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**RISK MANAGEMENT IN THE SYSTEM
OF PROFESSIONAL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
AS AN ELEMENT OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

Abstract. The article deals with risks in inclusive education. The goal of the presented research consists in identification and systematization of risks in the educational activity of an institution providing inclusive education, and the study of the impact of each of them on achieving the main goal of an educational institution — providing high quality educational services.

Keywords: risk, potential danger, situation of unavoidable choice, uncertainty, inclusive education, persons with special educational needs.

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Bringing the content and structure of professional training of the staff in line with modern labor market demands, making education more accessible and improving the system of evaluation of its quality and competitiveness of educational services have become priority avenues of development of the Russian education.

The situation connected with ensuring successful socialization of children with special educational needs, children with disabilities and children left without parental care and being in a difficult life situation needs special attention. It is this category of Russian citizens that finds itself in the risk zone in the context of unequal access to high quality education.

In these conditions, it is necessary to actualize the task of effective risk managements in the activity of institutions providing services for persons with special educational needs. The aim of the given research is to single out, on the basis of classification of risks of inclusive education, the key moments of the risk management strategy of special (rehabilitation) education institutions and suggest measures for minimization of certain kinds of risks on the basis of evaluation and monitoring the education quality of children with special educational needs.

It is well known that risk is a qualitative characteristic feature of the complex objective-subjective socio-

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economic category predicting a possibility of deviation from the expected result. It is almost always connected with the presence of choice between the offered alternatives by means of evaluation of possibility of risk-driven events leading to both positive and negative consequences [1; 2; 8; 9].

The pedagogical interpretation of risk is often associated with the use of an unusual method or technique of solving a separate pedagogical problem without being absolutely sure of getting a positive answer, and when usual measures are not effective [4]. In higher professional education risks are treated as stages of the subject of education's socialization and professional specialization. The main groups of risks are made up by those connected with the choice of profession and entering a higher education institution, with getting a profession and acquiring new knowledge and with looking for a job on graduation from the university [14].

Education risks include a wide range of consequences and circumstances which contradict the system which has been formed at an education institution; they upset certain educational traditions and entail negative social consequences. Thus, risks in the sector of educational services indicate worsening of qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the education system and its parts.

It is only natural that these characteristics are directly connected with the quality of training specialists. High quality professional education may be ensured by a high quality of:

–human, financial, information

and material-technical resources;

–the education process on the whole;

–graduates ready for professional activity;

–practical training;

–monitoring the labor and educational services market;

–management,

–and efficient methodology of evaluation of the education institution activity both from the inside and the outside; a serious image and high rating of the education institution, etc.

The modern approach to the problem of reduction of the risk of getting low quality education consists in creating the system of management of quality and efficiency of the social sector services through evaluation of the social effect of the services. The result of such evaluation in education should be interpreted as measuring the level of customer satisfaction with the real quality of an educational service which may be treated as complex characteristics of the results of hard work of the administration and pedagogical collective of the education institution providing the services. Approximation of real characteristics of the education process to the needs of society calls forth enhancement of positive social effects.

Low quality services, in their turn, showing a significant non-conformity of their typical features to social needs is characterized not only by the absence of positive social effects, but also serves as a factor causing reputation risks of both state maintained and municipal education institutions and the education system

on the whole.

Thus, the education quality should be a pre-planned (expected) indicator of the activity of an education institution the volume of which is defined, first of all, by the needs of the given society.

The sphere of inclusive education is a specific enough area and it runs its own specific risks. Along with the provision of a high quality educational service, an education institution with inclusive education catering for children with special educational needs (SEN) should provide complex rehabilitation and support for such children [6].

Education institutions providing education to children with SEN in the conditions of inclusion are imposed special demands. The following additional demands are laid down upon those education institutions which enroll not only typical children but also those with special educational needs:

- barrier-free environment (availability of rampants, school infirmaries, therapeutic physical training and psychological rehabilitation rooms, escalators, specially equipped bathrooms, rooms for defectological and logopedic counseling, gyms, audio information facilities, special furniture, etc.);

- adapted educational programs for students with special educational needs and academic timetables;

- professional higher education training of specialists for the system of inclusive education;

- individual plans of learning and complex rehabilitation of children of the given category made up by peda-

gogues, psychologists, doctors and parents in partnership;

- complex medico-psychopedagogical support of adaptation of students with SEN and creation of friendly adaptation environment;

- law and financial support of training children with SEN [5; 10].

Krasnoyarsk Trade and Economics Institute of the Siberian Federal University which has been realizing the scientific-educational project “My Profession is Health” in continuing education of persons with SEN [5; 6; 10] encounters various kinds of risks which are in most cases interconnected and dependent on each other (the latter means that a change of properties of one risk causes changes in all other ones).

For education institutions with inclusive education, including special (rehabilitation) education institutions, these are the risks of:

- underfinancing, including reduction of the budget funding share of education process;

- inefficient usage of budget funds;

- lack of qualified teaching staff;

- non-conformity of scientific-educational support to modern demands;

- inadequate information support of scientific-educational process;

- inadequate material and technical resources;

- inefficiency of career education and, as a result of it, low quality of student intake or shortage of students;

- high fees for additional educational services;

- low quality programs of practical

training and inadequate level of adaptation and employment of graduates;

–poor law, medical and psychopedagogical training of pedagogues and teachers for work with children with SEN;

–absence (complete or partial) barrier-free environment for children with SEN;

–low professional qualification of the specialists in inclusive education;

–underdevelopment of the civil society and absence of tolerant attitude towards people with disabilities;

–absence or utterly uneven territorial distribution of complex rehabilitation and development centers for children with SEN.

It is necessary to note that implementation of progressive methods of teaching and education of persons with SEN, creation of information service systems, alteration of technology and facilities, improvement of scientific foundations of taking and realizing administrative decisions do not eliminate risks. On the contrary, the situation of development and elaboration of the system of management of special education in the conditions of per capita funding makes the importance of the risk factor even more significant. The latter may be explained by the fact that the necessity of taking the risk into account in the context of reformation of budget funding should be understood as an opportunity to realize efficient practical activity in the sphere of teaching and education of children with SEN and as a real prerequisite for regulating the risk level in the management process [10].

The process of risk management may be regarded as the process of influencing the parameters of activity which is aimed at reducing risk towards the level acceptable for achievement of planned and accreditation standards of the education institution. Interdependent elements which constitute the system of risk management interact with each other in this process.

The system of risk management is a unity of methods, techniques and events allowing predicting the emergence of risk situations and taking measures of exclusion or reduction of their negative consequences. Its main elements are: 1) risk identification and localization; 2) risk analysis and evaluation; 3) risk minimization and prevention techniques; 4) risk situations monitoring.

To be able to identify risks, it is necessary to have reliable information about them. This involves both internal sources of information about potential risks (educational and medical treatment process information, marketing reports, accounting reports, auditing materials, personal experience of the leader, pedagogue or doctor, list of risk factors, etc.), and external ones (statistical data, prognosis, macro-economical data, information about consumers, partners, etc.).

For example, disorders accompanying the main somatic disease pose a considerable risk for inclusive education. Long-term observations of pupils and students with SEN revealed deficiency and poor formation of psychophysiological functions, underdevelopment of emotional-volitional,

communication and personal spheres, which in the long run hinders the formation of learning skills and leads to problems connected with adaptation and deviations in behavior [6; 7].

Risk can be assessed according to qualitative or quantitative criteria. The methods of risk analysis have been worked out quite well. They include: probabilistic and expert analysis, sensitivity and scenario analysis, ultimate level indicators analysis, analogue method, decisions tree analysis, imitation method, break-even point calculation, use of game theory criteria, etc. [12; 15]. The above mentioned risk analyses and assessment will not be efficient enough unless the special (rehabilitation) education institution carries out regular risk monitoring and takes timely corrective or preventive measures on its results.

The system of monitoring and assessment of a special (rehabilitation) education institution includes:

- law and normative acts regulating the procedures of monitoring and assessment of the quality of resources management;
- subjects and objects of monitoring;
- external and internal users of the system of monitoring and quality assessment;
- organization and procedures scheme;
- monitoring methods; input and output products or results monitoring.

And the monitoring procedure has its own risks:

1. Changes in the legislation designating the list of quality standards and their normative significance, as well as changes of the rules of ex-

ercising efficiency control over budget expenditure. (It is advisable to carry out regular monitoring of changes in the legislature with the aim of adaptation of the methods applied to the new Russian laws).

2. Provision of incomplete or false data and, as a consequence, incorrect calculation of the real quality level. (It is necessary to clearly regulate all procedures of the systems of monitoring and assessment of quality and risks in order to get reliable data).

3. Definitions of incorrect or non-objective standards and their critical values, as well as selection of inadequate methods of indicators calculation. (In order to reduce risks, it is necessary to analyze the existing experience and invite external experts).

The method of monitoring and assessment of the quality of management of financial resources of a special (rehabilitation) education institution used in the given research as a means of adaptation to risks made it possible to calculate risks as standart deviation of real financial indicators from the expected ones. Our research shows that risks differ radically even within education institutions of the same kind.

In addition to the risks mentioned above, the following risks often occur in the process of transition of a special (rehabilitation) education institution to the principle of per capita budget funding:

–transition to the new normative may diminish the volume of subventions and subsidies caused by decreasing numbers of pupils with SEN in the municipal district;

–use of a normative number of pupils in a class instead of the real one brings down the volume of budget funding;

–underestimation of peculiarities of “more expensive” programs (for example, for children with severe disabilities);

–normative formation of some expenses moves them over into the group of protected items and simultaneously makes the possibility of lowering budget funding of other items more real;

–staff reduction of the special (rehabilitation) education institution.

In connection with possible realization of these risks the chance of negative social consequences (discontent of teachers and administrators of special (rehabilitation) education institutions and parents of children with SEN) becomes more real and causes growth of social tension.

Let us consider some of the above mentioned risks, for example, the transition to the model of per capita funding.

The volume of an education institution budget funding in this case depends only on the normative expenditure, student-body of a certain category and the complex character of assessment of results of activity of an education institution by the state accreditation report. In order to illustrate potential risks of an education institution providing inclusive education and any other special (rehabilitation) education institution connected with transition to this model, it is sufficient to look at such indicator as the number of pupils in a class (group) influenc-

ing the volume of normative budget funding.

Our research showed that the average number of pupils in a class in education institutions of the same kind varies greatly in different regions of Russia, and this dispersion has a significant effect on the norms of per capita funding. Many regions take into account the peculiarities of children learning at special (rehabilitation) education institutions and education institutions with inclusive education by introducing correction factors. But this measure taken alone is not enough because these factors do not take into account the specificity of teaching children with various disabilities and are different even for education institutions of the same kind into the bargain [9; 10; 13].

Significant deviations from the recommended number of pupils in a class are undesirable in relation to persons with SEN. Thus, low numbers of pupils lead to the increase of the norm and, consequently, to the growth of the institution expenditures for payroll with additional payoff. High numbers contradicts the sanitary hygiene norms of catering for persons with SEN and prevent normal acquisition of the educational program. All mentioned above lowers the efficiency of learning and should be treated as a risk factor.

We recommend the following methods of adaptation to risks in order to prevent marked deviations of the expenditure volume of a special (rehabilitation) education institution from the traditional expenditure basis.

1. Not to calculate normative

expenditure on the basis of the average number of pupils but to proceed from the hypothetical number of pupils calculated according to the following equation:

$$\text{HNP} = \text{RNP} \times \text{NNPC} / \text{RNPC}$$

where HNP is the hypothetical number of pupils; RNP is the real number of pupils; NNPC is the normative number of pupils in a class; and RNPC is the real number of pupils in a class. This formula would allow taking into account the peculiarities of hypothetical numbers of pupils and the municipal district.

2. To practice equalizing of the calculated volumes of normative expenditure for each special (rehabilitation) education institution within the range of acceptable deviations from the basis or from the real expenditure of the previous year. The range boundaries are defined as weighted averages of expenditure deviations.

3. To take into account the peculiarities of the education institutions network. Equalizing takes place in this case for each education institution by the volume of deviation of the calculated funding from the normative one.

The risk of late funding of learning is also augmented by reconsidering the group of disability the child refers to; this risk may be lowered by creating a buffer fund of an education institution.

As long as the normative budget funding indirectly depends on the average number of USE points any leading university will try to attract as many future students with a high score of USE points as possible and thus get more budget funding. But the

higher education institution spends much on education of children with SEN (more than 200.000 Rubles per capita annually), but the level of their knowledge in a large number of cases (due to different reasons) may be low. In order to reduce the risk of non-entering it is necessary to execute the law to the letter and provide fair competition for entry.

There are a great many external risks for an education institution that markedly influence its activity. They include, apart from the transition to the new system of funding and payroll mentioned above, growth of external competition of higher education institutions, their dependence on the global tendencies and ratings (especially as a result of Russia entering the WTO); economic (financial) crisis; changes in the labor market conditions; alterations of the Russian legislature; changes in the psychological climate; level of the civil society maturity, etc.

As it has been stated above, risks are interconnected: external risks influence internal ones. The latter form individual risks of a person – the risk of underqualification and lack of practical experience. An enterprise hiring workforce runs the risk of getting workers with low theoretical training and without proper practical experience. The society confronts the risk of professionals' deficiency in all spheres, and the state faces the challenge of a fall in gross domestic product and inefficient spending of budget funds.

The permanent transformation (reorganization, modernization) of

education in Russia also greatly influences risks in this sphere. Uncertainty of the social policy which came into being in the 1990s still has an impact on the young people. From the certainty provided by the parents young people have to pass on to indefinite certainty of independent life and be personally responsible for building up life strategy. On the other hand, from an indefinite social status and poorly formed consciousness and from fears connected with health problems the young person passes on the definiteness of social maturity and stability of social positions. But the more experiments take place in the sphere of education (brining about uncertainty of education and life perspectives of the young people), the higher is the risk to be left out of the progress [14].

All the above mentioned conditions, as well as instability of the level of demand and supply on the educational services market, growing competition while entering universities and looking for a job, faster pace of technological development, inflation and devaluation of the national currency and many other factors characteristic of the current state of economy create the conditions for emergence of risks in the activity of education institutions. That is why implementation of the system of risk management in educational activity is an obligatory component of the quality management.

This conclusion presupposes:

–interpretation of social needs and state assignments with concrete definitions of staff, information, organization and financial resources used for realization of health rehabili-

tation activity;

–assessment of the quality of the used resources and risks of their usage as measures of conformity of these characteristics with the set out requirements;

–assessment of social effects and their interpretation in the form suitable for further research of efficiency of inclusive education.

If we look upon the strategic model of risk management of a special (rehabilitation) education institution or any other education institution with inclusive education from the point of view of its outcomes, its characteristic feature will be a combination of functionally different strategies for provision of high quality services in education, upbringing and rehabilitation of persons with special educational needs. The institution may realize several strategies each of which, on the one hand, complies with general goal of development of the education institution, and, on the other hand, possesses its own peculiarities and characteristic features. Thus, the strategic model of risk and education quality management may be interpreted both as the process of its design and the procedure of realization of all strategic intentions aimed at improvement of the efficiency of functioning of the education institution.

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