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INCLUSIVE AND HETEROGENEOUS CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

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Abstract: The article discusses the pedagogical foundations of effective inclusive and heterogeneous classroom management. It analyzes the importance of taking into account students' individual characteristics and special educational needs. The importance of creating equal educational opportunities for all students in inclusive education is substantiated.

The article also highlights the importance of differentiated instruction, educational adaptation, and psychological and pedagogical support. Particular attention is paid to creating a safe, comfortable, and respectful learning environment in a heterogeneous classroom. The importance of developing students' cooperation, tolerance, and social competencies is emphasized. In addition, the regulatory and legal foundations for the development of inclusive education in Uzbekistan are discussed.

Keywords: inclusive education, inclusion, disabilities, special educational needs, heterogeneous classroom, classroom management, individual approach, differentiated instruction, educational adaptation, cultural diversity, linguistic diversity, social diversity, learning environment, pedagogical support.

For a long time, the prevailing approach in international educational practice was to educate children with special educational needs separately from their peers in special educational institutions. However, the development of humanistic ideas, the concept of human rights, and modern pedagogical approaches led to the formation of a new educational paradigm — inclusive education.

According to the definition established in UNESCO documents, inclusive education is a process of ensuring equal access to quality education for all students regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, cultural, or other characteristics. The main idea of inclusion is not to adapt the child to the existing educational system, but to transform the system itself so that it can meet the educational needs of every student.

Traditionally, inclusive education has mainly been associated with educating children with disabilities or health limitations in mainstream educational institutions. However, modern international approaches interpret inclusion much more broadly. According to UNESCO documents, inclusive education is aimed at meeting the diverse educational needs of all students, expanding their participation in educational, cultural, and institutional life, and eliminating barriers that prevent access to education.

In modern pedagogy, the concept of inclusive education is therefore much broader than the education of children with disabilities or health limitations.

The following groups may be included in the category of students requiring an inclusive approach:

- students with visual, hearing, speech, and musculoskeletal impairments;
- children with autism spectrum disorders;
- students experiencing learning difficulties;
- gifted and highly motivated students;
- migrant children and representatives of linguistic minorities;
- students from socially vulnerable families;
- children experiencing temporary adaptation or learning difficulties;
- representatives of different cultural and ethnic groups.

At the same time, modern pedagogy also regards giftedness as a type of special educational need. A high level of intellectual, creative, or academic development may require special pedagogical conditions, just as health-related limitations do. The lack of appropriate educational opportunities may lead to decreased motivation, loss of interest in learning, and the inability of students to fully realize their potential.

Leading universities around the world, such as Harvard University, University College London, the University of Oxford, and the University of Melbourne, regard inclusion as an integral feature of quality education in the twenty-first century. According to contemporary research, the effectiveness of an educational system is determined not only by the achievements of its highest-performing students but also by its ability to ensure the success of every student.

The development of inclusive education, in turn, has gone through several stages.

1. The first stage

The isolation model was dominant at the first stage. Under this model, children with special educational needs were educated separately from other students in special institutions.

2. The second stage

The integration model emerged at the second stage. Within this approach, a child with developmental characteristics could attend a mainstream school, but the primary responsibility for adaptation was placed on the student. The school environment itself remained largely unchanged.

3. The modern stage

The modern stage is characterized by the transition to an inclusive model. Its fundamental difference is that changes occur not only on the part of the student but also within the educational environment. Curricula, teaching methods, assessment procedures, and the organization of physical spaces are adapted to the diversity of students.

The development of inclusive education has been significantly influenced by international documents, including:

- the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- the UNESCO Salamanca Declaration (1994);
- the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006).

These documents have strengthened worldwide the right of every person to education without discrimination and to participate equally in the educational process alongside other members of society.

Uzbek legislation also protects the rights of people with special educational needs. Many aspects of inclusive education are regulated by the following legal and regulatory documents.

According to Article 41 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Article 5 of the revised Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education," everyone has equal rights to education. Unlike the previous version, the new edition of the Law introduced the concept of inclusive (integrated/adapted) education and designated the Cabinet of Ministers as the authorized body in the field of inclusive education. Therefore, the development of inclusive education in the country is of particular importance.

On May 19, 2020, the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan adopted a new version of the Law "On Education," which introduced the concept of inclusive (adapted) education for the first time. Together with experts, the Association of Persons with Disabilities of Uzbekistan analyzed the compliance of the draft law with the principles of inclusive education.

A resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated October 13, 2020, "On measures to further improve the system of education for children with special educational needs," was also adopted.

The Concept for the Development of Inclusive Education for 2020–2025 and its "Roadmap" were approved. They established target indicators for the development of education for children with special educational needs. The Concept was implemented in two stages. In particular, during 2020–2022:

- the regulatory and legal framework in the field of inclusive education was improved;
- qualified teachers were trained and retrained to work within the system;
- the material and technical infrastructure of institutions implementing inclusive education was strengthened; they were to be equipped with special facilities such as lifting devices, ramps, handrails, and other necessary equipment, as well as relevant literature, methodological manuals, equipment, and materials for vocational training;
- modern information and communication technologies and innovative projects were introduced into the system;
- a positive public environment was created by raising awareness of the right of children with disabilities to education and explaining the essence of inclusive education;
- measures were taken to prevent discrimination and negative attitudes toward such children;

- inclusive education was introduced as a pilot project in selected educational institutions.

On October 12, 2021, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan adopted Resolution No. 638, "On Approval of Regulatory and Legal Documents on the Education of Children with Special Educational Needs." The resolution was developed in accordance with Presidential Resolution No. PQ-4860 of October 13, 2020, "On measures to further improve the system of education for children with special educational needs."

On the basis of this resolution, the Regulation "On the Procedure for Organizing Inclusive Education in General Secondary Educational Institutions" was approved. According to this regulation, inclusive and basic remedial classes are organized in schools where special conditions have been created for students to move around the building and receive education. Children who have reached the age of seven are admitted to the first grade. In addition, schools may admit children who are up to two years older than the established admission age.

Admission of students to these classes is carried out, with the consent of their parents or legal representatives, on the basis of a decision by the Psychological-Medical-Pedagogical Commission established under the relevant local public education department.

The total number of students in inclusive education classes should not exceed 30. Only students with the same medical diagnosis are admitted to inclusive and basic remedial classes.

The goals of inclusive education are much broader than academic achievement. Modern pedagogy views education as a means of ensuring the comprehensive development and successful socialization of the individual.

The main objectives of inclusive education are:

1. Ensuring equal access to education

Every child should have the opportunity to receive quality education regardless of health status, social status, nationality, language of communication, or other characteristics. In practice, this means eliminating physical, organizational, psychological, and social barriers that hinder access to education.

2. Creating conditions for realizing the potential of every student

Inclusive education is focused not on the average student but on the individual abilities of each child. For example, if one student learns better through visual information while another prefers practical activities, the teacher organizes the learning process in such a way that both students can achieve the intended educational outcomes.

3. Developing social competencies

Learning together contributes to the development of communication, cooperation, and mutual assistance skills. Research shows that students in inclusive classrooms demonstrate higher levels of empathy, tolerance, and readiness to interact with different people.

4. Preparing students for life in a diverse society

The modern world is characterized by a high level of cultural, social, and professional diversity. Schools should prepare students for life in such a society. An inclusive classroom becomes a model of the real world, where people differ in their abilities, views, and life experiences.

5. Developing humanistic values

Inclusive education contributes to developing respect for human dignity, recognition of the value of every individual, and an understanding of the importance of social justice.

According to Article 20 of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Education,” inclusive education is aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for all students in educational institutions while taking into account the diversity of individual educational needs and abilities.

Psychological and pedagogical support for students studying within an inclusive system is intended to create the necessary conditions for students with special educational needs to receive quality education without discrimination, correct developmental difficulties, facilitate social adaptation, and provide timely remedial assistance through special pedagogical approaches and methods.

This can also be considered one of the objectives of inclusive education.

The goal of developing an inclusive education system is to ensure equal access to education and create the necessary conditions for successful learning for all children, regardless of their individual characteristics, previous educational achievements, language, culture, or the socioeconomic status of their parents.

It is particularly important to avoid creating perceptions of “normal” and “abnormal” students in the classroom. Such divisions can lead to the stigmatization and social isolation of individual students.

Modern inclusive pedagogy is based on the understanding that differences between people are a natural feature of society and should be perceived not as barriers to learning together but as a resource for development.

A safe educational environment is impossible without clear and understandable rules of interaction.

One of the common mistakes made by young teachers is the belief that an inclusive classroom requires lowering expectations for students’ behavior. However, practice demonstrates that predictable and clearly communicated expectations create a sense of security among many students.

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