

# METHODOLOGY OF USING FOREIGN EXPERIENCES IN DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY EDUCATION

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## Abstract

This article analyzes the role of international experiences in the development of inclusive education for children of preschool and primary school age and the possibilities of their implementation in the conditions of Uzbekistan. The article also studies the basic principles, methods and infrastructure of inclusive education using the examples of successful experiences of countries such as Finland, the USA and Japan. The reforms being carried out in this direction in Uzbekistan are analyzed based on existing problems, statistics and research results. At the end of the article, proposals are made for solving existing problems and the need to form a national model of inclusive education in Uzbekistan is justified.

**Keywords:** Uzbek education system, children with special needs, equality in education, inclusive education, international experience, global model, educational strategy, pedagogical approach, integration in education, social justice.

## Introduction

Today, the issue of developing inclusive education is one of the most important areas of social and pedagogical policy in the world. International documents adopted by UNESCO emphasize the right of every child to quality education as the main issue. Many developed countries of the world have widely implemented this education system, and the experiences and approaches are diverse and rich in positive results. In this regard, the gradual development of inclusive education in Uzbekistan, the wide involvement of all children, including students with various limitations in physical and psychological development, in the general education process is one of the priority areas of state policy. The idea of inclusive education paves the way for each child to fully participate in the general educational environment, taking into account their individuality, potential and pace of development. This is necessary not only for human rights, but also for building a democratic and stable society.

The idea of inclusive education having been developed in the second half of the 20th century was consolidated in the documents of the UN and UNESCO. The UNESCO Declaration of Salamanca, adopted in 1994, specifically noted the need for all children to be educated in general education institutions. Also, the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the



Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Education” ensure the right of every child to equal education.

As scientists of our republic M. Kadirova, S. Tursunova, A. Abdullayev emphasize in their research works, an inclusive approach to primary education enhances the motivation to learn in children with special needs, accelerates the process of social integration, and helps them form as full-fledged individuals.

Current main principles of inclusive education are shown in the following table (Table 1):

Table 1

	Principles	Definition
1	<b>Creating equal opportunities</b>	Ensuring the right to education for all children
2	<b>Individualized approach</b>	Taking into account the abilities, interests and possibilities of each child
3	<b>Principle of cooperation</b>	The joint responsibility of educators, parents, and society
4	<b>Flexibility</b>	Modifying curricula to meet children's needs
5	<b>Principle of tolerance</b>	Creating a creative social environment in society

Uzbekistan is also gradually introducing inclusive education, approaching international standards. In 2009, our country ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. A number of works are being carried out on the basis of the concept for the development of inclusive education for 2021–2025. Inclusive classes have been established in schools and preschool educational organizations in many regions of the republic. The preschool and primary education stages play a key role in the intellectual, social, spiritual and spiritual formation of a child. Therefore, the effective organization of inclusive education at the preschool and primary education stages not only ensures the right to education of children with special needs, but also serves to educate healthy students in the spirit of tolerance and humanity. However, at the same time, existing statistics and social surveys show that there are a number of pedagogical, organizational and social problems in this area.

### Analysis of Issues

**Pedagogical issues.** Preschool and primary school children often need the help of a teacher with knowledge of defectology, speech therapy or special pedagogy. Unfortunately, not all teachers have sufficient knowledge and skills in defectology, speech therapy or special pedagogy. Therefore, they face difficulties in working with children with special needs. In addition, the large number of children in groups or classes makes it difficult to provide an individual approach. Most teachers cannot effectively use inclusive methods.

**Issues with methodology and resources.** The lack of adapted curricula, additional didactic materials and textbooks for children with special needs is a major problem. There are almost no books in Braille (for children with visual impairments), audio books and special software in



preschools and schools. Also, the material and technical base of many educational institutions is not adapted for children with special needs.

**Socio-psychological issues.** There is not enough positive attitude towards inclusive education in the society. Some parents do not want their child to study in the same group or class with a child with special needs. This situation leads to a feeling of inferiority among children with special needs. It is also observed that in some cases, healthy children react negatively to them with insulting words or emphasizing their physical disabilities.

**Organizational and legal issues.** Although a number of resolutions and documents on inclusive education have been adopted in the Republic of Uzbekistan, their practical implementation is slow. Due to lack of funds, the necessary conditions have not been created in all educational institutions. The shortage of specialists such as defectologists, speech therapists and psychologists also indicates the urgency of the problem.

If we look at international experience, countries such as Finland, Italy, the USA and Japan are leading the way in the proper organization of inclusive education. For example, in Finland, teaching methods are used that are tailored to the individual needs of each student. There, inclusive education is implemented within regular schools and there is no need for separate special educational institutions. At the same time, defectologists, speech therapists, social pedagogues, and psychologists constantly help students. The experience of Italy is that all children receive education in general schools and there are no separate special schools for them. This achieves full integration into society. In the USA, on the basis of the “Law on Education for Disabled Individuals”, an Individual Education Plan has been introduced, and an individual curriculum is developed for each child. Innovative technologies have been widely implemented in Japan: Braille textbooks, special sensory devices, and video teaching aids are used to encourage the interest and participation of children with disabilities in reading.

Everyone reading the article will naturally have a legitimate question: “What about our country?” According to official data presented in 2023, there are more than 30 thousand children with disabilities in Uzbekistan, of which only 12% are studying in inclusive classes in general education schools. According to the results of a survey among teachers, 68% of them have almost never participated in any special training courses on inclusive education.

This situation, first of all, indicates shortcomings in the personnel training system. There is a shortage of specialists such as defectologists, psychologists, speech therapists and sign language interpreters. The infrastructure of educational institutions is also not fully adapted: most schools and kindergartens do not have comfortable conditions for children with physical disabilities. There is still a misunderstanding and negative stereotypes in society regarding inclusive education. This, in turn, weakens social integration and prevents children from fully realizing their potential.



The solutions to the aforementioned problems are shown in Table 2:

Table 2

	Issues	Solutions
1	<b>Pedagogical issues</b>	Teacher training - organizing special training for teachers, defectology and speech therapy courses
2	<b>Issues with methodology and resources</b>	Developing customized programs - creating curricula, textbooks, and methodological guides tailored to the individual needs of students.
		Providing technical tools - equipping pre-school institutions and schools with braille printers, audio books, interactive tools, and special computer programs
3	<b>Socio-psychological issues</b>	Changing the views of society members in a positive direction - popularizing the positive aspects of inclusive education through large-scale advocacy work
4	<b>Organizational and legal issues</b>	Financial support - attracting additional funds through the state budget, non-governmental organizations, and international funds.
		Attracting specialists - introducing the staff of defectologists, speech therapists, psychologists, social pedagogues, and rehabilitation specialists in educational institutions.

In conclusion, to solve the problems of inclusive education, it is necessary to act in several main directions. First, separate courses and modules on inclusive education should be introduced in pedagogical higher education institutions. This will ensure the professional training of future teachers. Second, schools should be equipped with special technical means: ramps for wheelchairs, elevators, hearing aids, textbooks in Braille. The third and most important direction is to change social consciousness. Members of society, parents, teachers and even students themselves should understand the need for inclusive education. To do this, it is important to create positive images, exchange experiences and strengthen advocacy through the media, social networks and cultural and educational events.

It is also necessary to ensure the necessary resources and exchange of experience through the consistent and harmonized development of existing regulatory and legal documents, expanding cooperation with international organizations (for example, UNESCO, the US Embassy, the World Bank, etc.). Establishing an annual monitoring and evaluation system for inclusive education will also increase the effectiveness of this area.

This process will contribute not only to the integration of children with special needs into social life, but also to the upbringing of healthy peers in the spirit of tolerance and humanity.

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