

Teacher training internship as a means of future teachers adaptation to work in an inclusive educational environment

(scientific paper)

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Abstract: *The scientific article highlights the relevance of the problem of training future teachers during teacher training internship (pedagogical practice), which is a mandatory component of the process of students' professional training in higher education institution and an important stage of their professional growth. The theoretical aspects, the importance of pedagogical practice as a means of adapting future teachers to work in the conditions of an inclusive educational environment, an integral and core component of the personal and professional development of a young specialist, have been determined. Based on the analysis of scientific sources, publications of scientists on the topic of research, the state of the problem in psychological and pedagogical theory at the current stage is justified.*

Keywords: *inclusive education, inclusive educational environment, future teachers, teacher training internship, pedagogical practice, adaptation of teachers*

1 Introduction

Active integration of national education into the European and world space, humanization of relations between different social groups require improvement of the conditions of socialization of children and youth with special educational needs; demand changes in the orientation of education (preschool, general secondary and higher education) to ensure the accessibility of education for people with special needs, which becomes possible only if inclusion is implemented in the educational sphere, since its development is one of the urgent needs of today.

In the context of European values, inclusive education requires a significant reorientation of society's consciousness and, first of all, practical training of future pedagogical workers to carry out their professional activities (teacher training internship),

taking into account the principles of respect for the individual characteristics of children, tolerance, impartiality and non-discrimination. Today, a number of contradictions have arisen in society between the growing integration of children with special educational needs (SEN) in educational institutions and the lack of specially trained teachers to work with children with SEN in an inclusive environment; between the need for educational practice in qualified specialists who have a high level of formation of inclusive competence, and the traditional content of future teachers professional training. In this perspective, the problem of training future preschool teachers and future primary school teachers to work with children with SEN becomes particularly important.

We consider one of the urgent tasks of the future teachers practical training is a teacher training internship (pedagogical practice) by students as a means of adapting to work in the conditions of an inclusive educational environment, which, according to Article 1 of the Law of Ukraine “On Education”, is defined as a set of conditions, methods and means of their implementation for education and development of education seekers taking into account their needs and capabilities (Law of Ukraine “On Education”, 2023).

Teacher training internship (pedagogical practice) is governed by regulatory documents: Laws of Ukraine “On Education”, “On Higher Education”, “Regulations on the Practice of Students of Higher Educational Institutions of Ukraine” (Ministry of Education and Culture of Ukraine No. 93 dated 08. 04. 1993).

Teacher training internship (pedagogical practice) is a necessary means of professional and personal development of the future teacher as a competent specialist, as well as an indicator of students’ readiness to work in an inclusive environment. This will enable future teachers to deepen, improve and consolidate practical skills and abilities necessary for further professional activity.

The aim of the article is to consider the issue of the importance and current content of pedagogical practice as a means of adapting future teachers to work in an inclusive educational environment.

Analysis of the main studies and publications on the specified problem. Today, it is an undeniable fact that the problem of training future teachers to work in an inclusive educational environment is multifaceted and many-sided. Ways of professional training of future teachers to work with children with SEN are explored by O. Denisova, O. Martynova, V. Poncarova, N. Romanovych and others. Scientists A. Anishchuk, L. Zdanevich, I. Kuzava in their works revealed the content and aspects of the formation of professional training of educators for inclusive education. A. Kolupaeva, K. Kolchenko, G. Nikulina and P. Talanchuk, M. Tchaikovsky substantiated the conceptual principles of teaching people with SEN in an inclusive educational environment. Scientists consider an inclusive educational environment as one that provides all subjects of the educational process with opportunities for

effective self-development, involves solving the problem of educating children and youth with special needs by adapting the educational space to the needs of each participant in the educational process, including reforming this process, methodological flexibility and variability, a favorable psychological climate in the educational team and the institution, equipment of premises for the needs of all participants, which ensures their full participation in the educational process.

In the perspective of the problem of our research, we note a significant number of scientific works aimed at finding effective ways of preparing future teachers to work in the conditions of an inclusive educational environment, among them O. Martynchuk (features of preparing future educators for the introduction of inclusive forms of education in educational practice; components of professional and personal readiness to work in the conditions of inclusive education), theory and practice of training specialists in special education for professional activity in an inclusive educational environment (Martynchuk, 2019); S. Chupakhina (formation of the readiness of future teachers to use information technologies in the inclusive education of students with special educational needs) (S. Chupakhina, 2020); O. Akimova, K. Bovkush, V. Bondar, L. Grechko, I. Demchenko, A. Kolupaeva, O. Fedorenko, Z. Shevtsiv, Z. Udych (professional training of future primary school teachers to work in an inclusive environment of general secondary schools education) (Shevtsiv, 2017); S. Sydoriv (professional training of future primary school teachers to organize an inclusive educational environment as a psychological and pedagogical problem) (Sydoriv, 2022); O. Kasiyanenko (formation of the readiness of future educators to work with preschool children in conditions of inclusion) (Kasiyanenko, 2018); S. Alekhina, D. Akhmetova, O. Denisova, E. Kutepova, O. Martynova, V. Ponikarova, N. Romanovych (ways of professional training of future teachers to work in the conditions of inclusive education); I. Hafizullina, Yu. Shumilivska (readiness of the future teacher to work with children in the conditions of inclusive education); N. Agarkova, T. Dzhaman (training of future educators and primary school teachers to work with children with special educational needs) (Agarkova, 2019); S. Alyokhina, Yu. Boychuk, O. Borodina (formation of inclusive competence of teachers and educators of preschool education institutions). The problems of organization, meaning and content of pedagogical practice as a means of adapting future teachers to work in an inclusive environment were briefly considered by O. Hordiychuk (Hordiychuk, 2020), V. Shevchenko (Shevchenko, 2018). I. Malyshevska (Malyshevska, 2016) was engaged in the study of a professionally-oriented strategy for training specialists to work in the conditions of an inclusive educational environment.

2 Results and Discussion

N. Agarkova singles out theoretical, practical and personal components of improving the professional training of future teachers to work in an inclusive environment (Agarkova, 2019). According to the researcher, special attention should be paid to the theoretical and practical components, because the educational practice in educational institutions convinces that most of the teachers are not ready to effectively work with children in an inclusive environment.

V. Shevchenko emphasizes that clearly planned and professionally organized pedagogical practice plays an important role in the formation of practical work skills in an inclusive educational environment (Shevchenko, 2018). O. Borodina claims that in order to provide better conditions for the educational process in an inclusive environment, future teachers need to maintain close cooperation with parents in the process of pedagogical practice, take into account their wishes and recommendations (Borodina, 2014).

Today, it can be confidently said that it is teacher training internship (pedagogical practice) that has all the potential to ensure the interconnection and unity of theoretical and practical training of students with their activities in educational institutions and is designed to ensure high professional competence and professional culture of future teachers. The expressed opinion is confirmed by the scientific views of the scientist L. Khomych that “pedagogical practice” ... “has great opportunities for forming a creative attitude to pedagogical activity, for determining the degree of professional ability and the level of pedagogical orientation” (Khomych, 1998: 167).

Teacher training internship (pedagogical practice of future teachers) is a means of their adaptation to work in an inclusive environment, because students have the opportunity to face the real problems of implementing an inclusive strategies in the education system of Ukraine; observe and work with children of different categories; to study their features using a set of specially selected methods; carry out an early diagnosis of interests and abilities; communicate with parents of children; solve problems in cooperation with experienced teachers; develop a sense of responsibility, tolerance.

At the beginning of the professional activity of young teachers, the problem of their insufficient psychological and methodical preparation for working with children with SEN often arises, there is no motivation to work with this category of children, there is a lack of professional competence to work in an inclusive environment, the presence of psychological barriers, professional stereotypes. The main psychological “barrier” is fear of the unknown, fear of negative influence of inclusion for the rest of the educational process participants, negative attitudes, professional insecurity of the future teacher, psychological inability to adapt to various pedagogical situations that arise. Future teachers, designing an inclusive educational process, face

the difficulties of choosing optimal ways of organizing coeducation of children with SEN, which is important for meeting their special educational needs, and children with normal development to overcome negativity in their attitude towards peers with psychophysical problems, etc.

Students, having gained practical experience of the first professional attempts to interact with the participants of the educational process in an educational institution, understand the need to acquire special knowledge and skills. After all, educational institutions determine the order for the implementation of individual educational approaches to different contingents of students: children with special educational needs, children with deviant behavior, gifted children, socially vulnerable children, migrant children, orphans, etc.

The teacher training internship (production practice of future teachers) is an integral and core component of the personal and professional development of a young specialist, a connecting link between theoretical training and independent work in educational institutions. During the period of practice, the formation of professional abilities, skills and competences takes place especially intensively, since it is carried out in conditions as close as possible to future professional activity, aimed at solving specific professional educational tasks.

Teacher training internship (pedagogical practice) helps the future teacher consciously accept the philosophy of inclusion; learn to observe children, noting the slightest changes in their behavior and learning; overcome fears and debunk superstitions related to the education of children with special needs; identify gaps in professional knowledge and set goals for filling them; identify resources for organizing successful pedagogical activities.

Teacher training internship (pedagogical practice) ensures the establishment of a direct connection between theoretical knowledge and practice, since in the conditions of real professional activity there is an integration of students' knowledge and practical skills, which determines their mastery of the professional competence components.

Currently, the training of future teachers to work in an inclusive environment should be based on a competency-based approach and be aimed at improving the theoretical and practical areas of educational courses, in particular, Teacher training internship (pedagogical practice). We agree with the opinion of N. Agarkova that "pedagogical training of students at the university is an effective means of personal and professional improvement of future specialists" by mastering psychological and pedagogical competencies (Agarkova, 2019:76).

In order to fully develop the inclusive competence of the future teacher, it is necessary to attend parents meetings during pedagogical practice. Such meetings are passive for future teachers at the beginning, the student-listener takes over the experience of senior colleagues. The next step is active participation in an information and

educational campaign, the purpose of which is to increase the level of awareness of parents regarding inclusion and various options for obtaining education for children with special educational needs (Borodina, 2014).

It is during pedagogical practice that students learn to consciously perceive the process of inclusion, to be responsible, to increase their knowledge of related specialties, to be ready to discuss problems, to acquire skills in resolving pedagogical conflicts, to be able to make the transition from pedagogical stereotypes of a directive model to flexible pedagogical thinking, initiative, creativity and adaptability. At the stage of teacher training internship (pedagogical practice), it is important to learn to create an environment that will promote the development of both children with special educational needs and children with normal development.

The experience showed that during pedagogical practice, future teachers have to learn to cooperate with various specialists who will help ensure the understanding and implementation of individualized learning, gain experience in better organizing the educational process with the entire group of children, have an individual approach, become more reflective and sensitive.

Teacher training internship (pedagogical practice of future teachers and educators) also involves acquiring the skills and experience to foresee various ways of including children with special developmental needs in the educational process: accepting children with special educational needs like other children in the group; involve children in group forms of work, joint problem solving; include them in the same types of active activities as other children, but set different tasks for them; in working with children, use active forms of learning such as games, projects, dramatizations, artistic creativity, modeling, constructive-building activities, search and research activities.

Teacher training internship (pedagogical practice) in Inclusive Resource Center and Rehabilitation Centers provides an opportunity for future teachers to familiarize themselves with a complex of rehabilitation measures (medical, physical, psychological, pedagogical) aimed at preventing and correcting developmental disorders of children with special educational needs.

In order to effectively organize an inclusive educational space, it is necessary, first of all, to provide personnel, which involves the training of multi-professional specialists team to work with children with special needs. And that is why it is important to ensure the constant active connection of the block of disciplines of psychological and pedagogical orientation with the practical work of various educational institutions. High activity in the process of independent work of future teachers in mastering the system of knowledge, abilities and skills in the cycle of pedagogical, social, psychological disciplines, in combination with the involvement of students in research activities will provide the necessary basis for the qualitative formation of skills and abilities to work with children with special needs.

Knowledge of the main stages of working with children with special educational needs and the main types of activities at these stages will help ensure the adaptation of future teachers to effective work in the conditions of an inclusive educational environment.

The diagnostic stage involves mastering diagnostic activities, the ability to organize and conduct a diagnostic study, to make a correct socio-pedagogical diagnosis.

The analytical and prognostic stage includes analytical activities for the study of intellectual, psycho-physiological, general personal capabilities of children, as well as the selection of leading ways of child's development and correction. The ability to predict is also necessary to observe the results of certain actions in the conditions of pedagogical practice.

The project stage involves the ability of the future teacher to set goals according to the results of the diagnosis, competently plan his activities, as well as the work of other participants in the educational process. It includes the development of an individual plan, a curriculum, a special educational program, a program for the inclusion of a child with developmental disabilities in the environment of healthy peers.

The activity stage is aimed at implementing an individual program of correction and development, including the child in joint activities with peers.

The evaluation stage involves the analysis and evaluation of the results of the work performed, the adjustment of the implementation process of the individual development program.

It is important for students to emphasize the fact that it is important not only to know specific methods, ways and techniques of teaching, the ability to use information resources, but also to have a certain attitude towards working with children with SEN.

Future teachers also need to master the consultative activity, which provides the opportunity to organize informational and educational support for all participants in the educational process, as well as the ability to carry out self-development and constant professional self-improvement.

On the eve of pedagogical practice, students noted: a) the presence of a feeling of anxiety and incompetence in matters of inclusive education; b) changes during the practice of attitudes towards inclusion from existing or latent resistance to awareness of the positive effects of inclusive education. The future teachers noted the following changes: mastering the knowledge of the characteristics of children with special educational needs, meaningful and procedural filling of the teacher training activity, which is worked out during practical classes, leveled the feeling of fear and professional incompetence.

3 Conclusion

The problem of preparing future teachers to work in an inclusive educational environment by means of teacher training internship (pedagogical practice) remains relevant and requires further research. In order to prepare and adapt future teachers to work in an inclusive environment during teacher training internship (pedagogical practice), targeted work is needed to improve knowledge of methodological preparation for working with children with special needs, learning to work in a team, to cooperate with all participants in the educational process, to learn new things and to spread the acquired knowledge experience. However, due to the insufficient development of this system in scientific and pedagogical research, there is an urgent need for theoretical and methodical improvement of the content of pedagogical practice as part of the professional training of future teachers to work in the conditions of an inclusive educational environment. We see the prospect of further research in the organization of pedagogical practice for working in distance learning conditions with children with special educational needs.

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