DEVELOPING TEACHERS’ ABILITY TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH TROUBLED BEHAVIOR AND HEALTH LIMITATIONS

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Abstract

The paper deals with the urgent problem of secondary school teachers’ ability to provide psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and health limitations within the system of inclusive education. The paper covers empirical data to determine factors that impede the relevant support of school students with health limitations and troubled behavior in an inclusive educational environment. The paper provides research results and experience of theoretical, psychological and methodological competencies formation in teachers as components of their professional competence in organizing inclusive educational space for the above-mentioned category of school students. The program of advanced training is proposed to form teachers’ specific theoretical, psychological and methodological knowledge and emotional-personality qualities required for effective professional work with teenagers having limited health opportunities and troubled behavior within the system of inclusive education. The content of the program is focused on refreshing secondary school teachers’ psychological and pedagogical knowledge, on obtaining knowledge in the field of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education, on the formation of necessary skills and psychological readiness to implement professional activities. The main method is pedagogical experiment (stating, forming and control) applied to reflect qualitative characteristics and dynamics of theoretical, psychological and methodological components of teachers’ professional competence and their readiness to work in an inclusive educational environment.

Keywords: Inclusive educational environment, professional competency, psychological competency, special educational needs, students with limited health opportunities, troubled behaviour.
1. Introduction

Changes occurring in the social-economic, political and spiritual spheres of public life put forward a number of problems, one of which is teenagers’ troubled behavior. Its relevance is getting increasingly urgent as juvenile delinquency and drug addiction are escalating every year, and the number of teenagers with disabilities supplementing criminal environment is growing.

Maladaptation of teenagers with disabilities (formation of inadequate mechanisms of adaptation to school in the form of learning and behavioral disorders, conflict relations, psychogenic diseases and reactions, increased level of anxiety, distortions in personal development) is a serious problem in the context of inclusive education. The education system is not sufficiently prepared to provide conditions adequate to their educational needs for personal development and integration into modern society.

Psychological-pedagogical support for teenagers with troubled behavior in conditions of inclusive education requires teachers to be ready for effective targeted work. The analysis of basic educational programs of higher teachers’ training education as well as programs for advanced training and retraining of teachers evidenced that the content and technologies of necessary theoretical, psychological, pedagogical and methodological knowledge required for psychological and pedagogical support for teenagers with troubled behavior, including those with disabilities, are not fully specified. Therefore, teachers do not master basic competencies in the field of troubled behavior etiology in children and adolescents with disabilities and do not apply diagnostics and methods of designing an educational environment for this category of students, technologies to prevent negative manifestations among students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities as this knowledge is not included in university programs (Bubeeva, 2010).

Institutions of additional pedagogical education are supposed to assist teachers to overcome difficulties arising in their practical activities. In case of refresher training, it is possible to solve issues of teachers’ professional skills development in the sphere of planning and implementation of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in conditions of inclusion.

2. Problem Statement


Many different researchers (Alekhina, 2016; Kutepov, 2013; Semago, Semago, Semenovich, Dmitriyeva, & Averina, 2011; Chetverikova, 2014; Yakovleva, 2013) consider training of competent teachers able and ready to perform their duties efficiently working with children with health limitations (HL) as a significant condition for introduction and development of inclusive education.

Semago et al. (2011) propose a systematic approach to design training of experts implementing inclusive practices. The scientists distinguish three aspects of training: value, organizational and content; the training program is built on modules. This enables to form teachers’ values orientations needed in
inclusive education and to facilitate the ability to organize appropriate joint education of children with normative and disordered development, to elaborate and implement adapted basic educational programs.

Patseka (2012) conducted a special research to identify that teachers are not sufficiently trained to prevent troubled behavior in primary schoolchildren at early stages. The researcher specifies reasons for this: firstly, the lack of systematic training of teachers in colleges and higher educational institutions to prevent troubled behavior; secondly, compartmentalization and ineffectiveness of training; thirdly, insufficient theoretical and technological elaboration of the problem. The author believes that the system of teachers’ advanced training can contribute to this issue.

Foreign practice of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior in education has obtained great experience. The system of inclusive education is theoretically grounded and has been successfully operating over the past decades in western countries.

Research of teachers’, learners’ and public settings in regard to disabled people is presented in the majority of publications. Scientists are trying to determine factors producing positive or negative impact on attitudes to people of this category.

Štemberger (2013) undertook a study aimed to establish the way teachers assess their knowledge and skills of psychological-pedagogical support for students with disabilities in an inclusive educational environment. The author concludes that teachers in Slovenia, teachers of natural sciences, in particular, consider themselves insufficiently competent for this type of pedagogical activity. However, teachers are generally positive about students with disabilities and are willing to change their teaching methods in order to realize tasks relevant to an inclusive educational process.

Quenstedt (1988) presented research results of 28 school students studying in 7-9 grades; the research was conducted in a specialized school for children with developmental disorders in Bremen. The results show that students who exhibit troubled behavior but often suffer from minimal brain dysfunction and, sometimes, organic brain damage, increasingly "neglect themselves" in terms of medical sense: uncontrolled drug use and disregard of their general physical development. Therefore, the researcher believes that close collaboration between teachers of special schools and doctors should be sought and, possibly, outpatient services should be introduced in school.

A group of scientists (Bao, Li, Zhang, & Wang, 2015) proved that school climate is largely associated with juvenile delinquent behavior. Researchers found that a positive school climate can reduce criminal behavior and contribute to the prevention of juvenile delinquency.

Rakap, Cig, and Parlak-Rakap (2017) examined the impact of special education courses on the following indicators: teachers’ general attitude to children with disabilities; willingness of teachers to work with children with significant intellectual, physical and behavioral disorders in inclusive classes; the level of comfort in case of interacting with disabled children. The authors conclude that successful implementation of inclusive practice mainly depends on teachers’ attitude towards children with special needs as well as their willingness to work with disabled children.

The problem of teachers’ professional competence formation was studied by many philosophers, teachers and psychologists. These issues are considered in the works of Zimmaya (2006), Zeer (2014), Choshanov (1996). Ideas of purposeful training of an innovative type of a teacher and their professional competence are presented in works of Baydenko (2005), Guzeev (1993), Dorofeyev (2005) and other researchers. Serious attention is paid to the implementation of such principle as continuity and
differentiation of teachers’ advanced training; to the development of professional interests, research and creative skills, teacher's professional and pedagogical culture (Karakovsky, 2001; Shmelkova, 2002). The study of teachers’ professional development in the process of advanced training and creating favorable conditions for expert’s formation is quite important (Vvedensky, 2004; Panin, 1999). However, pedagogical conditions aimed to form professional competence in psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities have not been studied sufficiently.

3. Research Questions

The research is aimed to develop a set of pedagogical conditions to form secondary school teachers’ special professional competence and their training for work with children with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in the context of an inclusive educational process.

4. Purpose of the Study

1. To study the current state of teachers’ training for work in inclusive forms of education on the basis of scientific literature analyses; to identify problems of forming teachers' theoretical, psychological and methodical readiness for work with children with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities relevant for the system of teachers' advanced training.

2. To develop a diagnostic complex aimed to identify theoretical, psychological, pedagogical and methodological components of teacher's professional competence in issues of inclusive education of disabled school students with troubled behavior.

3. To study the state of theoretical, psychological and methodological components of teachers' professional competence and their readiness to work in an inclusive educational environment.

4. To develop and verify a set of pedagogical conditions including methodological, methodical and organizational aspects of secondary school teachers’ training, retraining and advanced training in compliance with new requirements for education of disabled children with troubled behavior in the system of refresher training courses.

5. Research Methods

The following methods were applied in the research: methods for reviewing and analyzing psychological, pedagogical and methodological literature on the problem of psychological-pedagogical support for disabled students with troubled behavior in the general education system, pedagogical experiment (stating, forming and control).

5.1. Experimental research base

The study was conducted on the basis of Kazan Federal University in the city of Kazan, the Republic of Tatarstan, Russian Federation; comprehensive schools 1, 6, 8, & 9 in Elabuga, comprehensive schools 108 and 146, in Kazan, comprehensive schools 8 and 11 in Leninogorsk, comprehensive schools 3, 8, & 21 in Nizhnekamsk (the Republic of Tatarstan, Russian Federation).

5.2. Stages of research
The study was conducted in three stages:

– During the first stage (preparation) we analysed the current state of the problem in pedagogical theory and practice; the program was worked out and research methods were selected;

– During the second stage (main stage) levels of teachers’ theoretical, psychological and methodical training for psychological-pedagogical support of disabled students with troubled behavior in inclusive education were studied; a supplementary educational program aimed to form teachers’ competence in issues of psychological-pedagogical support for school children with disabilities and with troubled behavior in an inclusive educational space was developed and implemented; the effectiveness of this program was verified;

– During the third stage (final stage) systematization, analysis and generalization of research results were performed; theoretical conclusions were drawn; obtained research results were processed and registered.

6. Findings

6.1. Structure and content of the research program.

The goal of the research is to study teachers’ theoretical, psychological and methodological competence for work with disabled school students with troubled behavior in the context of an inclusive educational process.

Stages of the program implementation:

Stage I – identification of theoretical, psychological and methodological competence levels of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education;

Stage II – development and implementation of the program aimed to form teacher’s professional competence in the issues of psychological-pedagogical support for disabled students with troubled behavior in inclusive education;

Stage III – verification of content and methods application effectiveness to form teachers’ theoretical, psychological, methodological knowledge and readiness to realize psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education.

The stating stage

Diagnostics of teachers’ theoretical, psychological and methodical competences to implement psychological-pedagogical support of students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education was performed in the stating stage.

50 teachers participated in the research; they made experimental and control groups. The experimental group consisted of 25 teachers (EG); later they were trained at advanced training courses where they studied issues of psychological-pedagogical support of students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities; the control group included 25 teachers who did not take the above mentioned courses.

We designed a diagnostic complex to research specified competences:
- theoretical competence was studied with the help of the questionnaire elaborated by us; its questions were aimed at assessing teachers’ knowledge in the sphere of ethology of troubled behavior in children and adolescents with disabilities, mechanisms and classification of types of troubled behavior;

- psychological competence was studied with the help of tests: methodology for studying empathy (Yusupov, 1992); an express-questionnaire on the study of the "Index of Tolerance" (Soldatova & Shaigerova, 2013);

- methodical competence was studied with the help of a test developed by us; tasks were aimed to determine the degree of mastering methods of diagnostics and design of a psychologically comfortable educational environment, information-communication technologies to prevent negative manifestations among students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities, and the ability to create individual programs of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities

On the basis of experimental data and generalization and analyses of scientific literature, we have developed criteria with the help of which levels of teachers’ special competence in psychological-pedagogical support of disabled school students with troubled behavior (Table 01) were specified.

Table 01. Criteria and levels of teacher's special competence in psychological-pedagogical support for disabled students with troubled behavior in conditions of inclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Components of special professional competence</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theoretical</td>
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<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Availability of fundamental knowledge in the field of troubled behavior etiology in children and adolescents with disabilities; knowledge of mechanisms and classification of types of troubled behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Knowledge in the field of troubled behavior etiology in children and adolescents with disabilities is not systematized and compartmentalized; difficulties in understanding troubled behavior mechanisms in children and adolescents</td>
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with disabilities; fragmentary awareness in the classification of types of troubled behavior development are not systematically manifested in creating individual programs of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities

| Low | Sketchy knowledge in the field of etiology and mechanisms of troubled behavior in children and adolescents with disabilities; lack of knowledge of troubled behavior types classification | Lack of desire to interact with students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities; critical attitude to the perspective of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities | Insufficient knowledge of information and communication technologies aimed to prevent negative manifestations among students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities; lack of skills to create individual programs of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities |

The stating experiment revealed the same percentage of teachers with a low (EG-48%, CG-52%) and average (EG-44%, CG-44%) level, and a low percentage of teachers with a high level (EG-8%, CG-4%) of special professional competence (Table 02). In general, we can say that the initial level of professional competence (theoretical, psychological and methodological) in the issues of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities is the same in both groups of teachers; both groups experienced the same conditions before the experiment.

Table 02. Diagnostic results of the professional competence level of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in conditions of inclusion, %

| Levels | | Professional competence |
|--------| | Experimental group | Control group |
| High   | | 8 | 4 |
| Average| | 44 | 44 |
| Low    | | 48 | 52 |

Thus, experimental research has singled out the need to elaborate a program to form teachers’ special professional competence in issues of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities.

The forming stage

The content, methods and organizational forms of teachers’ training and their preparation for psychological-pedagogical support for students with limited health opportunities and troubled behavior in inclusive education were specified in the forming stage of the experiment as a result of studying the level
of teachers’ special professional competence in the issues of psychological-pedagogical support of students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education. This work resulted in the elaboration of a supplementary professional educational program "Psychological and pedagogical support of students with troubled behavior and disabilities in inclusive education" for teachers’ advanced training.

The program is aimed to form general education teachers’ professional competencies in the context of implementing an inclusive educational process including special competencies: necessary theoretical and psychological knowledge, emotional and personal qualities, the ability to apply methods and techniques for diagnosing and designing a psychologically comfortable educational environment, communication technologies to prevent negative manifestations among students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities.

The objectives of course training were determined in compliance with the goals:
- formation of theoretical knowledge and practical skills of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education
- teacher’s ability to identify dysontogenetic development peculiarities in students with disabilities;
- determination of optimal age for troubles behavior correction;
- teachers’ training in methods and techniques for diagnosing and designing a psychologically comfortable educational environment, information and communication technologies to prevent negative manifestations among students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities;
- formation of a positive psychological attitude to work with children with developmental disorders; development of personal qualities: acceptance of the child, tolerance, empathy, reflexivity, focus on self-development.

This program takes into account the requirements of the Law "About Education in the Russian Federation", State Educational Standards for Higher Professional Education” and Special Federal State Educational Standard.

The content of the program is focused on updating secondary school teachers’ psychological and pedagogical knowledge, on obtaining knowledge in the field of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education, on the formation of necessary skills and psychological readiness to implement professional activities.

The program consists of modules:
(1) Modern legal-regulatory foundations for education of students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education.
(2) Organization of the educational process of students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in an inclusive educational space.
(3) Psychological-pedagogical foundations of teachers’ professional activity to conduct psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education.
(4) Content and procedural aspects of teachers’ professional activity to perform psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education.
(5) Applied aspects of actual problems solutions of teachers’ professional activity to realize psychological-pedagogical support of students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education

Modules include topics that suppose the inclusion of lectures, seminars or practical sessions of students, as well as internships in inclusive educational institutions.

The content of teachers’ training in the system of advanced training:

The program of work included 4 stages:

Stage 1 – secondary school teachers’ training to implement psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education.

The purpose: formation of secondary school teachers’ professional competencies in conditions of inclusive educational process implementation.

The following activities were held in this stage:

1) advanced training courses on the problem of teachers’ competence formation in issues of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education

2) seminars, round tables, business games on the problem of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education, psychological-pedagogical trainings conducted in the intercourse period.

Stage 2 - analytical.

Purpose: comprehension of acquired knowledge.

In this stage of work with teachers, we relied on the activity-based principle and proceeded from the assumption that the level of special professional competence (theoretical, psychological, methodological) in issues of psychological-pedagogical support of students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education gets increased in case of direct immersion in the problem. The stage is aimed at reflecting their own knowledge, skills and abilities within the frames of the studied sections of the program. Group and individual counselling of teachers on emerging issues was conducted.

3 stage - practical

Purpose: to verify the effectiveness of teachers’ special professional (theoretical, psychological, methodological) competence increase in the experimental group in practice.

Knowledge acquired by teachers in this stage has been practically applied for two years, therefore, it allowed teachers to develop necessary personal qualities and consolidate their professional skills of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in inclusive education.

Stage 4 - consolidating

Purpose: awareness of basic guidelines for self-change (development).

Re-examination of teachers’ professional competence and psychological readiness to work with disabled students with troubled behavior in inclusive education was carried out. Seminars, business games, trainings were conducted and the participants of the experiment independently updated issues of psychological-pedagogical support of the above said category of students in inclusive education.
To determine the effectiveness of the program that we developed and to analyze the results of the forming experiment, teachers from the experimental and control groups were recruited for the control experiment. The examination was carried out according to methods of the stating experiment.

Table 03 presents results of the control experiment which clearly shows that the number of teachers with a low level of professional competence has significantly decreased in the formative experiment in the experimental group (before training it was 48%, and after - 16%); the number of teachers with a high level of professional competence (8% and 28%, respectively) has increased by several times. The number of teachers with a low level of professional competence in the control group practically did not change (in the stating experiment - 52%, in the control 48%) during this period; the number of teachers with an average level of professional competence decreased slightly (44% and 40% respectively); the number of teachers with a high level of professional competence has slightly increased (4% and 12%).

The change of teachers’ professional competence in the experimental group took place due to increase in theoretical, psychological and methodological competence.

Table 03. Diagnostic results of the professional competence level of psychological-pedagogical support for students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in conditions of inclusion, %

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<th>Levels</th>
<th>Experimental group</th>
<th>Control group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before</td>
<td>After</td>
<td>Before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>52</td>
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7. Conclusion

The effectiveness of the program in the forming stage of the study was verified and allowed us to draw the following conclusions: the process of teacher’s professional competence formation and training in psychological-pedagogical support of students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities in conditions of inclusion can be effectively implemented in the system of teaching staff advanced training. Teachers’ retraining in compliance with the proposed program can help achieve a higher level of special professional competence formation in the following aspects: necessary theoretical, psychological, methodological knowledge, emotional and personal qualities, the ability to apply methods and techniques for diagnosing and designing a psychologically comfortable educational environment, communication technologies to prevent negative manifestations among students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities. Gradual formation of necessary professional qualities in teacher’s personality assumes systematic work in the intercourse and coursework periods of advanced training. The developed and tested program can be considered as one of the options for teachers’ professional training in the system of teaching staff advanced training and retraining. The scientific novelty and theoretical significance of the research are substantiated by the fact that empirical data obtained and analyzed allow us to determine qualitative characteristics of secondary school teachers’ special professional competence and their readiness for pedagogical activity in inclusive educational conditions. Pedagogical conditions of training teachers in
correctional and pedagogical work with students with troubled behavior and limited health opportunities through the system of advanced training and mastering supplementary education program are determined.

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