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**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: SOLVING PROBLEMS AND WAYS IN
PRIMORSKY KRAI, RUSSIAN FAR EAST**

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Abstract

The article reveals specific features of introducing inclusive education at the regional level into secondary general education institutions based on the case study of Primorsky Krai, the Russian Far East. The authors have put forward an assumption that to lay foundations of inclusive education properly and to avoid failures during its implementation, it is necessary, already at the regional level, to consider and evaluate all essential and situational contradictions and constraints, risks and resources. Analysis of statutes and regulations, provided for implementation of inclusive education at the regional level, at the country level (the Russian Federation), as well as at the level of the region under study, has shown that inclusive trends have rooted themselves in domestic education and have already gained the status of official government policy. Moreover, when analyzing practical aspects of inclusive education, the authors have faced discrepancies between theory and its practical implementation, which is a problem of Primorsky Krai and each region of the Russian Federation taken separately. The authors have analyzed legal regulations providing for inclusive education implementation, and current issues hindering such implementation, and eventually have offered their solutions in part of substantiation of the most suitable model under conditions of Primorsky Krai, the Russian Far East. The authors believe that each territory should follow its own way of inclusion development, taking into account its own peculiarities, opportunities, economic factor of each region taken separately, combining certain elements of already existing models and approaches, weighing their pros and cons, advantages and disadvantages.

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Keywords: Inclusive education, inclusive education models, children with special needs, education for special children, inclusive education principles, nosological groups.



1. Introduction

Presently 4.5% of children living in Russia belong to the category of people with limited health abilities and are in need of such kind of education that meets their special education needs.

Gaining from the global experience (Van der Bij, Geijsel, Garst, Ten Dam, 2016; Emam, 2016; Futaba, 2017; Carrington, Pillay, Tones, 2017; Suc, Bukovec, Karpljuk, 2017) and already available Russian experience (Alekhina, 2016; Karpushkina, 2017; Osmuk, Degtyaryova, Zhdanova, 2017), inclusive education may and should become this kind of education. It is inclusive education that is such kind of organization of the education process, in which all children, regardless of their physical, psychic, intellectual, cultural and ethnical, language and other special features, are included in the general comprehensive education system and are educated next to the place of their living together with their peers without any disability in the same general comprehensive education school, where their special education needs are be taken into consideration and such children are given special care and support.

Inclusive education in the Russian Federation is viewed as a new perspective strategic direction of education policy and practices, which significantly concerns the fundamentals of general comprehensive education. Therefore, at the stage of planning an inclusive education process in the general comprehensive education institution, it is necessary to review and to evaluate essential and situational contradictions and constraints of this process, risks and resources so that to lay the foundation for genuinely efficient inclusive education and to avoid imbalances and failures on the way of their implementation.

2. Problem Statement

In order to rightfully approach the understanding of problems of inclusive education at the regional level, it is necessary, first of all, to analyze the legal regulations providing implementation of inclusive education in Primorsky Krai in the Russian Far East.

International education in the area of granting the rights to receive education to children with limited health abilities has more than half-century history of development. Among the documents related to this subject, one can name the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Standard Rules to Establish Equal Possibilities for People with Disabilities (1993), Salamanca Declaration.

All the above-mentioned documents affix the basic principles of equal rights to education, introduce prohibition on demonstrating any discrimination in the area of education, and declare the right of every person with disability to get education in the general education system.

A lot of attention is paid to education and rearing of children with limited health abilities in the Russian Federation. There was a number of statues and regulations adopted to regulate this process.

Article 43 of the Constitution of the RF declares the right of every person to get an education. The equality principle also includes the prohibition of discrimination based on the health conditions. The government guarantees to its citizens easily accessible and free of charge general and basic professional education.

Besides, the Family Code of the RF affixes the right of the parents to choose the forms of education and educational institutions.

The Russian Federation ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, this way taking obligations to observe the norms set forth by this convention.

Inclusive trends have rooted themselves in the domestic education and gained the status of the official government policy. Article 5, the Federal Law “On Education in the Russian Federation” dated December 29, 2012, No. 273-FZ, grants the right to education, as well as offers the government guarantees for implementing the right to education in the Russian Federation. The Russian Federation guarantees the right of every person to education. With the purpose of implementing the right of each person to education, the federal government authorities, Russian Federation constituent entities government authorities and local government authorities establish prerequisite conditions for getting quality education without discrimination for people with limited health abilities, to correct developmental conditions and social integration anomalies, for offering early correction help based on special pedagogical approaches, as well as languages, methods and ways of communication and conditions most suitable for these persons to enable them to get an education of a certain level and in a certain area, as well as social development of such persons, including, among other, organization of inclusive education for people with limited health abilities.

The federal Law “On Social Security for Disabled People in the Russian Federation” dated November 24, 1995, No. 181-FZ, sets forth the right for all disabled people to get education both in the general education institutions and in the special education institutions in accordance with the individual program of the disabled people rehabilitation.

Article 19 “Education of disabled people” declares the government support for getting education by the disabled people and guarantees establishing the necessary conditions for the disabled people to get such education.

Support of general education, professional education and professional training for disabled people is aimed at their realization of human rights and liberties alongside with other citizens; development of their personality, individual abilities and opportunities; their social integration.

The authorities carry out education management, as well as educational institutions together with the social security authorities provide for getting easily accessible and free of charge education for disabled people, including pre-school, general elementary, basic, intermediate professional education, as well as free of charge tertiary education.

Necessary conditions are created for disabled people to enable them to get education in the institutions, which carry out educational activity in the area of basic comprehensive educational programs, have special environment for the students with the limited health abilities, as well as at the certain institutions, which carry out educational activity under the adapted basic comprehensive educational programs.

The national strategy of activity to pursue the interests of children for 2012-2017 was approved by the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation dated June 1, 2012 No. 761, which describes the measures aimed at providing easily accessible and high quality education, legal affixing of legal mechanisms of implementing the rights of disabled children and children with limited health abilities to

be included in the existing education in environment at the level of pre-school, general and professional education (right for inclusive education).

Decision of the RF Government dated November 17, 2008, No. 1662-r (edited on February 10, 2017), "On the Concept of Long-term Socioeconomic Development of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2020" sets forth development of education in part of creation of educational environment provided for accessibility of high quality education and successful socialization for the persons with limited health abilities.

To support the above-mentioned statutes and regulations, other statutes and regulations of inclusive (integrated) education for disabled children and children with limited health abilities create favorable conditions for training and education of children with limited health abilities in the Russian Federation.

1. Regulation of the RF Government dated February 20, 2006 No. 95 "On the Procedure and Conditions for Admitting the Disabled Person".

2. Order of the Ministry of Labor of Russia dated July 31, 2015 No. 528n "On Approval of the Procedure for Development and Implementation of Individual Program for Rehabilitation and Habilitation of Disabled People, Individual Program for Rehabilitation and Habilitation of Disabled Children issued by the Federal State Institutions of Medical and Social Expertise and Forms Thereof".

3. Order of the Ministry of Labor of Russia dated January 29, 2014 No. 59n "On Approval of Administrative Regulations to Offer the Public Services for Arranging Medical and Social Expertise"

4. Order of the Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation dated December 23, 2009 No. 1013n "On Approval of Classifications and Criteria Used for Medical and Social Expertise of the Citizens by the Federal State Institutions for Medical and Social Expertise".

5. Regulation of the RF Government dated March 12, 1997 No. 288 "On Approval of Standard Provision for Special (Corrective) Educational Institution for the Students and Trainees with the Limited Health Abilities".

6. Regulation of the RF Government dated December 29, 2001 No. 1756-r "On the Concept of Modernization of the Russian Education for the Period up to 2010".

7. Letter of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation dated April 18, 2008 No. AF-150/06 "On Creating Conditions for Getting Education by the Children with Limited Health Abilities and Disabled Children".

8. Letter of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation dated September 20, 2013 No. 1082 "On Approval of Provision on Psychological, Medical and Pedagogical Commission".

9. Letter of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation dated March 27, 2000 No. 27/901-6 "On Psychological, Medical and Pedagogical Concilium of Educational Institution".

10. Letter of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation dated April 18, 2008 No. AF-150/06 "On Creating Conditions for Getting Education by the Children with Limited Health Abilities and Disabled Children"

11. Order of the Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation dated August 14, 2009 No. 593 "On Approval of Unified Classification Reference List of the Duties of

Management, Specialists and Employees”, Section “Qualification Characteristics for Positions of Educational Employees”

Current models for organization of inclusive education of disabled children is based on the local statutes approved by the department of education. They also provide the general provisions, organizational aspects, list of required documents.

In Primorsky Krai, implementation of inclusive education for disabled children, conforming to the Law of Primorsky Krai dated August 13, 2013, No. 243-kz “On Education in Primorsky Krai”, which says that inclusive education means providing equal access to education for all the students taking into consideration their special educational needs and individual opportunities. This is carried out through the following models: full, partial or extracurricular inclusion. In the situation of full inclusion, children with special needs attend general education institutions together with their healthy peers and are educated according to the individual curriculum which may coincide with the curriculum of respective class, and also may take part in the extracurricular activities (attend the hobby groups, hobby clubs, extracurricular general school events). Partial inclusion involves a combination of individual education (at home) and attending general education institution, education according to the individual curriculum, whereas the number of hours and studied disciplines are recommended by Special Commission for Inclusion of Disabled Children to Inclusive or Distant Education under approval of the parents (legal representatives). Attending extracurricular activities (hobby groups, clubs, extracurricular general school events etc.) is possible according to the recommendations of Special Commission. Extracurricular inclusion is such inclusion model where education of disabled children is possible to get only at home, whereas attending hobby groups, hobby clubs and extracurricular general school events at the general education institution is possible only under recommendation of Special Commission and under approval of the parents (legal representatives).

Control over implementation of these provisions is imposed on general education institutions of Primorsky Krai and local government authorities. At the same time, each general education institution has to independently develop the program and provisions, which shall define the procedures of inclusive education organization at the general education institution. Inclusive education, having in mind reforming of educational institutions, shall aim at searching for various pedagogic approaches, which will make it possible to take into account educational needs of children with limited development abilities. In this respect, important mechanisms strengthening inclusive potential of the Russian education should include not only development of special educational programs and education and training methods, special textbooks, learning aids and didactic materials, special technical learning tools for individual and team use, offering services of assistant which renders the necessary technical help to the students, arranging individual and group corrective classes, providing access to the buildings of educational institutions. More than that, change of philosophy of education itself is required.

3. Research Questions

When analyzing the practical aspects of inclusive education, one faces discrepancies between the theory and its practical implementation, and, in the authors’ opinion, this is the problem not only of Primorsky Krai, but also of each region of the Russian Federation separately.

The problem lies in the fact that the Russian region implements the mechanical approach to inclusive education, i.e. so-called formal inclusion, when the children with special needs should be accepted to the general education school, which is in fact not prepared to meet the inclusion requirements. In the average classes, along with children with normal development, there are students with a light and moderate degree of mental impairment, as well as with physical, sensory and complex disorders. Such approach seems ineffective and hazardous, both for the children with special needs and for the normal children, which is totally unacceptable. Every second child with limited health abilities studies individually at home.

Primorsky Krai schools is financed from different budgets: federal, regional and local budgets; besides, there is a special budget item, voluntary sponsorship contributions. So, there is no saying about inadequate financing today, although many directors of education institutions refer to absence of financing as a reason standing behind their problem.

One should also take into account that the major part of schools of the region are facilities built in 1960-1970s, some of them even earlier, therefore, to carry out their modernization within the frames of arranging “accessible environment” is next to impossible; therefore, modernization of education facilities in the architectural respect, according to the reports of the schools administrations, as of September 1, 2017 did not go beyond installing entrance ramps.

Therefore, the problem of accessibility in the architectural respect does exist and it can only be solved by way of constructing new premises, which design projects shall take into account the needs of special children as early as at the construction stage.

Primorsky Krai schools have an average rate of 30-32 children in the class; teachers in such big groups have more problems in paying enough attention to each student, let alone the children with special needs.

It is also important to consider that the general notion of “children with limited health abilities” includes rather a broad group of persons under various nosological categories, such as sight and hearing disorders, mental development impairment, musculoskeletal/mobility disabilities, as a result of infantile cerebral paralysis, limbs amputation, spinal cord functions impairment and so on. Depending on the major defect, the situation with mobility and physic condition of such children varies significantly, which means that the ways, methods and forms of educational activity organization should be also different. Motion, physic, sensory disorders have various reasons behind them, time, a degree, accompanying diseases, secondary disorders, different health status and unimpaired functions, which limit mobility of such children and call for a differentiated and individual approach to selection of ways, methods and forms of education, training, physical, psychic, personal development of this category of children.

Such multifacetedness of information required for professional activity of educators call for versatile theoretical and practical training, knowledge of special medical and biological disciplines, as well as psychological and pedagogical disciplines.

However, the results of sociological survey conducted by the authors show that many respondents, among which were parents and teachers of Ussurrisk and Vladivostok, have wrong or misleading ideas not only about the essence of inclusive education, but also about the specific features of various nosological groups. Moreover, 73% of people questioned were extremely apprehensive to the idea of

inclusive education, and only 15% agreed that special children should study at the same class with the normal children; majority of people surveyed objected to this idea, and 10% were undecided.

4. Purpose of the Study

This does not mean, however, that one should forget the current problems or give up the idea of inclusion, in view of the fact that it is impossible to implement in practice. It is necessary to introduce amendments to the understanding of the essence of changes to the directors, to the professional thinking of educators, and to the attitude of the parents.

One should take into account that the choice and substantiation of inclusion model should consider its accessibility and benefits for the child with special needs, and at the same time does not hinder normal children without any health conditions from getting quality education.

5. Research Methods

Summarizing all the above-said facts, the authors are offering a Regional Model as a model of inclusive education for Primorsky Krai at the Russian Far East, which peculiar features are described below.

1. In each city, it is necessary to define the list of schools to participate in inclusion, taking into account the rate of children with limited health abilities and territorial distribution, the number of such schools should be limited to 2-3. When selecting schools, one should be guided by the following parameters: possibility of architectural modernization, equipment of classes with special aids, methodical aids, technical and didactical learning tools, available facilities for arranging remedial physical training classes, possibility to add to the staff special educators (speech-language pathologist, psychologist, remedial physical training instructor etc.) or their being already available in staff, organization of delivery of children with special needs to and from school.

2. On the basis of general education schools, taking part in inclusion, inclusive education, classes shall be formed: either classes which involve coeducation, with the rate of 20 students and the number of children with limited abilities shall be 2-3 students with the homogeneous disorders, or special classes formed by the children with special needs only, with the rate exceeding 12 students, depending on their nosological group, which involve education based on the individual curriculum including coeducation on the certain disciplines and joint extracurricular events, among them schoolwide events. Tutor support is a must.

It is highly important (according to the Belarus Integration Model) to observe the psychological and pedagogical conditions of integrated education: an individual approach, creating positive emotional background, designing positive experience of social interaction of students. The interaction of general educators (teacher, trainer) and special educators, educators and psychologists, educators and parents as the main actors of integrated learning process is important.

3. Organization of additional training for the educators on the basis of Pedagogical School of the Far East Federal University (FEFU) within the frames of the qualification enhancement programs or additional education programs. One should also note here that the future educators currently studying at

FEFU should have additional medical and pedagogical disciplines added to their curriculum, the task that the professors are currently working upon.

Reviewing the problems of Primorsky Krai in part of inclusive education, one should remind that the Krai territory includes not only urban, but also rural small-number schools in the areas considerably remote from the center, where this problem may be solved introducing a Rural Small School model, where socialization takes place when the small number of students communicating with each other and children with limited health abilities are not set apart from other children; the teacher has enough time both for education activity and for methodological work. These ideas are supported by practices of Kostroma Oblast, where experimental testing of the inclusive model is implemented, which involves educating children with mental impairment on the basis of several rural schools in the situation of small school. The principal element of this model is technology of differentiation of the teaching process within the classroom, full inclusion in the accessible classes and extracurricular events, but the tasks and assessment system take into account peculiarities of cognitive activity, motivation and emotional-volitional aspects of special children.

6. Findings

Development of inclusive education is in fact a rather complicated and multifaceted process (Grobbelaar, Tijssen, Dijksterhuis, 2017), which gives rise to conflicts in the process of practical implementation concerning scientific, methodological and administrative resources (Michalik, 2016; Rakap, 2017).

In spite of certain problems and ambiguous attitude, inclusive education should become an open and up-to-date model for development of new dynamic society and government. It should not serve as a replacement for special education. An integration of inclusive and special education is required (Da Fonte, Barton-Arwood, 2017). Such connection shall make it possible to offer adequate educational services, to make corrections of development disorders and to successfully integrate school leavers in the society.

Hence, the primary task of specialists from various areas of expertise shall become finding the objective solution to existing problems. The most important task of an adult is to stimulate a child with special needs to develop and learn; and to do that, it is necessary to accept him the way he is.

7. Conclusion

One may endlessly analyze experience of foreign countries (Deng, Wang, Guan, Wang, 2017; Altemueller, Lindquist, 2017; Rusznyak, Walton, 2017), debate on this issue, estimating these and those models of inclusive education (Scandinavian model, Swedish Model, American Model, Italian Approach) and the ways of their implementation. But one thing is beyond any doubts: the Russian Federation should follow its own way of inclusion development, taking into account its own peculiarities, opportunities, economic factor of each separate region, combining certain elements of already existing models and approaches, taking into account their pros and cons, advantages and disadvantages.

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