

Scientific Perspectives on Shaping The Social Activity and Vocational Orientation of Students with Disabilities

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Abstract: This article explores the theoretical and methodological foundations for fostering social activity and career orientation among students with disabilities. The author analyze inclusive education approaches that enhance social adaptation and professional development, and they provide practical recommendations. Special emphasis is placed on individualized learning strategies, motivation, and promoting active participation.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Social Activity, Career Orientation, Methodology, Disability, Adaptation, Motivation



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Introduction

Globally, the educational engagement and social integration of children with disabilities constitute a pressing socio-pedagogical issue. According to UNESCO data, up to 98% of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school, and 99% of girls with disabilities remain illiterate. Overall, approximately 240 million children worldwide have various forms of disabilities, and they largely remain marginalized from education and social life. The magnitude of this problem has placed it at the center of attention for the United Nations (UN) and the international community, leading to the development of inclusive education principles aimed at ensuring every child's right to receive a quality education. The active inclusion of children with disabilities in social life and their subsequent preparation for the labor market is acquiring paramount importance in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, guided by the principle of "leaving no one behind." The urgency of this issue is equally evident at the national level. Ongoing societal transformations impose high demands on the level of an individual's social activity; therefore, fostering social activity in children with disabilities is a necessary prerequisite for them to become full-fledged members of society and take their rightful place alongside their peers without disabilities. Through Presidential decrees and resolutions, the development of inclusive education and the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities have been designated as priority directions of state policy in Uzbekistan [1]. This legal framework, coupled with international recommendations, substantiates the contemporary relevance of research and practical measures in this domain.

Methods

The concept of social activity is defined as the conscious and active participation of an individual in society. Psychologists L.N. Zhilina and N.T. Frolova emphasize that social activity is a psychological attribute of a person, characterizing it as a state of not being indifferent to surrounding events, demonstrating an interest in occurrences not only within the immediate environment but also on a municipal, national, and global scale, and actively

participating in labor and public affairs. Consequently, social activity embodies an individual's sense of belonging to their environment and their civic engagement. For children with disabilities, cultivating this quality serves as a foundational element for their future adaptation to independent living and integration into society.

Cultivating social activity is primarily achieved by integrating the child into a network of social interactions. Research indicates that through the processes of creative activity and social collaboration, children can establish relationships with their peers and develop essential social skills. However, for students with disabilities, this process is accompanied by a series of objective and subjective challenges. Foremost, disability inherently restricts a child's interpersonal interactions due to physical and environmental barriers, a limited circle of communication with peers and adults, and constrained opportunities to participate in natural and cultural life. In most cases, the communication scope of children with disabilities remains confined to their immediate family members. These deficiencies profoundly impact the child's self-perception, leading them to feel "rejected" by society and unacknowledged by their loved ones, ultimately fostering a sense of social vulnerability. As a result, psychological states such as internal discomfort, anxiety, and a sense of inadequacy may emerge. Therefore, when fostering the social activity of children with disabilities, priority must be given to their environmental integration, expanding their communication with peers, and assisting them in perceiving themselves as integral components of society. To achieve this objective, modern pedagogy advocates for the utilization of various socio-cultural events, group projects, volunteering, and other forms of collaborative activity to engage children with disabilities in social life. For instance, excursions to cultural heritage sites, creative meetings, and competitions broaden children's worldviews and encourage their participation in collaborative endeavors. Such socio-cultural cooperation not only manifests as social activity but also serves as a pedagogical tool to cultivate it: children learn to approach the activities of others with empathy and respect, while aligning their personal interests with the collective goals of the group. Empirical evidence demonstrates that children with disabilities who are engaged in a social environment become increasingly open-minded, confident, and proactive, actively participating in various societal events. This, in turn, lays the foundation for increasing their personal and social autonomy, enabling them to feel like full-fledged members of society. The concept of career orientation (proforientation) denotes the process of assisting students and young people in selecting a suitable future profession and adequately preparing for labor activity.

Results

Providing career orientation for youth with disabilities is of particular significance, as this process is aimed at enhancing their competitiveness in the labor market and determining their opportunities for acquiring qualifications, retraining, and subsequent employment. The primary objective of career orientation (proforientation) is to assist young people in consciously evaluating their abilities and potential, choosing a profession and educational institution, and outlining the pathways to achieve their chosen specialization [2], [3]. While the general career orientation framework is applied to students with disabilities, specific characteristics must be taken into account: in addition to their desires, abilities, and labor market demands, their health conditions and physical capabilities are also considered when choosing a profession. It is worth noting that due to limited health capabilities, certain professions may not be suitable for individuals with disabilities; however, one should not become overly fixated on these limitations. In most professions, it is possible to facilitate the work of a person with a disability by creating specific, adapted conditions. That is, the primary focus of career orientation is to select a profession that best aligns with the student's capabilities and interests, while simultaneously ensuring conditions that allow them to perform labor activities without harming their health. As a result of effective career orientation, a profession is selected that not only matches the young person's aptitudes and market demands but is also as safe as possible for their health. Furthermore, recommendations are provided to the youth regarding the working conditions they should prioritize in their chosen field in the future, as well as how to find specially adapted workplaces corresponding to their specialty. When providing career guidance, specialists strive to orient youth with disabilities toward intellectual labor or professions requiring high

qualifications, since physical limitations present fewer barriers in these specific areas, enabling individuals with disabilities to compete on equal terms with others. Modern approaches to the career orientation of individuals with disabilities incorporate person-centered counseling and a rehabilitative approach. These approaches envision assisting students in developing an individualized career plan by thoroughly examining each student's personal interests, aptitudes, and health conditions. For instance, the experience of developed countries involves implementing transition planning within special education, where individualized transition plans are formulated for high school students with disabilities. According to the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" (IDEA) in the United States, beginning at age 16, a specific section regarding preparation for future employment and independent living is incorporated into the Individualized Education Program (IEP) of every student with a disability. Through the collaborative efforts of the student, parents, and professionals, this process outlines career guidance and the development of life skills in accordance with the student's interests and capabilities.

In European countries, significant attention is also devoted to career orientation and vocational training as an integral component of inclusive education. For example, in nations such as Germany and the Netherlands, transition services have been established, allowing students with special educational needs to utilize services related to internships, counseling, and job placement prior to their graduation from school. Such approaches serve to facilitate the transition of youth with disabilities from school to independent living and effectively integrate them into the workforce. International experience demonstrates that preparing youth with disabilities for a profession is not solely the responsibility of the education system but must be supported through comprehensive state and societal programs. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD, 2006) mandates all member states to ensure inclusive education under Article 24 and the right to work and employment for persons with disabilities under Article 27. To implement the Convention, states are required to take concrete measures to adapt educational and labor systems for individuals with disabilities, ensuring their participation on an equal basis with others. In collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNESCO is implementing guidelines and projects to introduce inclusion into Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems. For instance, a UNESCO-UNEVOC report emphasizes that while vocational education holds the potential to open doors of opportunity for many marginalized students, numerous barriers persist in this field: poverty, living in remote areas, gender, disability, and other factors prevent many young people from accessing TVET programs. In numerous countries, equal opportunities for youth with disabilities are not being realized due to the inadequacy of flexible vocational education policies for students with special needs, a lack of trained and qualified teachers, and insufficient connections with partner organizations. Therefore, based on international standards and empirical experiences, every country must strengthen comprehensive measures within its education system to prepare students with disabilities for social life and professional activity [4].

The primary methodological approaches utilized in the upbringing and education of students with disabilities include the following:

Axiological (Value-based) Approach: An approach directed towards the formation of social and spiritual values in students during the educational process. The application of the axiological approach creates conditions for students to internalize social values. Consequently, the student's worldview and personal value system are positioned at the center of the upbringing process.

Activity-based Approach: An approach founded on the principle of developing the student's personality through active engagement and practical activity. The activity-based approach conceptualizes education as a process of the student's active learning-activity, wherein the child's consciousness and personality are formed. In other words, it is an upbringing aligned with the pedagogical principle: "Tell me and I forget, show me and I remember, involve me and I learn."

Student-centered (Person-centered) Approach: An approach reliant on universal humanistic values, considering the individual needs, interests, and characteristics of each student. Student-centered education is based on respecting the child's rights and dignity, providing the opportunity to voluntarily select an educational trajectory (in terms of subjects and types of activities) [5]. The objective of this approach is to establish individualized conditions to cultivate an independent and creative personality in every student.

Inclusive Approach: An approach that envisions the joint

education and development of all children, taking into account their diverse capabilities. Within the inclusive approach, the unique characteristics of each student are considered, and all students participate collectively in the process of acquiring knowledge and socialization. Specifically, integrating children with special needs into the general education process without segregation, provided with necessary accommodations, forms the core of the inclusive approach [6]. This approach necessitates a fundamental restructuring of the education system to ensure that all students, regardless of their diverse needs, receive quality education. The aforementioned methodological approaches are inextricably linked and should ideally be applied comprehensively when working with students with disabilities. While the axiological approach facilitates the formation of their value system, the activity-based approach enables the acquisition of social experience and skills directly through action. Concurrently, the student-centered approach ensures the determination of an educational strategy tailored to the specific needs of each child, whereas the inclusive approach adapts the general educational environment for these children, creating conditions for them to feel as full-fledged participants in the community. All these approaches are mutually complementary and serve a singular objective: to educate students with special needs into spiritually rich, socially active, and career-oriented independent individuals. Scientific research conducted within the scope of this topic has illuminated various aspects of the social activity and career orientation of students with disabilities [7]. Analyses demonstrate that an inclusive educational environment and specially structured upbringing measures exert a significant positive impact on the development of the social abilities of these students. For instance, empirical studies note that involving children with disabilities in group activities and having them complete various tasks in collaboration with their peers substantially enhances their social participation and relational skills. As an example, an analytical study conducted by Garrote et al. (2017) revealed that engaging students with disabilities in support groups and general social activities successfully increased their level of social participation. It is emphasized that such social engagement can also positively impact children's levels of well-being and self-confidence [8]. Concurrently, researchers underscore that the social participation of students depends not solely on the proactivity of the children with disabilities themselves, but equally on the attitudes of their typically developing peers. Consequently, fostering a sense of tolerance and empathy among typically developing students within an inclusive environment is being examined as a factor that directly influences the social integration of students with disabilities [9]. Scientific research concerning career orientation highlights the necessity of enhancing professional counseling and vocational training for youth with disabilities. Specifically, Russian researchers I.G. Kislitsina and E.A. Andreeva (2016) examined the vocational orientation of individuals with disabilities at a regional level, emphasizing the need to develop specialized methods and approaches. They advocate for customized approaches to issues such as diagnosing vocational interests, adapting working conditions, and delineating individualized pathways for professional learning for youth with disabilities. Furthermore, international observations corroborate the existence of persistent barriers to integrating students with disabilities into the labor market: the majority of young people with disabilities encounter difficulties in securing employment upon completing their education, often being deprived of opportunities due to the entrenched stereotypes of employers [10]. As highlighted in the UN Fact Sheet on Youth with Disabilities, these young individuals face a "double burden" of challenges compared to their peers without disabilities: firstly, disability itself exacerbates the risk of poverty and social exclusion; secondly, they lag behind in educational and employment opportunities due to their physical limitations. For many youth with disabilities, structural discrimination and isolation have become a daily reality [11], [12].

Discussion

Consequently, scientific research advances a series of proposals and conclusions aimed at refining state policy and educational-upbringing practices in this domain. Firstly, it is imperative to fortify the inclusive education system and cultivate a comprehensive environment at all levels. As studies indicate, many countries have yet to establish specialized teacher training systems for inclusive education, and educational curricula remain unadapted to the needs of individuals with disabilities. Despite good intentions, this ultimately results in the

practical marginalization of students with disabilities. Therefore, enhancing the professional development of educators in inclusive pedagogy and revising educational curricula and instructional materials based on the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) are crucial necessities [13]. Secondly, intensifying a holistic (comprehensive) approach is recommended: mechanisms facilitating the post-educational transition to employment for youth with disabilities must be established through the collaborative efforts of not only schools and families but also labor market institutions, local communities (mahallah), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). As articulated by UNESCO experts, rendering the education system entirely inclusive requires the concerted action of all stakeholders—state organizations, the private sector, and NGOs. Responsibility must be equitably distributed across all echelons of society, rather than borne solely by the school. Based on the preceding analysis, it can be scientifically concluded that fostering the social activity and career orientation of students with disabilities necessitates a holistic and cohesive approach [14]. Achieving social activity requires an inclusive environment that engages children with reality, promotes collaborative activities with peers, and provides value-based upbringing. Concurrently, it is essential to thoughtfully consider their future career trajectories, providing individualized career orientation and cultivating the requisite skills and competencies. In this regard, by amalgamating international best practices and recommendations, national legislation, and scientific-methodological developments, novel theoretical and practical solutions can be formulated at the level of Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences research [15]. The analysis conducted in this article affirms that educating students with disabilities to become active and productive members of society, while facilitating their professional self-realization, remains one of the paramount priorities of contemporary pedagogical science and practice.

Conclusion

The study concludes that fostering the social activity and vocational orientation of students with disabilities requires a comprehensive, integrated pedagogical framework grounded in inclusive education principles. The findings highlight that active social engagement, participation in collaborative environments, and individualized career guidance significantly enhance students' self-confidence, adaptability, and readiness for independent life. The analysis demonstrates that combining approaches such as axiological, activity-based, student-centered, and inclusive methods creates a synergistic effect, enabling the development of both social competencies and professional potential. Furthermore, the results emphasize that effective career orientation must account not only for students' interests and labor market demands but also for their health conditions and the need for adapted working environments. These insights have important implications for educational policy and practice, suggesting the necessity of strengthening teacher training in inclusive pedagogy, improving institutional collaboration, and ensuring continuity between education and employment systems. Additionally, the study underscores the critical role of societal attitudes and support systems in facilitating successful integration. Future research should focus on empirical validation of these approaches in diverse educational contexts, the development of innovative inclusive teaching models, and the long-term assessment of employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities to further refine strategies for their social and professional inclusion.

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