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POST-SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AS AN INDICATOR OF SOCIALIZATION OF CHALLENGED PEOPLE

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Abstract

The article describes the main directions and modern prospects of after-school education, training and employment of students with eyesight disorders according to the analysis of theoretical approaches. This issue forms the basis of socialization of challenged people and is an indicator of the effectiveness of the existing state and public system of social integration of challenged persons. On the basis of the sociocultural analysis, using the example of people with eyesight disorders, we determine the need for after-school support for challenged people as a determining condition for the success of socialization. Moreover, we substantiate the insufficient development at the state level of this very aspect of the pedagogical support of challenged people and prove the need for its theoretical justification and practical development as the final stage of assistance to the indicated contingent of people in several dimensions: in the dimension of humanistic approach defined by state policy as leading in relation to challenged people; in methodological dimension as determining the development of the concept of public relations to the indicated issue; in psychological and pedagogical dimension as the main practical aspect of work with the challenged people. The presented data indicate that such a multidimensional approach allows considering the process of the creation of psychological and pedagogical support for people with eyesight disorders at after-school stage as a prerequisite for the implementation of state policy regarding the education of challenged people. The implementation of this approach is achieved by its consideration and development at theoretical, methodological and practical levels.

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Keywords: Follow-up, post-secondary education, people with eyesight disorders, employment, vocational education.



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1. Introduction

The changes in the consciousness of modern society started in the end of the twentieth century, and their consolidation in a number of basic federal documents (Constitution of the Russian Federation, “Law on Education in the Russian Federation”, Law of the Russian Federation “On Social Protection of Challenged persons in the Russian Federation”, “Concept for the Modernization of Russian Education for the period until 2020”, the orders of the Government of the Russian Federation, etc.) are inextricably linked with the processes of humanization, as a result of which the basic views of mankind on attitudes towards challenged people are radically changed, and the issues of their socialization and professional rehabilitation are becoming one of the prior directions of state policy of the Russian Federation.

It is necessary to note that the existing system of education and training of challenged students requires modernization. Therefore, today the government pays special attention to professional self-determination, training and their employment radically changing the paradigm of interaction between society and challenged people at all age stages. Therefore, science and practice are faced with the question of the development of directions, determining the content, substantiating the optimal organizational forms of post-secondary vocational education for challenged people as a means of their socialization. It is very relevant for people with eyesight disorders who have certain restrictions on the choice of professions, the difficulties of professional self-realization in constantly changing socio-economic relations.

Thus, it is necessary to identify and study the current state of after-school education and employment of people with eyesight disorders as a prerequisite and indicator of their successful socialization, as well as identify existing problems and ways to solve them.

2. Problem Statement

The current stage of development of society is characterized by high mobility of changes in the requirements for the professional potential of a person, which in turn is defined as the basis of social success of a person. This problem is even more relevant when it comes to challenged people, among whom people with eyesight disorders make up a special nosological group: restrictions on the work of the leading, most information-intensive analyzer seriously reduce the possibilities of professional choice, professional self-determination and professional self-realization of a person. According to the identified priority tasks of the modern education system for challenged people, formulated in the project “Strategies for the development of education of challenged children in the Russian Federation for the period until 2030”, one of the leading vectors of national education system is “the development and implementation of effective employment mechanisms for challenged graduates...” (Cantor, 2004, p. 58).

Consequently, the main problem of this study is the justification for the need to develop, at the theoretical and methodological level, after-school support for graduates of educational institutions with eyesight disorders in the process of their professional training, employment and labor activity. At the same time it is necessary to note that the justification of effective support is possible only with an objective assessment of the real situation in the life of people with eyesight disorders, with a detailed analysis of personal follow-up data for blind and visually impaired students at the end of school. Thus, we

can state the need for modern, innovative, effective approaches to support children with eyesight disorders, which will create conditions for professional post-secondary education and the subsequent employment of the graduates of schools for blind and visually impaired (Malkova, 2008).

3. Research Questions

The subject of this study is the justification of post-school professional support for people with eyesight disorders as the main stage of support in order to achieve the main goal of their education – social adaptation, one of the indicators of which is the employment of a challenged person. It is professional occupation that allows a person (especially if he has a disability or some kind of health restrictions) strengthening his material support and social security; realizing own social importance and increasing self-esteem; making sure of a wide range of own capabilities and, as a result, of the formation of self-conscious content “I am like any other human” (very attractive for challenged people).

4. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to identify the totality of the main problems of post-secondary education and employment of blind and visually impaired persons and substantiate the need to create a system supporting this people at the stage of post-secondary education and employment as a prerequisite and indicator of their successful socialization on the basis of the analysis of the follow-up data of graduates of a school for students with eyesight disorders in Chelyabinsk (School No. 127 of Chelyabinsk).

5. Research Methods

In the process of the development of the theoretical foundations of the essence of post-secondary vocational education of persons with eyesight disorders, a methodological basis was determined, which included personal and activity approaches.

The implementation of the personal approach in the framework of our study involves, on the one hand, the consideration of the totality of knowledge of people with eyesight disorders about their psychophysiological (state of vision, health), psychological and personality characteristics, the presence of a certain evaluative attitude to oneself and the ability to control one’s behavior in various social, communicative and professional situations. On the other hand, in the process of providing professional support, a teacher needs to take into account the potential of student’s personality, the development of abilities in activities, as well as existing experience.

The essence of the activity approach (Leontiev, 1975; Rubinstein, 1973; Vygotsky, 1983) is that the formation of social competence during the choice of a profession should be carried out, first of all, with the active participation of a subject itself, as well as through the provision of information on a profession by a teacher.

The implementation of these approaches allows creation of a system of after-school professional support for people with eyesight disorders in accordance with the principle of the correlation of chosen profession with interests, abilities and capabilities of an adolescent in accordance with the real state of his

health and existing restrictions; the promotion of the formation of adolescents' ideas about the prospects of self-realization in future professional activities.

The achievement of the main purpose of the study was reasoned by the use of a set of adequate and highly informative research methods – the method of analysis of the obtained data: a retrospective analysis of scientific and periodical literature, content analysis of materials of scientific events at various levels from international to regional (scientific and practical conferences, symposia and meetings on the research problem), the methods of primary mathematical processing; free description method; diagnostic methods of data collection: conversation, questionnaires, interviews.

People with eyesight disorders are a peculiar, but a rather small category of challenged people compared to other nosological groups, so the data obtained is the result of the analysis of the follow-up of graduates of a special (correctional) school over the past few years.

The analysis of the follow-up of graduates with eyesight disorders allows identifying the main trends, problems and positive experience of after-school support and professional occupation for blind and visually impaired, which creates the basis for the solution of this problem at the theoretical and practical levels (Zarubina, 2006).

6. Findings

Summarizing the results of theoretical analysis and empirical research of the current state of the problem of post-secondary vocational education and the subsequent employment of challenged people, the following main conclusions can be drawn in several aspects:

In the framework of the first aspect, on the basis of the analysis of the main and chronologically last documents, we revealed that in the 21st century the development of the issue of the preparation of the visually impaired students for independent living is traditionally one of the promising and priority areas of theoretical research and practical development in the field of tiflopedagogics (pedagogy for blind and visually impaired). Under the conditions of modern cultural, socio-political and economic changes, the prevailing traditional views and approaches require a revision and a new understanding.

1. The mission of general secondary education is “to contribute to the formation of a socially responsible, critically thinking person, member of civil society, a person capable of adequate goal-setting and choice in the rapidly changing socio-cultural life, recognizing education as a universal value and ready to continue throughout life.

2. Post-secondary vocational education and the subsequent employment of the blind and visually impaired people is considered as an option for the implementation of the basic rights and freedoms of challenged persons.

3. Regular and mobile documentary support for post-secondary vocational education and subsequent employment of blind and visually impaired students is necessary, taking into account “the adequacy of the dynamics of social, economic and political changes in the life of the country”.

In the framework of the second aspect, based on the analysis of the main theoretical approaches to the study of the problems of post-secondary vocational education and the employment of people with visual impairments, we found that the modern education system for challenged people is characterized by the need to modernize it through the creation of an after-school support system. Indeed, nowadays in the

process of training blind and visually impaired students, the stages of preschool (Druzhinina & Osipova, 2017; Plaksina, 2004) and school (Ermakov, 2002; Lapshina, 2016; Litvak, 1998) education are quite theoretically developed and tested in a wide long practice. At the same time, at each of these stages, the specific tasks of preparation for professional work, corresponding to age, are solved and career guidance work is carried out. However, at the end of school, this work at the system level does not work today. The post-secondary vocational education system for people with visual impairments developed in the country during the Soviet period, in the conditions of changing economic relations, does not fully meet the demands of our time.

Despite the fact that people with eyesight disorder during the period of post-secondary vocational education can undergo the testing procedure necessary to determine inclinations in the professional services of regional employment centers, receive psychological assistance in professional self-determination on the basis of the profession chart, continue vocational education in secondary schools and higher education institutions, boys and girls of this category do not always find personal meaning in professional (labor) activities (Belyavsky & Solovieva, 2016; Plaksina, 2004; Zarubina, 2006).

On the basis of the above mentioned aspects, we state the need to develop a stage of post-secondary vocational education in the modern educational system of people with visual impairments.

1. It is necessary to develop the concept of a modern system of preparation for professional work with the subsequent employment of challenged people in general and people with visual impairments in particular.

2. This concept should have a level-based organization and contain the stages of pre-school, school and after-school preparation for professional work.

3. In conditions of predominantly inclusive education for challenged children, the post-secondary stage of preparation for professional work should be considered as the main stage in the whole system, as the final stage of preparation for an independent life of a challenged person.

4. The employment of challenged people and their stable subsequent independent work should be considered as one of the main indicators of the effectiveness of the entire system of preparation of challenged people for professional work.

In the third aspect, based on the analysis of the history of 26 graduates of a special (correctional) school for blind and visually impaired students in Chelyabinsk, we have identified the current state of post-school adaptation of people with visual impairments. The obtained results indicate the mixed results of professional employment of the studied contingent of individuals – both positive and disturbing trends were identified. As positive facts, the following should be noted:

1. The post-secondary education of people with visual impairments is quite diverse: graduates continue their education both at the level of secondary vocational and higher education. Moreover, the number of applicants and successfully mastering both of these levels of education in this study is exactly the same – 26.9 % each (7 people of each).

2. The graduates, currently university students are studying and have previously received higher education in three different (leading!) Universities of the city – Ural State University of Physical Culture, Chelyabinsk State University and South Ural State Humanitarian Pedagogical University.

3. Students and graduates with visual impairments with secondary vocational education are also diverse in their choice. They choose college of culture, teacher training college, building college and multidisciplinary college “Komintent” – one of the most prestigious institutions of secondary vocational education in Chelyabinsk.

4. The choice of profiles of higher and secondary vocational education is quite diverse; there are both classical ones – a teacher, a psychologist, a director, and modern ones – a manager.

5. It is necessary to note that among the professions chosen there are those that are on the list of professions for people with visual impairments – a massage therapist, a music teacher, and those that are not in this list – a manager, a psychologist. This may indicate that graduates with visual impairments are not afraid of being not competitively capable of entering post-secondary vocational institutions, while receiving vocational education and subsequent employment.

6. All the participants of this study who started their post-secondary higher / secondary vocational education completed it and received a document of the established form.

7. Conclusion

Nowadays, at the stage of socio-economic and national political transformations of society and the modernization of education system, the problems of awareness of new values and goals of the education of challenged people, including those with visual impairments, are becoming increasingly relevant. The current stage of its development in our country is defined by specialists as a transitional one, which includes not only the improvement of the existing system of supporting people with visual impairments, but also the search for the ways to move it to a higher, qualitatively different level, associated with the inclusion of such people in the educational space at preschool stage. The post-secondary stage is considered as indicative in the work of the whole system.

As a result of the analytical study, we identified the need to solve the problem of post-secondary education and preparation for professional occupation of people with visual impairments in three aspects: humanistic, methodological and psychological and pedagogical. Such an approach allows not only substantiating the relevance of the problem, but also solving it in accordance with the requirements of modern social reality.

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