of children with special educational needs.

2. Competence in creating the conditions necessary for the maximum realization of the educational potential of children with special educational needs.

3. Competence in interaction with all participants in the educational process, necessary for inclusion in a comprehensive psychological pedagogical, correctional and developmental work with children who need an individual approach to teaching and education;

4. Competence in creating conditions that protect the physical and mental health of children and promotes the socialization and personal growth of both children with special educational needs and their peers with normal development.

In pedagogical science has the concept of readiness for activity, where readiness is presented as an integrated professionally important quality of personality. Readiness for teaching includes the following components (Sayyed Ali Samadi, McConkey R., 2018): motivational-positive attitude and interest in the profession; the desire to succeed and show themselves at their best; orientational — knowledge and ideas about the specifics and conditions of professional activity, the requirements for the specialist’s personality; operational (cognitive) — possession of knowledge, skills, abilities, methods and techniques of professional activity, understanding of professional tasks, assessment of their significance; emotional-volitional-self-control — the ability to manage their professional actions; a sense of professional honour and responsibility; evaluational — self-assessment and reflection of professional training.

It is advisable to distinguish between types of readiness for inclusive education. They define psychological readiness for professional activity as a set of mental formations: ideas and concepts, ways of thinking and skills, motivations, personality traits that provide motivational and content readiness and ability of the subject to carry out professional activities. In addition, psychological readiness is characterized by personal and pedagogical orientation, which is manifested in the understanding and acceptance of themselves and others as a unique entity, as well as motivational and value attitude to the learning process, which realizes the subject-subject relations.
As for the professional readiness of the teacher for inclusive practice in the educational environment, it can include the level of his knowledge and professionalism, which allows making optimal decisions in a particular pedagogical situation. Professional readiness can be represented by three groups of special competencies: organizational and managerial, educational and methodical. In each group, we can distinguish a list of professionally important qualities that will have a significant impact on the effectiveness of professional activities. Professional readiness is the result of professional training, personality quality, and also acts as a regulator of professional success.

It is reasonable to divide the components of the teacher’s readiness for work with children in an inclusive educational environment into four basic groups (Figure 1), which reflect the full range of skills necessary for the effective integration of the teacher into an inclusive environment.

| Motivational                 | Cognitive                          |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| expresses a conscious teacher’s attitude to the need and conditions of inclusive education, indicates the existing quality of personality, manifested in the interest in the activity, the desire to succeed, shows the specialist’s willingness to update and provide the necessary conditions for learning in a given mode and successfully perform the task. | Integrates and fixes the necessary knowledge about the main point of the inclusive education and the main variants of its application (researching, observing, creative and projecting activity), pedagogical tools to organize learning process even beyond the |

| Value-content | Operational-activity |
|---------------|----------------------|
| reflects the teacher’s attitude to the process, content and result of professional activities carried out in different types of training, reflects the personal significance of the activities | is based on a set of acquired skills in the organization of educational activities within integrated learning, reflects the experience that ensure the implementation of the necessary activities in various standard and unconventional situations of educational practice |

**Figure 1**

Components of the teacher’s readiness for work with children in an inclusive educational environment

Thus, a combination of factors that describe different levels and aspects of readiness determines the state of readiness, and exacerbate if the teacher himself is an active subject in the learning process and becomes a researcher. In continuation of this statement, it seems appropriate to support the theoretical basis of experimental research through the survey of future teachers and those who already have experience working with children with special needs. Table 1, 2 presents the results of the survey.
**Table 1:** The dynamics of the survey of preschool teachers (practicing and future) of educational institutions

| Item No. | Self-assessment criteria | 1 point — difficult to answer | 2 points — doesn’t matter | 3 points — more unimportant than important | 4 points — more important than unimportant | 5 points — very important |
|----------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1        | awareness of the need for innovation | 7/11                          | 20/13                    | 23/15                                      | 35/23                                    | 61/41                    |
| 2        | confidence that the adopted innovation will bring a positive result | 9/6                           | 14/9                     | 18/12                                      | 41/27                                    | 68/45                    |
| 3        | consistency of personal goals with innovation | 10/7                          | 25/17                    | 21/14                                      | 34/23                                    | 60/40                    |
| 4        | readiness to overcome failures | 11/7                          | 7/5                      | 24/16                                      | 42/28                                    | 66/44                    |
| 5        | positive assessment of their previous experience in the field of inclusive activities | 13/9                          | 9/6                      | 26/17                                      | 39/26                                    | 63/42                    |
| 6        | ability to professional reflection | 10/7                          | 5/3                      | 28/19                                      | 26/17                                    | 81/54                    |
| 7        | availability of the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities | 10/7                          | 13/9                     | 21/14                                      | 30/20                                    | 76/51                    |
| 8        | flexibility of thinking and behaviour depending on the situation | 14/9                          | 15/10                    | 27/18                                      | 39/26                                    | 55/37                    |
| 9        | inclination to creativity and anticipation of the desired pedagogical result at the stage of choosing a strategy of influence | 16/11                         | 19/13                    | 31/21                                      | 33/22                                    | 51/34                    |

**Table 2:** The results of a survey of preschool teachers (practicing and future) of educational institutions

| Item No. | Self-assessment criteria | Pedagogical College Mean | Pedagogical University Mean | Preschool Educational Institution No. 1 Mean | Preschool Educational Institution No. 2 Mean | Preschool Educational Institution No. 3 Mean |
|----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1        | awareness of the need for innovation | 4.1                      | 4.3                         | 4.2                                         | 4.4                                         | 4.3                                         |
| 2        | confidence that the adopted innovation will bring a positive result | 3.1                      | 3.1                         | 3.1                                         | 4.0                                         | 3.9                                         |
Figure 2 presents the ranking of criteria by importance for teachers according to the results of the study. The most important are: readiness to overcome failures, availability of the necessary knowledge and skills, flexibility of thinking and behaviour depending on the situation, inclination to creativity and the expected desired pedagogical result, as well as awareness of the need for innovation. Thus, we should take into account these criteria when preparing educational materials for the training of future teachers of preschool inclusive institutions, as well as to improve the skills of teachers with experience in ordinary preschool institutions. Another important result is the comparison of results between students of pedagogical educational institutions and teachers of preschool educational institutions. The means differ greatly in the following criteria: positive assessment of their previous experience in the field of inclusive activities, ability to professional reflection, confidence that the adopted innovation will bring a positive result.

We can explain this difference by the fact that it is difficult for students to assess the practical aspects due to lack of work experience. Instead, the current employees of preschool institutions were more meticulous in assessing the proposed criteria, and, therefore, these results are more correct.
The main limitation for this research is the insufficient coverage of the practical component of the training of preschool teachers, as well as the limited number of research methods used in the article.

3 DISCUSSION

Thus, this research was a contribution to the study of the problem of training preschool teachers in the context of implementation of the concept of inclusive education. First of all, the study expanded previous research on the necessary skills and abilities of teachers who will work with children with special needs (Florian L., Beaton M., 2018; Gauvreau A. N., 2019; Nizet, I. & Meyer, F., 2015). The study of teachers’ readiness for inclusive education and work with mixed groups was also continued (Sayyed Ali Samadi, McConkey R., 2018; Smantser, A. P., & Ignatovich, E., 2015). An attempt is made to group the components of the teachers’ readiness to work with children in inclusive education, which are divided into four groups: motivational, cognitive, value-content and operational-activity. Grouping these components can be discussed, since this is only an attempt to generalize them without highlighting the specifics and features of educational institutions. In this direction, it is possible to expand the study by including a larger and wider range of influencing factors. This will allow caregivers to be more prepared to work with children.

In addition to the theoretical substantiation of the study, we strengthened the experimental part, namely a survey on the importance of criteria for teacher readiness for inclusive teaching practice using a five-point scale (Palla L., 2017; Smantser & Ignatovich, 2015). The results indicate the importance of the following criteria: readiness to overcome failures; availability of the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities; flexibility of thinking and behaviour depending on the situation; inclination to creativity and anticipation of the desired pedagogical result at the stage of choosing a strategy of influence; as well as awareness of the need for innovation (Spratt G., 2015). We believe that the results obtained can be further discussed with the inclusion of a wider and more detailed range of criteria and a greater number of respondents. In particular, it is important to take into account previous studies and exclude from the sample educational institutions that already have direct experience and successfully apply educational and methodological support.

In general, this study confirmed the need to take into account the components of readiness for inclusive education in the preparation of teaching materials for future teachers.
4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research gave an idea of the importance of training future teachers for work with children under the conditions of inclusive preschool education.

Thus, the system of professional training of future educators for professional activities in an inclusive educational environment began to form only at the end of the 20th century. An inclusive educational environment as a center of tolerance and respect for “otherness” is especially important for children with special educational needs within preschool educational organizations. The success of inclusion depends on the level of training of teachers who are able to work with children with special educational needs. However, due to the lack of development of this system in scientific and pedagogical research, there is an urgent need for theoretical and methodological improvement of different aspects of professional training of teachers in this professional field.

An important aspect in the training of future specialists is the assessment of the state of readiness, which is determined by a combination of factors that characterize different levels and aspects of readiness, and is exacerbated if the teacher is an active subject of educational process and becomes a researcher. As a result of the research (survey method by the assessment of teachers’ readiness according to 9 criteria), we identified the most important criteria that should be taken into account when preparing curricula in pedagogical educational institutions, namely: readiness to overcome failures, availability of the necessary knowledge and skills, flexibility of thinking and behaviour depending on the situation, inclination to creativity and expected pedagogical result, as well as awareness of the need for innovation. Basically, achieved main purpose of the study, mainly empirical research gave necessary findings which helped to identify main skills that should have teachers who work with children under the conditions.

This study also allows for a broader development of the issues of training different skills that are needed when working with children with special needs.

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