

**IMPLEMENTATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN
UKRAINE AND ROMANIA**

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Abstract

The basic democratic values established in Ukraine and Romania are freedom, openness, tolerance. The space covered by inclusive education in both countries is determined by interdependent and interpenetrating processes of humanization and democratization. The humanistic approach is the basis for the functioning of a democratic society with its system of social ties, archaic values of spirituality, religion, and culture. The values and principles declared by inclusive education are recommended and follow from the content of international documents. The approval of a number of regulatory documents on the introduction of inclusive education indicates that the Ukrainian and Romanian social policies have reached the level of norms declared by international and European legal norms. It has been found out, that the transformation of European values in both countries takes place on the basis of the international human rights instruments. This circumstance has intensified the actualization of the development of inclusion and the manifestation of reflexive spirituality, humanity and democracy.

Keywords: *inclusive education; humanity; democratic society; education of Ukraine; education of Romania; children with special educational needs.*

1. Introduction

The introduction of inclusive education in Ukraine has significantly changed the state social policy, the modern educational paradigm, and the understanding of the problems of persons with disabilities. On the one hand, we observe the emphasized social humane component associated with a highly spiritual perception, tolerant understanding, reflexive "vision" of disability and its consequences.

Ukrainians and Romanians are peace-loving nations with their own mentality, ethnic identity, ideals, meaning of existence, religiosity, statehood, and virtues. Spirituality is the most expressive personal determinant, the formation and manifestation of which is accompanied by the process of hierarchy of values, ideals, motives, etc. According to O. Vishnevsky, "a person develops and asserts in himself a natural tendency to good and a willingness to defend the good in himself and the world around him" (Vyshnevsky, 2006). Evidence of the "fusion of space and time", as well as the "fundamentally religious basis" of spirituality, is found in the work of Morar (2014). The analytical basis for understanding the spiritual reflection of Romanians is found in the works of such researchers as N. Morar (2014), V. Bulloch, T. Madigan (1994) F. Montague (1962), T. Smith (2017), M. Haidegger (1967) and others. According to these researchers, the spirituality of Romanians has its own essential characteristic, which harmoniously combines the external and internal beauty of the individual, creating "naturalness of spirit, energy and deep consciousness"; the spiritual dimension combines the divine and human nature (Cazacu, 1994).

Reflexive spirituality is an intermediate link between modern and religious traditions. This is the basis on which a variety of semantic explanations can be built, reflecting a philosophical understanding of the introduced innovations and implemented practices in educational institutions. In this context it seems relevant to cover the content resource of inclusive education through the prism of reflexive spirituality; to search for the most meaningful alternative explanation of the essence and identification of the spiritual and humane components of Ukrainian inclusion; as well as introduction of inclusive education to people with psychophysical development disorders.

As the results of the analysis of literary sources evidence, that Ukrainians and Romanians are characterized by spirituality and humanism in various manifestations (their human qualities, values, morals, etc.), vital activity (the basis of actions, activities).

2. The aim of article

Purpose of the article (problem statement) to justify an alternative explanation of the meaning of introducing inclusive education in Ukraine and Romania.

3. Methods

In the process of the research the following methods have been used:

- general scientific - analysis, synthesis, systematization and classification to summarize information from scholarly and pedagogical sources.

- historical (typological, historical-comparative, logical-historical, chronological) and retrospective for the analysis of implementation and development of inclusive practice in Ukraine and Romania, changes and relevance, timeliness;
- comparative - interpretation and forecast of research results, in order to identify common and distinguishing characteristics of social preconditions in the development of inclusion in the studied countries, as well as prospects for its creative use in modern education in Ukraine.

4. The main cultural background of inclusive education in Ukraine

During the implementation of inclusive practice, which is almost 20 years (including the first 10 years of experimental implementation in pilot schools), the number of children with special educational needs covered by inclusive education has significantly increased. Only in the period of 2015-2019, the official indicator of inclusion of children with developmental disabilities in the educational process of general educational institutions was 61% (more than 12,2 thousand schoolchildren and 2,2 thousand preschoolers). During 2018, with state funding, almost 14 thousand children received correctional services from inclusive resource centers, the number of the latter increased from 500 institutions in 2018 to 700 in 2019. Only 1,127 of the 17,337 schools have introduced inclusive education. Therefore, the inclusion rate in Ukraine is 7 % (note that in Poland, Slovak Republic – 42 %, Hungary – 57 %, Norway – 90 %, Italy – 99 %) (Hrynevych, 2019a).

Like most European countries, Romania has also made significant strides in inclusive education over the past 30 years. In particular, since 2014 in partnership with UNICEF, with the help of Central, County and local authorities, non-governmental organizations, through the involvement of available local resources, the program «Pachetul educației incluzivă de calitate» (UNICEF Romania, 2019; Morar, 2014) has been successfully implementing. Common main achievements of the countries are: economic profitability, improving microclimate in the children's environment, finding resources to improve human potential.

The basis of inclusion is the ideology of equality of people with special needs with other people, ensuring equal treatment for everyone, and eliminating any form of discrimination. Educational inclusion is aimed at forming the opportunities for each child to successfully socialize in society, implementing the acquired knowledge and skills, overcome life difficulties effectively, make decisions independently, make choices consciously, and show social activity. We are convinced that the moral component of inclusive education is based on a system of universal and national values.

Participation of a child with special educational needs in an inclusive educational environment filled with a system of value attitude to communication, learning, upbringing, personal growth of all students contributes to positive personal development and formation of a number of qualities: *moral* (such as honesty, integrity, decency, humanity, compassion, mutual support, etc.), *social* (social activity, stability of beliefs, ability to self-esteem, emotional balance, general culture, etc.), *improvement of personal qualities* (erudition, willpower, endurance, neatness, empathy, etc.). Provided that the teacher takes a responsible attitude to their professional duties, teaching a child with developmental disabilities in an inclusive class will contribute to the moral development of each student's personality, which will manifest itself in the culture of moral consciousness, feelings, and behavior. Under the influence of teacher's worldview, their ethical knowledge, beliefs, ability to trust, respect and empathize, etc., students of the inclusive class learn to understand real phenomena (customs, ethical norms, rules of behavior, etc.), identify the formed level of morality, moral habits, empathy, regulate their own emotional state. «Lightening the soul of the individual and preparing it for life, as well as survival in the world – these two tasks are a kind of basis on which the educational process should be grounded» (Vykhushch, 2009).

Ukrainians have always been committed to civil-democratic values, adhered to faith in the ideals of good and tried to implement them in public life. Convincing evidence of this is provided by the documents "Russkaya Pravda", "Statutes of Lithuania", "Teachings of Vladimir Monomakh" and others. A civil micro-society embodied in an inclusive school environment is more like a voluntary organization in which spiritual, moral and religious values are freely exchanged. For example, European civil societies, which were among the first to implement inclusive practices in the activities of Public Schools (Romania, Italy, Austria, Sweden, Germany, Holland, etc.)

5. Inclusive education in Romania: reflexive foundations and connection with the humanity of the individual and democratic society

We find the democracy of modern Romanian society in many components. This includes well-coordinated governance, the rule of law, and a system of democratic state procedures aimed at implementing policies to protect and respect the rights of individuals of various social groups. The proximity of Romanian culture to European standards is evidenced by its membership in the UN (1955), NATO (2004) and the European Union (2007).

Romania is characterized by a traditional socio-cultural profile with appropriate theological principles, the great role of religion in the daily life of citizens, and the significance

of religious precepts in their professional activities. Therefore, the declarative international policy to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities has a practical solution in the form of introducing mandatory inclusive education – on the one hand, and on the other – is considered as an important means of regulating state social practice, taking into account legal standards set by the European Union. Another aspect is important. It is well known that a spiritual person is the one who is guided by consciously developed spiritual guidelines in various spheres of life (Domoroslyi, 2011).

Reflexive spirituality as a conglomerate of religiosity and spirituality of Romanians is realized at two levels – individual (with a mandatory religious basis, which affects personal daily practice) and collective (joint and systematic actions of various social structures in achieving tasks, developing the socio-political and socio-economic architecture of the country). Inclusive education offers an ideal solution to the reflexive spirituality of citizens in social, political, cultural and economic contexts, to act according to the laws of mass inclusion, promotion of declarative international attitudes, social and educational practices.

Morar (2014) writes about Romanian spirituality as a unity of tradition and novelty, a diachronic and synchronic approaches to understanding modern values. According to the researcher, Romania has always been a spiritual country that gave neighboring and Western European countries a cultural basis for building ideological guidelines. Therefore, the absoluteness of views on disability and migration are considered to be the key problems of modern Romania.

We assume that the social motivation that guides the Romanian authorities in their search for a fair solution / elimination of the problem of segregation of "marginal groups" is based precisely on religious concreteness. In particular, Bugiulescu (2015) recognizes Romanian orthodoxy as a process of inculturation of the idea of salvation, united by faith and traditions. State social policy is aimed at preserving the Romanian identity and inculturation.

The cultural and historical community of Ukraine and Romania as a civilizational entity consists in lobbying the interests of socially vulnerable groups of the population, implementing programs for the inclusion of persons with disabilities. In terms of social inclusion, Romania has more successful democratic actions, covering a contingent of Roma children and persons with disabilities, as well as rural children from large families where one of the parents is located outside the country (Giovazolias, et al., 2010).

It should be noted that Ukraine is guided by European recommendations on expanding inclusive practices to socially and educationally excluded categories of the population,

gradually brings state legislation in line with international standards, and is open to good-neighborly relations and cooperation in the social and educational spheres.

What is common is that both countries are actively searching for resources, ways and means to implement affordable and possible social programs for the inclusion of exclusive groups and individuals. The legal basis for providing a mechanism for reforming the educational and social system, taking into account the needs of categories of "special" groups in both countries, is a combination of international legal norms, recommendations and national foundations, organizational, administrative and educational models of this process. Ukraine and Romania, as UN members who have joined the process of "ensuring sustainable development in education", are implementing internationally declared guidelines for ensuring the right for education, accessibility, and prevalence for "marginal groups" (National Report, 2017). Ukrainian researchers (A. Kolupayeva, 2009; G. Davidenko, 2015) note the orientation of the standard of social services reflected in the law of Ukraine "On education" (2003, 2017), according to which education is designed to meet the "physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs of each individual and his relatives and friends" (Kolupaieva, 2009).

Due to its membership in the European Union, Romania's inclusive practice has more priorities, opportunities and prospects in gradually addressing the urgent challenges of expanding the social inclusion of individuals and groups classified as special needs.

An important basis for the development of inclusive practice is the reflexive spirituality that both Ukrainian and Romanian peoples are endowed with.

6. Conclusions

The space covered by inclusive education in both countries is determined by interdependent and interpenetrating processes of humanization and democratization, each is characterized by the ways and spheres of manifestation, means and signs, values and culture of behavior. The humanistic approach is the basis for the functioning of a democratic society with its system of social ties, archaic values of spirituality, religion, and culture. The values and principles declared by inclusive education are recommended and follow from the content of international documents; Ukraine has committed itself to their implementation having ratified these documents. The approval of a number of regulatory documents on the introduction of inclusive education indicates that the Ukrainian and Romanian social policy has reached the level of norms declared by international and European legal norms.

Inclusive education is a guide/means by which schoolchildren and young students are enriched with Universal and national values, master the culture of interpersonal interaction in a diverse human environment, accessible educational standards, and basic knowledge that will help them fully function in the adult world.

So, the humanization of education in Ukraine is evidenced by:

- focusing of inclusive learning on the assimilation of social experience (on knowledge, skills, values, rules of social behavior);
- focus on the formation of positive interpersonal interaction and tolerance in an inclusive educational environment, respect for human diversity;
- simultaneous orientation of the educational process to a specific student and to all students of an inclusive class; priority of the student's personality, reliance on his needs, interests, opportunities;
- intensive influence on the sensory sphere of the student, expansion of personal freedom through a democratic approach, universal and national values;
- formation of a fully developed harmonious personality, which is characterized by justice, wisdom, morality, humanity, tolerance, etc.

The universal value of Ukrainians and Romanians is spirituality. We consider religiosity as an ideological mechanism that guides a person to «ennoble» their own behavior, morals, norms and rules of everyday activity. The value of spirituality, combined with the religiosity of a person involved in the development of inclusive education in Ukraine, lies in the fact that within the framework of professional activity, a person reproduces permanently updated ideological beliefs, legal relations, and interpersonal relationships. Ukrainians with high moral standards are characterized by a combination of faith, experience, knowledge, practice, and ethics (religious, spiritual). Of course, the institutional involvement of such a person in solving socially important issues in the field of social and educational policy (development of inclusive education, in particular) will have positive manifestations at the state declarative and real levels. So the main determinants of Ukrainians are mental reflexive-spiritual (charity, morality, religiosity, charity, loyalty, sincerity, humanity, etc.), humanistic-democratic determinants (ideals, norms, humanism, emotionality, stability, democracy, love of freedom, tolerance, ethics, etc.).

The introduction of inclusive education is a consequence of the active European integration of social and educational policy, which Ukraine joined by ratifying a number of important regulatory documents regarding persons with disabilities. Since humanism and spirituality form the basis of the national character of Ukrainians, inclusive principles and

moral norms are reflected in the activities of people who are interested in recognizing human diversity, personal needs, interests and opportunities of individuals with psychophysical development disorders.

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