

Education for Parents with Disabled Children: How to Participate in Inclusive Education Support

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ABSTRACT

Timeliness of the problem stated in the following article is determined by the fact that the parents who give their disabled children inclusive education should not only be highly-competent for supporting, but they should be ready to change their way of thinking concerning active interaction with teachers and immediate help to the child with some problems occurring in the process of education. Aim of the article is to form certain training models for parents bringing up a disabled child; these models are meant to prepare parents for participation in the process of inclusive education for child with disability. Main research method for this problem was modeling, which let us see the problem as an aim-targeted and well-organized process of knowledge and parental skills enhancement, that are necessary for effective supporting of the disabled child with his/her life and education. Structure of the presented life and education support training model for parents with disabled children includes purposeful, methodological, informative and effective components. The model is targeted at giving parents new knowledge about inclusive education for children with disability and at improving life and educational support skills. Teaching parents in accordance with this program is the main condition for improving the quality of educational and social inclusion of disabled children. The information given in the article might be of practical use for specialists and teachers from educational organizations, who implement educational inclusion by means of parents and family's potential in disabled education for disabled children; for specialists from inclusion education resource centers as a part of educational support trainings for parents with disabled children.

KEYWORDS

Disabled child, child with disability, inclusive education, social inclusion, educational inclusion, disabled child's educational route

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Introduction

Inclusive education for disabled children was codified in the Russian Federation by the Federal Law "on Education" in 2012 and now it is developing

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rapidly. Each year the number of educational organizations, that create special conditions for educating children with special educational needs increases and The RF statistics data only proves that fact. According to official data from the Department for Education and Science of the RF today 6.5% of educational organizations have already created special conditions for disabled children. Implementation of the state-run program “Dostupnaya sreda” 2011-2015 also conducted increasing in the number of such organizations, and in 2016 the program was prolonged till 2020. The prospect researchers, who were the first to introduce inclusive education to the Russian Federation, now understand that forced increasing of the number of mass schools may have a negative effect firstly on disabled children. Some regions of Russia implement inclusive education in the following way – transfer “special” children to the regular school (Alekhina, 2015).

Mechanical transfer of disabled children to common schools is ineffective and dangerous both for children and the idea of inclusion, though its effectiveness was proved worldwide (Alekhina, 2015). Inclusive education needs all the participants of the educational process, especially teachers and parents of the disabled child to be prepared thoroughly (Saitgalieva, 2013). Family of a disabled child is the strongest resource in his/her educational support. But it's a hard task for parents because they haven't developed their attitude to inclusive education and they lack necessary knowledge for supporting.

Parents of disabled children have developed their attitude to the participation in the education of their own children on the basis of common for Russia tendencies of segregation and isolation. Special boarding schools, where they had special people for everything and parents were not allowed to take part in the educational process were meant to give education to disabled children (Saitgaleeva & Khusnutdinova, 2013).

Parents' participation in educational support for a disabled child demands not only be highly-competent for supporting, but be ready to change the way of thinking concerning active interaction with teachers and immediate help to the child with some problems occurring in the process of education. All this necessitates a research of the following problem as an aim-targeted and well-organized process, which is very important for child's effective adaptation to the educational environment.

Materials and Methods

Following methods were used for the research: parents' survey (composed a special questionnaire), given material analysis, preplanning, facts and concepts systematization and summarizing, modeling, projection, expert evaluation, analysis of the received research data, studying and summarizing of the data received after parents' support trainings for disabled children transferred to a regular school, diagnostic technique and educational experiment.

Experimental basis of the research

All the experiments were carried out within social organizations: regional social organization Mother's council “Materinskoe serdtse”, independent noncommercial supporting organization for children and adults with autism spectrum disorders “RASSVET”, regional social organization “Organization of parents with Down's syndrome children “SoDeistvie” of the Republic of Bashkortostan”, Bashkir association of parents of disabled children “BARDI”, independent noncommercial organization “the Republican center of Adaptive Riding for disabled children”, etc.

Stages of research

The research had three stages:

- stage one – preparation – present-state analysis of the research problem in the academic literature and praxis; research methodological program set up;
- stage two – main stage – working out and implementing of the educational program for training parents to support the child, who studies in the conditions of inclusive education; the training efficacy verification tests were carried out;
- stage three – final stage – systematization, reasoning and summarizing of the research results; specification of theoretical conclusions; processing and arrangement of the received research data.

Structure and program of training

The established training program for parents is meant for changing their attitude to the inclusive education for disabled children, it includes purposeful (purposes, tasks, aimed at accepting the idea of inclusive education); methodological (approaches and principles of co-education for children with special educational needs); informative (disciplines, aimed at forming skills needed to support the child in case of any problems occurring in the course of inclusive education) and effective components (criteria and showings of the skill-levels necessary for educational support). The program is targeted at giving parents new knowledge about inclusive education for children with disability and at improving life and educational support skills. Teaching parents in accordance with this program is the main condition for improving the quality of educational and social inclusion of disabled children.

Training program implementation stages

The Program establishment and its implementation assumed two stages of experimental work:

- knowledge level testing for parents to find out what they know about inclusive education and the right of the child for education. During this stage parents showed competencies, necessary for further improving;
- establishment and implementation of the parent training program “Tutoring support for disabled children in the inclusive education”. During this stage we studied parents’ competency levels before and after the above-mentioned trainings.

Ascertaining stage

During the ascertaining stage parents (198), members of social organizations of parents with disabled child were tested for the following knowledge: medical, psycho-pedagogical and knowledge in the sphere of social rehabilitation and social inclusion in education supporting for the child, who studies in the conditions of inclusive education. Such tests showed that parents lack biomedical knowledge of derangement, psycho-pedagogical knowledge and they don’t know how to use it to solve a certain problem in the process of education of a disabled child (Table 1).

Table 1. Knowledge-level test results of parents with disabled child, %

Knowledge and skills	Biomedical	Psychological	Pedagogical	Social
Levels				
Low	46,1	58,3	60,1	50,6
Medium	33,5	23,6	30,2	28,5
High	20,4	18,1	9,7	20,9

During this stage we surveyed parents with disabled children to study their attitude to the inclusive education for disabled children, in other words, with their healthy peers. Received data showed that parents' attitude concerning such co-educational opportunities (combining disabled and healthy students in mass schools) was controversial (Table 2).

Table 2. Survey data on “Parents’ attitude to co-education of disabled and healthy children in mass schools”, %

Parents’ attitude to co-education of disabled and healthy children in mass schools	%
Parents’ negative attitude to co-education of disabled children	69,2
The opinion was not set up	10,8
Parents’ clearly positive attitude to co-education of disabled children	20,0

Clearly positive reaction to co-education of disabled and healthy children in mass schools showed those who have higher vocational education – 83.7%, those, who have secondary specialized – 64.1%, and those, who have only secondary general education or incomplete secondary – 50.0% of all surveyed.

Among conditions hindering co-education of disabled and healthy children in mass schools’ parents underlined the following (Table 3).

Table 3. Ranging answers of the surveyed people to the question: “What conditions could hinder co-education of disabled children and their peers in mass schools, how do you think?” %

Conditions hindering co-education of disabled and healthy children in mass schools	%
School teachers’ qualification	29,6
Schools’ lack of specialists necessary for teaching the disabled children	25,0
Lack of understanding from healthy children	23,8
Social stereotypes concerning disabled children	
Lack of necessary physical resources	14,6
Parents’ lack of biomedical and psychopedagogical knowledge of supporting the disabled child in the process of education	56,4

The results of the tests and surveys let us conclude that parents have to acquire necessary knowledge and skills in the spheres of teaching, psychology, social support as well as skills conducting solving problems, that occur in the process of inclusive education of a child.

Forming stage

During the forming stage of the experiment the “Tutoring supporting for disabled children in inclusive education” program for parents was established and implemented. It included curriculum, educational materials, methodological recommendations for parents and specialists’ consults on different disciplines.

Contents of training program for parents with disabled child

The course program for parents “Tutoring supporting for disabled children in inclusive education” consists of four separate parts: part 1 “Biomedical peculiarities of disabled children’s and teenagers’ development and rehabilitation”, part 2 “Psycho-pedagogical distortion of disabled children and teenagers: diagnosing and correction”, part 3 “Psycho-pedagogical education support for disabled children and teenagers”, part 4 “Social rehabilitation and inclusion of disabled children”. Contents of disciplines in the above-mentioned parts are meant for acquiring knowledge in sphere of biomedical peculiarities of disabled children’s development, their medical rehabilitation, psycho-pedagogical tricks of effective help and support to the disabled child in the process of his/her growing-up, development and education, correction in-home classes methods (for instance, speech therapy), acquiring knowledge in working out and correction of education programs for children with disability, including the following level of professional education; knowledge in the sphere of social inclusion of disabled children and skills to implement social rehabilitation and to form social interaction skills in children with disability in the social environment, etc.

Experimental efficacy level verification test of the proposed contents of the parents training in accordance with the program

We assessed parents’ competency level before and after finishing the training course, which let us see the efficacy level of the proposed content of the parents training program (Table 4).

Table 4. Results of parents’ competency level tests before and after training course, %

Levels	Biomedical and social competence parts			
	Biomedical		Social	
	Before	After	Before	After
Low	46,1	21,9	50,6	25,6
Medium	33,5	43,5	28,5	49,9
High	20,4	34,6	20,9	24,5
Levels	Psycho-pedagogical competency parts			
	Psychological		Pedagogical	
	Before	After	Before	After
Low	58,3	22,3	60,1	29,8
Medium	23,6	44,9	30,2	54,6
High	18,1	32,8	9,7	15,6

The data, received as a result of implementation of an established program and educational materials for parents’ education proves the increase of competency levels.

Discussion

Today there are not so many scientific researches on opportunities of parents participating in education support for disabled children in inclusive education. The most outstanding works of all researches on this problem are works by G.R. Anikeeva (2013), O.N. Ertanova (2013), I.U. Makarova (2013), G.G. Saitgaleeva & Z.A. Khusnutdinova (2013), G.G. Saitgaleeva (2015), E.V. Sorokina, O.L. Lekhanova & R.A. Samofal (2014).

Analysis of the accessible scientific works showed that most of them serve as a description or a discussion.

Conclusion

It's stated that the established parents training program with a disabled child gives this category of parents a chance to form and acquire all the necessary knowledge and skills for education and life support of a child. Acquired during trainings competencies let parents consciously and responsibly help the child solve the problem that may occur in the inclusive education process; this provides comfort and effective adaptation of the child with special educational needs to the educational and social environment.

The material might be of scientific and theoretical use for researchers for further analysis of the stated problem; it also might be of practical use for specialists and teachers from educational organizations, who implement educational inclusion by means of parents and family's potential in disabled education for disabled children; for specialists from inclusion education resource centers as a part of educational support trainings for parents with disabled children.

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Disclosure statement

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