SOCIAL INCLUSION PRINCIPLES IN UKRAINIAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF IMPLEMENTATION

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The work is focused on theoretical and practical aspects of social inclusion principles implementation in higher education institutions (HEI) of Ukraine. The article touches the issue of the organization of the process of education for individuals with special educational needs in higher education institutions of Ukraine. The work is based on the example of the experience of the University “Ukraine”, illustrating general trends in the enhancement of the inclusive process in the higher education institutions (HEI) of Ukraine. The research outlines the main forms of organization of educational process in the University “Ukraine” that chose the inclusive way of its activity. On the basis of technological, engineering and organizational aspects of the inclusive education in the University “Ukraine” the most actual remains the analysis of the didactic issues, advancement of the quality of education of individuals with disabilities, preparation of content, forms and methods of teaching in accordance with their specific problems, search for the ways of alignment of the implementation of the principle of “succession” as one of the main principles of organization of the inclusive educational process in schools and HEI’s of Ukraine. It also describes the main organizational, methodological and didactic means and measures that allow advancing the quality of education of students with disabilities. The article reflects important didactic aspects of the higher inclusive education, such as distribution of responsibilities between the participants of the inclusive educational process; technical and didactic maintenance of the inclusive educational process; specificity of the admission exams, ongoing and final examinations of the knowledge of students with disabilities, special attention is paid to the principle of “succession” as one of the main principles of organization of the inclusive educational process in

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schools and HEI’s of Ukraine. The article proves that only the usage of effective forms of cooperation of general education schools and higher education institutions will foster the realization of succession principles, consistency and continuity of the educational and medical-rehabilitation processes when educating individuals with disabilities.

Key words: social inclusion, higher inclusive education, inclusive teaching, inclusive educational process, didactic methods and techniques, organization of educational process.

ПРИНЦИПИ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ ІНКЛЮЗІЇ В ЗАКЛАДАХ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ УКРАЇНИ: ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ ТА ПРАКТИЧНІ АСПЕКТИ ВПРОВАДЖЕННЯ

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У статті досліджуються теоретичні та практичні аспекти впровадження соціальної інклюзії в закладах вищої освіти України. Робота базується на вивченні досвіду Університету "Україна" та ілюструє загальні тенденції щодо посилення інклюзивного процесу у закладах вищої освіти України. У статті окреслено основні форми організації навчального процесу в Університеті "Україна", який визначив соціальну інклюзію одним із найголовніших принципів своєї діяльності.

Особлива увага в дослідженні присвячена вивченню дидактичних питань, підвищенню якості освіти людей з особливими освітніми потребами, підготовці змісту, форм та методів навчання викладання відповідно до їх конкретних проблем, пошук шляхів удосконалення реалізації принципу "спадкоємності" як одного з основних принципів організації інклюзивного навчального процесу в школах та ВНЗ України. З цією метою в роботі детально описано основні організаційні, методичні та дидактичні засоби та заходи, що дозволяють підвищити якість освіти учнів з особливими освітніми потребами. У статті відображени важливі дидактичні аспекти вищої інклюзивної освіти, зокрема такі як: розподіл обов’язків між учасниками інклюзивного навчального процесу; технічне та дидактичне забезпечення інклюзивного навчального процесу; специфіка вступних іспитів, посівних і підсумкових перевірок знань студентів з особливими освітніми потребами. Описано принцип "наступності" як один з головних принципів організації інклюзивного навчального процесу в школах та закладах вищої освіти України.

Доведено, що лише використання ефективних форм співпраці загальноосвітніх шкіл та закладів вищої освіти сприяє реалізації принципів спадкоємності, посівність та безперервність навчальних, соціальних та медико-реабілітаційних процесів при навчанні осіб з особливими освітніми потребами.

Ключові слова: соціальна інклюзія, вища інклюзивна освіта, інклюзивне навчання, інклюзивний навчальний процес, дидактичні методи і техніки, організація навчального процесу.

Introduction. Today, the social model of a disability lays claim on a new humanitarian conception of human rights and liberties. It is a social, not medical, model that has become the basis for the philosophy of inclusive education in Ukraine. Contemporary education in Ukraine requires an expansion of its functions as the inclusive educational process is expected to draw individuals with disabilities to general education establishments. That is why, in addition to the didactic and profession-oriented, the function of personal fulfilment and social adaptation gains substantial attention. Furthermore, it must be recognized that the Ukrainian education system has formally stated its intention to establish and integrate inclusive education into its contemporary practices.
It need be stated that, at present, the quantity of Ukrainian children who study in inclusive educational environments is rather small. This study's relevance emanates from the fact that Ukraine does have vivid and unique examples of the effective implementation of the principles of inclusive education, although not universal to all schools and/or students. Among the institutions that have effectively implemented inclusive education is the HEI "Open international university of human development "Ukraine". As such, analysing the experience of the University “Ukraine” in the organization of educational process for individuals with disabilities in higher education institutions of Ukraine will provide implications for possible solutions to the target issue.

Current research. Recently, the attention of researchers has been mainly concentrated on the issue of the western experience of the integration of inclusive education (domestic researchers: O. Bezpalko, Ye. Martynova, O. Poliakova, T. Samsonova, N. Shapoval, Ie. Tarasenka, O. Shevtsova; foreign: G. Becker, F. Armstrong, J. Davis, N. Borysova, P. Bourdieu, B. Barber, K. Janx, M. Crozier, Ph. Crosby, P. Romanova, W. Schmidt, K. Taylor, O. Yarskaia-Smirnova etc.). Separate issues of the higher inclusive education in Ukraine draw the attention of domestic educators, sociologists, and law professionals. The legal aspects are being studied by L. Shumna and A. Kolupaieva; the social-educational by P. Talanchuk, M. Chaikovskyi, H. Nikulina, and S. Litovchenko. The issue of specific principles, methods and techniques for the education of youth with disabilities in Ukraine remains poorly studied on the domestic level, which contributes to the relevance of this publication.

The goal of the article is to outline the ways in which the University 'Ukraine' incorporated inclusive education practices into its educational process. Regarding the technological and organisational aspects of inclusive education in the University 'Ukraine', the most relevant include the analysis of the didactic issues, advancement of the quality of education, preparation of content, forms and methods of teaching in accordance with individual's specific needs, and the search for the ways of alignment of the implementation of the principle of "succession".

**Results and Discussion.** According to the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union and the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, the total number of individuals with disabilities in Ukraine during the year 2016 (excluding the temporarily occupied territories of the Crimea and Sevastopol) was 2 568 532, or 6 % of the total permanent population of the state (42.9 million people). These included people with I-st group of disabilities– 251 833 individuals; II-nd group of disabilities – 915 891 individuals; III-rd group of disabilities – 1 249 683 individuals; children with disabilities – 151 125 individuals (44 % female, 56% male) [4]. The number of children with disabilities is continuously growing. During 2016, the disability status was assigned to 16 000 children. More than a quarter of children with disabilities are located in boarding schools and nursing homes, which takes nearly six billion hryvnias of annual expenditures from the state budget. The majority of this money is not spent to meet the needs of the children, but for the maintenance of buildings, natural resources, staff of these institutions, etc.

Contemporary statistics show that Ukraine, although stating its intention to implement inclusive education, it falling short of this goal. Out of 151 125 children with disabilities, only 2 700 (1.8 %) are educated in inclusive
groups. 5 200 (3.4 %) children are in special groups, 40 000 (26.5 %) in the boarding schools, and 55 000 (36.4 %) are educated individually [4]. There are many reasons for such a state of affairs. This study includes an analysis of the first results of the implementation of inclusive education in the system of higher education of Ukraine during the past 5 years and outlined the following challenges and issues:

1. The general lower level of scientific achievements of graduates with disabilities in comparison to the normative students.

Causes: peculiarities of the legislature; differences in the academic curricula and requirements in terms of knowledge and skills; insufficient grading system; the functioning of boarding schools and specialized schools that provide education of inadequate level; low self-esteem and motivation-related problems in individuals with disabilities; incompetence, non-objective and biased attitudes of the teaching staff in the system of the general secondary education.

Possible solutions:

Short-term solutions: organization of the courses of pre-institutional training with additional opportunities for individuals with disabilities; continuous social-psychological and pedagogical support of such applicants during the initial stages of education; provision of educational seminars and methodological training for the workers in the system of the general secondary education and other personnel.

Long-term solutions: implementation of reforms of general and special education systems; advancement of the mechanisms of the External Independent Assessment with the consideration of the individual differences; elimination of gaps in the education-related legislation; integration of the principles of availability and the universal design.

2. Inconsistencies between the technical and educational aspects of educational institutions and the needs of the students with disabilities.

Causes: conservativeness of the system of education, and poor readiness for change; inadequate financing of the industry; poor skills in working with the innovative technology; poor competence and knowledge of the opportunities to participate in the international projects and grants; ignorance of the availability and design requirements.

Possible solutions:

Short-term solutions: provision of training seminars and methodological training sessions for the teaching staff of the higher education system and administration of educational institutions in terms of availability and architectural design; training of the scientific and teaching staff in the methodology of textbook creation and organization of lectures for the individuals with different nosology.

Long-term solutions: change in the current legislature; work with the social expectations and stereotypes; search for the sources of additional financing of the re-equipment of the internal architecture and educational environment of an institution.

3. Poor psychological and methodological readiness of the contemporary scientific-teaching personnel to work with students with explicit forms of disability.

Causes: psychological barriers: low level of tolerance, poor readiness for work with a student as with a client, poor culture of communication with students with disabilities; methodological barriers: absence of knowledge about the peculiarities for education of students of different nosology groups, poor skills in building an academic session of inclusive
character, poor motivation of the staff members for change of the technology instrumentation, use of the innovative methods and techniques.

Possible solutions:

Short-term solutions: ineffective.

Long-term solutions: change of attitudes of the scientific-teaching personnel toward the individuals with disabilities through the system of training; exchange of experience, compulsory participation in the trainee program in progressive educational institutions in terms of work with students with different forms of disability; active formation of effective social inclusion; adjustment of the educational goals in general, specific technologies, methods, forms of work to the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Particularly, there is a problem securing additional hours for the position of an assistant educator at the level of the local authorities. Even schools that manage to find resources for the position experience the problem of hiring experts with the appropriate education and work experience. Accessibility also remains an issue, as the majority of general education schools (GES) are architecturally inaccessible. Only 91 out of 17 000 GES ensure access to the second floor for children with limited mobility, while 25% of schools do not provide appropriate access to the first floor. At the same time, inclusive education is cheaper than education at the boarding schools – 20 thousand hryvnias a year versus 80 thousand hryvnias a year accordingly.

The integration of inclusive education in general education schools and higher education institutions changes the essence of the educational environment of such establishments, and necessitates the incorporation of new educational services. These include the expansion of existing student services, supplying special equipment and didactic materials, the provision of diagnostic and counseling aid by professionals, the implementation of psychological, adaptive, medical-rehabilitation and social support, goal-oriented training of pedagogy professionals, and the involvement of the representatives of the local authorities, NGO’s, unions, funds, and parents of children with disabilities.

A main obstacle that students with disabilities encounter during, and immediately following, completion of their high school education is accessibility to higher education. The absence of contact and collaboration between pedagogy professionals at both general education schools and HEIs significantly contributes to the low rate of youth with disabilities present in the general population of HEI’s. Even despite the fact that the University “Ukraine” is one of the only inclusive HEI in Ukraine, it must be noted that there was a decrease in the population of students with disabilities from 2014 to 2017, from 998 individuals to 692 throughout the structure of the university [4].

The urgent need for the development of collaboration between integrated educational establishments of various levels lays a foundation for the creation of an inclusive education environment. Collaboration between GES and HEIs is motivated by the need for increased accessibility of youth with disabilities to higher education and the development of appropriate succession, consistency and continuity of the learning and rehabilitation processes.

The inclusive education environment of GES-HEI is collaboration between all participants in inclusive education and the voluntary delegation of the functions of educational institutions to their partners.

The inclusive education environment of GES-HEI should ensure the succession, consistency and continuity of the educational and rehabilitation
processes in educational establishments of the inclusive type.

The effective functioning of the inclusive education environment of GES-HEI requires the creation of temporal social contacts and constructive collaboration between the participants in the educational process of educational institutions of various levels. A system that is targeted to provide high-quality education to, and foster socialization of, youth with special educational needs should be developed [1: 17–18].

The experience of integration of inclusive education in the University "Ukraine" testifies to the fact that the organization of the educational process for individuals with different nosological backgrounds includes the solution of two general problems: provision of access-oriented environment and organization of the educational process. These problems are currently being resolved in the following ways:

1. Integration of innovative technologies and know-how that not only make the comprehension of material easier, but expand the world-vision and increase environmental adaptation of special needs students (supply with hearing aids, electronic Braille tablets, magnifying glasses for students with eyesight impairments etc.).

2. Creation of paid or voluntary inner-university unions, cooperation groups, and groups that will help students with special educational needs.

3. Creation of inter-university reference groups that will include 5-10 specialists within the areas of inclusive education and socialization. Most of these specialists are individuals with disabilities who have achieved success in teaching, science, medicine, etc. and who have continuously exchanged their experience with their colleagues. Such groups would provide planning of the educational process, enhancement of the didactic and technical material and exchange of experience between the higher education institutions.

4. Creation of an accessible physical environment for students with disabilities. This would include the building up and reforming of architectural, engineering and communication objects, as well as equipment of the educational facilities, rooms with a system of signs, training tools, multimedia technologies, etc.

5. The introduction of paid or voluntary positions for assistants, tutors, supervisors, and other assistance personnel, mainly from the general population of students, who are working with particular students with disabilities and support them on a variety of organizational, educational and elementary issues.

6. Simplification of the administrative and social hierarchy during the organization of the educational process for students with disabilities. This means that faculty, department and even a separate educator (as a rule an operating professor) would coordinate the presence, education and socialization of a student with a disability without redundant bureaucratic "loading" from the side of social agencies.

7. Regular increase in the qualification of educators on the issues of inclusive education (including grant-based projects, exchanges of experience with international colleagues, participation in methodological seminars, etc.) and continuous monitoring from the students’ perspective regarding self-management of the effectiveness of such education.

8. Introduction of a personal card for a student with a disability. During the admission to the University "Ukraine", every student with a disability fills in a special form, where he or she specifies all aspects of their special needs. The card is studied by psychologists and educators, enriched
and revised throughout the entire education. What is important is that students’ form is taken into account at all levels of the educational process organization.

9. Involvement of a student with a disability in a large-scale informational environment regarding the issues of inclusion, life, and the capacity of an individual with limited functionality due to health concerns in the contemporary world. This aspect is being implemented in a variety of ways: a) by means of continuous electronic sharing of information about adaptation, possible employment, events, grants, competitions, and other opportunities for the students with disabilities; b) by means of the introduction of special courses that address the above-mentioned issues; c) administration of meetings with domestic and international educators and specialists on inclusion, allowing disabled students to see a range of opportunities and methods of work that currently exist in this world.

10. Introduction of individual and individual-group approaches according to the category of a disability (eyesight impairment, auditory impairment, impairment of the musculoskeletal system, etc.), which modifies the implementation of methods and technical means of education without the lowering general level of requirements.

A separate problem of inclusion in the University "Ukraine" covers the didactic methods and techniques that are targeted to meet the special needs of students. This begins with the development of a schedule and adjustment of the timetable and practical activities according to the special needs of a student. This allows for individual education plans to be designed for each student with a disability (free attendance, attendance of the major courses; individual, distance, and mixed education). The process of comprehension and reproduction of knowledge by students with physical disabilities (individuals with eyesight, auditory, and musculoskeletal system impairments) differs from the physically healthy students only by the quantity of the time spent and the form of fixation-reproduction of knowledge.

Eventually, in the University "Ukraine", educators who conduct lectures for an inclusive group, need to control the involvement of students with disabilities in the process of perception every 10-15 minutes. In the case of students becoming unsatisfied with the structure and / or efficiency of the classes, written recommendations may be introduced to support groups or to the administration of the educational institution. These will be seriously taken into account in the future.

Furthermore, ongoing and final control is optimally conducted with the consideration of sensory and functional capacity of the student and limited health-based capabilities: tests, interviewing, written interviewing, computer-based diagnosing etc.

It should be stated that the issue of assessing the level of knowledge obtained by a student with disabilities has gone through a substantial reforming process and has thus gained objectivity. In the past, there was an informal tradition of awarding students with disabilities higher markers due to sympathetic sentiment. A feature of the successful implementation of inclusive education practices causes students to feel as equal-value individuals, and has negated such traditions. Students with disabilities consciously refuse any such privileges during assessments of their knowledge, and are frequently amongst the hardest working of students, demonstrating high levels of knowledge attainment.

There is currently much working being conducted on the creation and dissemination of educational materials
specifically created for students with disabilities. These include the digitization of materials, transformation of materials into audio format, publication of books with Braille script and/or with large-sized fonts, creation of multimedia variants of educational and methodological resources (digital and audio books, films, presentations, infographics, schemes).

The majority of European Union states implement the practice of forming groups of students with disabilities (in accordance with medical indicators). However, scientists acknowledge that among students with musculoskeletal system, eyesight and auditory disabilities, the level of knowledge and communication skills are superior under the conditions of general education groups than in those comprised of students with disabilities [2: 172–175].

Through the experience of organizing the inclusive education programme at the University 'Ukraine', certain administrative issues need be addressed. The fundamental issue remains the organization of classes, which should remain high quality and effective, and, at the same time, intellectually accessible to students with special educational needs. There is a stereotype that the presence of individuals with health limitations in a course or group of students "inhibits" the course of classes and creates barriers to the equal participation of all students in the educational process. On the contrary, additional multimedia aids for students with auditory and eyesight impairments can help all students to better comprehend the educational material, while voluntary tutoring contains high moral potential.

It is clear that the mentioned issues are primarily determined by medical factors, followed by psychological and social ones. Through research regarding inclusive educational practices within the EU, it may be generalised that there are three categories of students with health limitations, the particulars of which can influence the didactic component of the educational process [2: 169–175]. Students with impairments of the musculoskeletal system do not differ from the general student population regarding perception and comprehension of material, and frequently, due to concentration, perseverance and sedulity, are extremely high achieving.

Students with sensory disabilities (eyesight or auditory impairments) require additional materials and approaches regarding the comprehension and reproduction of knowledge. It has been proven that the use of technical resources compensates for limitations of the sensory channels of information (electronic speech synthesizers, audio books, computer training systems etc.). These technical resources, used in combination with the differential approach, which includes the elements of individual education, contribute to the development of the appropriate and advanced level of knowledge in such students.

The most challenging category of students is individuals with psycho-emotional disorders that require a simplified or decelerated introduction of the material, additional consultations, specific forms of education, individual work and control of knowledge. For the successfully integrated education of such students, the following should be carried out: a) integration of limited number of students with psycho-emotional disorders into an educational group (1-3); b) utilization of the differentiated approach rather than the direct method of knowledge control; c) emphasis on didactic and educative cooperation with parents (classes with parental involvement, provision of parents with algorithms and informative aids etc.); d) the
organization of groups of mutual help within the academic group.

The important didactic, and at the same time, educative moment is the stage of diagnostics of knowledge. The main difference that students with disabilities demonstrate in comparison with the general student population is the speed of knowledge reproduction and their content-structural specifics. The leading universities of the European Union address these problems in the following way: a) coding of written works (on the demand of a student this can be omitted) during the announcement of the results of control; b) a differentiated approach during the on-going, module and final controls (on demand, a student can give answers in a verbally, written, and typed form), this is suggested for all students; c) introduction of a part-time individual education, i.e. students with developmental disabilities can avoid separate complex, while some of them can be attended optionally; d) modification of goals and expected results of knowledge during the teaching of complex theoretical courses, during the assessment of which students with psycho-emotional disabilities are suggested to substitute the theoretical-analytical (oral) reproduction of knowledge by the completion of content-oriented practical tasks (essays, summaries, practical implementation of knowledge etc.). The effective multimedia means for the comprehension of theoretical courses by such students is the elaboration and implementation of infographics at every stage of the material layout. This method allows taking the deficit is abstract thinking to demonstrative-graphic one.

Another difference between the teaching of the general student population and those students with disabilities is increased combination of the processes of didactic and educative components, which results in a stronger emotional connection between an educator and the student. A Russian researcher in the field of the higher inclusive education, P. Mykhailova, indicates that “students with limitations in medical health hold a clear need in an individual work, which can be called as psychological-educative. The independently demonstrate an initiative and directly contact an educator, discussing various issues: issues that are associated with their relationships and those associated with the composition of the world. Such behavior is possibly a form of a search for emotional social support, while inquiries for consultation on a subject – is a form of a search for an instrumental social support” [5: 188].

Conclusions. The most important didactic aspects of inclusive education at the higher education level are a) distribution of responsibilities between the participants of the inclusive educational process; b) technical and didactic equipment of the inclusive education process; c) specifics of the admission examinations, ongoing and final controls of knowledge of the students with disabilities.

To enhance the quality of education of students with disabilities in the University Ukraine, the following steps were taken: implementation of this process in accordance with the special requirements of the educational schedule and practice-orientated activity; introduction of an individual educational plan (free attendance, attendance of the major courses, individual, distance, mixed education); increase the term of education; regularly control the involvement of students with disabilities into the perception process; on-going, module and final controls of knowledge are conducted in the most optimal form with consideration of sensory and functional possibilities of students with disabilities: tests, verbal interviewing, written interviewing, computer-based diagnostics, etc. The continuous didactic accompanying, either paid or
Voluntary, is implemented by both educators and the staff of assistants.

Furthermore, it is important to take into consideration the accessibility of students with mobility issues, as well as the administration of joined sport, cultural, creative, and scientific events for all students with the purpose of creating a microenvironment of the inclusive educational environment by the majority of GES and HEI of Ukraine. In this case, the implementation of inclusive education can be examined from a holistic perspective.

Effective cooperation between general education schools and higher education institutions will foster the realization of succession principles, as well as consistency and continuity of the educational and medical-rehabilitation processes when educating students with disabilities. Implications for further scientific developments are seen in the analysis of the organizational and methodological aspects of learning at all levels and areas of education in Ukraine.

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Received: March 29, 2019
Accepted: May 30, 2019