

STUDY AND EDUCATION OF PERSONS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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CAREER EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AT SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

Abstract. The article describes special educational needs of students with health problems which should be taken into account while organizing in-class and out-of-class activities of a modern educational institution. The article sets out the system of career education of students with special educational needs and defines its content and principal tasks. The authors analyze the main lines of career education granting a possibility of choice of future profession and self-determination of these students under the guidance of pedagogues. The article demonstrates individual approach to psycho-pedagogical support for students with special educational needs in various kinds of career education taking into account their possible professional choice.

The article looks at the history of professional training of persons with special educational needs and describes the modern tendencies and perspectives of organization of successful continuing education of such persons in the system of secondary and further education. The article deals with the peculiarities of organization of state final certification of students with special educational needs. It also defines pedagogical conditions for the development of secondary and higher vocational and professional education of persons with special educational needs, and socio-rehabilitation technologies ensuring maximum personal development and self-determination in the context of the modern tolerant civilized society.

Keywords: students with special educational needs (SEN); professional self-determination; psychological support for students with SEN.

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Career education in its generally accepted interpretation consists in a system of measures aimed at providing support for the growing genera-

tion in their choice of future job. In the system of general secondary education this important activity allows senior pupils to make up their minds what field they would like to work in and chose the future job.

At present, quite extensive experience has been collected by career centers of regional employment offices, where psychologists manage to give effective career support for young men and girls with the help of testing and professionograms necessary to figure out the preferences of a young person. For many years the system of polytechnic general education has formed a worldview of career possibilities in pupils enabling them to reveal their own preferences which could later help them in their successful socialization and making a career. As a rule, the system of school values includes education of industry, hard work and responsibility for one's professional activity. The system of career education traditionally includes provision of knowledge about jobs, career upbringing, career counseling and facilitating after-school employment.

Let us now define peculiarities typical of all categories of students with special educational needs (SEN). They include marked difficulties in capability to choose and process information which results in late formation of the worldview of the children with SEN and the low level of working capacity. Academician V. I. Lubovskiy formulated assumptions "about general and specific typical features of psychological development disorders". Such typical features include slow reception and processing

information. It is reflected in all functions, and not only in the primary (basic) disorder. The volume of stored information is also limited (the available portion of knowledge is smaller). The next typical feature is speech underdevelopment which hinders comprehension of the teacher's instructions, learning texts and active communication. The cognitive process of such children should be assessed through the prism of cognitive activity during a long period of time going beyond the boundaries of preschool and school education. The difficulty in getting information is overcome, as a rule, at the time of secondary vocational or higher education. The success of continuing education consists in continuous provision of information support for persons with SEN and designing indirect routs for exercising feasible academic and then vocational activity in the triad "school – college – university".

It is well known that in the 1930s people with auditory and visual disorders passed through all stages of continuing education: from general secondary to higher education through special school and then *rabfak* (*educational establishment set up to prepare workers and peasants for higher education*). They got education successfully in Tomsk, Moscow, Novosibirsk, etc. But based on the study of variants of continuous education we may state that it was possible only for the most ambitious persons with SEN to get complete education and due to the fact that special schools and family support created the conditions for realization of their individual educa-

tional program. Reviews conducted in 2011/12 school year on the site *defnet.ru* allowed revealing the most significant conditions for acquisition of higher education by persons with SEN. Good preschool training, high level school education and family support were named among the most significant conditions.

At the same time it became a tradition that the efforts of scientists-defectologists were concentrated mainly on the primary general education; that is why special teaching methods worked out by them were limited to the primary stage of education with the hope that the basic general education and the secondary general education could be acquired by the persons with SEN through the methods designed for typically developing schoolchildren. But practical teaching shows that it is necessary to use special teaching methods for this category of students both at inclusive and at special schools.

As a result of the above mentioned limitations, mental concepts in children with SEN are formed 5 – 7 years later than in ontogenesis. In this connection, the support for children with SEN in vocational and personal self-determination should be oriented towards the search for personal sense in vocational (labor) activity. Thus, for example, children with intellectual disabilities are apt to overestimate their intellectual and physical abilities, cannot define the professional skills necessary for a certain sphere of professional activity and demonstrate absence of stable career interests. In this case, the character of career edu-

cation of children with SEN should undergo considerable changes. We can conventionally single out provision of knowledge about jobs, counseling and psychological career motivation in it.

At a special (remedial) educational institution, it is possible to organize work for planning the future life of students and revealing the most significant life landmarks which would facilitate self-determination of teenagers with SEN and the formation of ability to make a conscious choice of a course of life and future career.

The choice of profile of vocational training at an educational institution should be based on regional, local, and ethno-national conditions and ought to be oriented towards labor force demands, job quotas, possibility of employment of school leavers and the interests of students and their parents (or legal representatives).

Now let us single out the main methods used in the classroom:

- verbal (explanation, clarification, narration, conversation);
- visual (observation, illustration, demonstration by means of computer systems);
- practical (exercises, role playing games, practical works, excursions, socially useful labor).

The structure of career lessons is based on the age peculiarities of students and the children's cognitive interests (the following techniques are used: listening and discussion, designing "one's own course of life", telling about oneself, solving cross-word puzzles and riddles, staging situations, and role playing games).

The forms of activity at career lessons include the following:

- psychological and sociological tests and methods,
- games and festivals connected with a profession,
- setting a career corner in the classroom,
- socially useful labor.

The effectiveness of acquisition of the content of the course is manifested by expanding the scope of knowledge of students with SEN about the world of professions and is assessed by the level of formation of adequate self-evaluation of their own abilities and possibilities in the choice of future career.

Education of a person with SEN is a specific and deeply personal process. To a large extent it depends on the character of deviation(s) in the structure of disorder, functionality of analyzers, abilities of cognitive activity, somatic health and socio-cultural and ethno-cultural potential of the family in providing support for the child's daily living activity.

Education of people with SEN is very closely connected with their social protection. At present, the system of social protection of people with SEN in Russia is being significantly reformed in the conditions of fundamental changes of political, economic, social and ideological structures. According to the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Russian Federation, more than 13 million people with various disabilities live in our country; 70% of them are people of working age and only 3.4 – 6.8% of them have a permanent job (S. N. Ka-

vokin, 2013).

It is stated in the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993) and in the Federal Law "On Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities in the Russian Federation" (1995) that provision of appropriate vocational training for disabled persons is considered to be one of the most effective mechanisms of raising social status and level of social protection.

Improvement of vocational training of persons with SEN including those with severe disabilities became possible in the result of adoption of the Federal Law "On Provision of Support for Persons with Disabilities in Various Spheres of Life" (13.10. 2015, № 419). The adopted law guarantees a new format of participation of this section of community in social life: a disabled person tries to get free from the necessity to receive various social aids and benefits and live on his own earnings.

Acquisition of the status of highly qualified specialists and professionals by people with SEN remains to be problematic due to different reasons including high economic cost of their vocational training.

To a large extent this situation is associated with the break of ties between education institutions for people with SEN and base enterprises where senior pupils had practice, acquired high quality skills and habits in the job and were later employed. It is necessary to take into account the fact that for many decades school leavers with auditory and visual impairments had a chance to get vocational training

at production-training enterprises of the *All-Russian Society of the Deaf and the All-Russian Association of the Blind*. Persons with SEN learned at part-time schools and education centers. On receiving general secondary education after three-four years of study some of them could enter technical higher education institutions.

The new course of development of the country dramatically cut the economic possibilities of social associations of the people with disabilities which led to a drastic decline of the number of production-training enterprises; training young disabled people there practically stopped. At the same time, the level of vocational training at the majority of special (remedial) education institutions lowered due to a number of reasons (morally and physically outdated machine tools at training workshops; high prices of equipment, tools and materials; absence of demand of jobs acquired at school workshops). Without proper vocational training school leavers, as a rule, cannot find employment and often face a predicament.

According to a general belief, there is only one way out of this situation – to continue education at institutions of vocational training. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation has taken certain measures to organize vocational training of persons with SEN reflected in the document “Recommendations on Creation of Conditions for Getting Education by Children with Special Educational Needs and Severely Disabled Children in the Subjects of the Russian Federation” (18.04.2008, №

АФ—150/06). An All-Russian scientific-practical conference “Vocational and Labor Training of Children with Special Educational Needs” was held at the Federal Institute for the Advancement of Education with the information support of the Department of State Policy in the Sphere of Children’s Rights of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation on November 27-29, 2012. The analysis of the conference materials showed that the policy of many subjects of the Russian Federation in the field of vocational training and employment of people with disabilities had been considerably reconsidered. The problem of employment of people with disabilities has become one of the urgent matters for Moscow and Moscow Region.

For example, two thousand new quota jobs are created annually in Moscow for persons with disabilities. At the same time the undertaken measures are reported to be inadequate. About 330,000 working age people with disabilities are living in the capital now (*Argumenty i Fakty*, 2015, № 48); of this number, 150,000 people are capable of working, but only 80,000 of them are employed. This means that there is a considerable reserve of professionally non-demanded people with disabilities; of course, this problem needs further attention.

Twelve practical training sites were allocated for teaching children with SEN on the basis of the decision of the College of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation (19.05.2010) on the results

of a competition held among higher education institutions. In July 2011, practical training sites were allocated by an order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation at vocational schools of the Republic of Buryatia and Krasnodar Krai on the results of a competition held among various education institutions for children with SEN.

The Department of Continuing Education of Persons with Disabilities of the Federal Institute for the Advancement of Education studied the activity of education institutions of vocational training in different subjects of the Russian Federation in accordance with the government assignment "Designing Guidelines for Methods of Support for Persons with Sensory Disorders in Institutions of Secondary and Higher Vocational Education".

Analysis of pedagogical activity of the most successful educational institutions made it possible to single out the main problems in the field of realization of the rights of persons with disabilities to acquisition of vocational education. It turned out that the majority of educational institutions of vocational training of the Russian Federation do not possess the conditions for providing free access to persons with disabilities, which is stated in the requirements set out in the Federal Law "On Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities in the Russian Federation". Many educational institutions of vocational training are understaffed by qualified specialists possessing the necessary knowledge in organization of voca-

tional training of people with disabilities. The equipment for conducting psycho-medico-pedagogical rehabilitation of students with SEN needs improvement. As long as the process of rehabilitation needs considerable material expenses, there appears a need to work out socially and economically justified approaches to the content and mechanisms of realization of the given process.

By way of conclusion, we would like to stress that acquisition of really valid vocational education by persons with SEN is one of the most effective mechanisms of raising their social status and the level of social security. In this connection, organizations of vocational education are called upon to play an important role in the development of the new state system of social protection of persons with SEN.

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