

Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in Uzbekistan

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Abstract

This article examines the current state of inclusive education for children with disabilities in Uzbekistan. Through field-based research focusing on specialised teaching approaches, it identifies key challenges and proposes practical solutions. The study incorporates both local and global data, including UNICEF statistics and experiences from specialised schools. Recommendations encompass curriculum reforms, teacher training programmes, parental support systems, and infrastructure enhancements. The findings underscore the critical importance of collaborative efforts amongst policymakers, educators, and families to ensure effective implementation.

Keywords Inclusive education, disabilities, special needs, Uzbekistan, teacher training, parental support, school reform.

Introduction

For every child, school represents not merely an educational institution but a place of profound significance. It serves as the environment where children develop and mature, ultimately forming the foundation of society. Whilst all children require adult support and affection, this need is particularly pronounced for children with disabilities. Consequently, providing quality education to children with disabilities remains one of today's most pressing societal challenges.

As observed across numerous countries, including Uzbekistan, negative attitudes toward children with disabilities persist, necessitating substantial intervention. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan has emphasised implementing inclusive education in mainstream schools—an initiative acknowledging the importance not only of accommodating these children but also of ensuring specialised support.

Research Methodology

This study centres on the needs of children with disabilities, employing survey-based methodology. The findings derive from real-life observations and extensive field research, including a week-long monitoring visit to School No. 223 for children with disabilities in Yakkasaray district. During this period, various experiments were conducted to assess approaches for improving children's behaviour and educational outcomes. The central research question asks: 'What should be done to improve schools for children with disabilities in Uzbekistan?'

Global Context

Evidence indicates there are more than 240 million children with disabilities worldwide. According to UNICEF, the highest prevalence occurs in West and Central Africa, whilst Europe and Central Asia report lower rates. Approximately 11 million children with disabilities in Europe and Central Asia are entitled to support and care, including educational services. However, they frequently face denial of these rights due to stigma, service deficiencies, institutionalisation, and physical barriers. A recent comprehensive report addresses this information gap by compiling data from nine countries and over 1,000 respondents.

Inclusive Education System

The inclusive education system differs fundamentally from conventional education in terms of content, purpose, objectives, and methodologies. Stubbornness and disobedience in children with disabilities often stem from excessive adult intervention; therefore, appropriate pedagogical approaches must be carefully considered.

Challenges of Implementation

Children with disabilities rarely experience educational conditions equal to those of their typically developing peers. Evidence demonstrates that many educational institutions lack barrier-free environments. Institutions require appropriate literature, manuals, and equipment. Public awareness remains limited, university pedagogy programmes often lack inclusive education components, and prospective teachers receive insufficient training.

Educational Approaches

Children with disabilities often demonstrate greater curiosity and creativity than their peers. Engaging them in stimulating activities promotes development and well-being. Early childhood education deserves particular attention. Literature emphasises corrective pedagogical methods in collaboration with specialists.

Teacher Qualifications

Teachers working with children with disabilities must demonstrate particular responsibility, activity, and experience. These children require more intensive support. Teachers should receive additional training and better compensation for their specialised roles.

Conclusion

Pedagogical efforts alone cannot adequately address the educational needs of children with special requirements. Parents often lack preparation. Improving correctional and pedagogical literacy among parents is essential. Participation in supportive educational activities enables children with disabilities to gain knowledge, integrate socially, and develop crucial life skills.

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