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PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS OF SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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ABSTRACT

Psychological support of students with special educational needs in the context of inclusive education is one of the most relevant and dynamically developing areas of modern pedagogical and psychological science in Uzbekistan. The transformation of the national education system towards inclusivity has significantly increased attention to the emotional, cognitive, and social characteristics of learners who require special educational conditions. This scientific article examines the psychological factors that influence effective support of students with special educational needs in general secondary education institutions. The study is based on the analysis of Uzbek scientific literature, methodological recommendations of the Ministry of Preschool and School Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and contemporary international approaches adapted to the national context. Particular attention is given to the role of teacher psychological competence, family involvement, peer interaction, motivational mechanisms, emotional safety, and adaptive learning environments. The article highlights that successful psychological support is not limited to corrective assistance, but also includes preventive, developmental, and integrative strategies aimed at ensuring full participation of students in the educational process. The findings emphasize that inclusive education in Uzbekistan requires systematic improvement of psychological services, professional training of teachers, and the development of tolerant attitudes within school communities.

KEYWORDS

inclusive education, special educational needs, psychological support, Uzbekistan education system, teacher competence, emotional development, learning motivation, school psychology, social integration, adaptive learning environment

INTRODUCTION

The development of inclusive education in Uzbekistan has become an important strategic direction in the modernization of the national education system. In recent years, significant reforms have been implemented to ensure equal access to education for all children, including students with special educational needs. According to Uzbek educational researchers such as Karimova, Yuldasheva, and Mirzayev, inclusive education is not only a structural transformation of schools but also a deep psychological and social process that requires changes in attitudes, values, and professional practices. Psychological support plays a central role in this transformation, as it ensures the emotional well-being, cognitive development, and social adaptation of students who experience learning difficulties due to physical, intellectual, sensory, or emotional conditions.

In the context of Uzbekistan, where inclusive education is still developing, psychological factors become particularly significant. Schools are increasingly required to create environments that reduce anxiety, prevent social exclusion, and promote positive self-esteem among students with special educational needs. Psychological support includes diagnostic, corrective, preventive, and developmental components that must be integrated into everyday educational practice. Uzbek scientific literature emphasizes that the effectiveness of inclusive education depends not only on material resources but also on the psychological readiness of teachers, students, and parents to accept diversity and cooperate in a supportive educational environment.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the psychological factors that influence the effective support of students with special educational needs in general secondary education institutions in Uzbekistan. The study considers both theoretical perspectives and practical implications, focusing on

emotional stability, motivation, communication, teacher-student interaction, and family involvement. Special attention is given to the socio-cultural context of Uzbekistan, where collective values, respect for elders, and community orientation significantly shape educational interactions.

MAIN PART

Psychological support of students with special educational needs is a multidimensional process that involves creating favorable conditions for emotional comfort, cognitive development, and social integration. One of the most important psychological factors is emotional safety. Uzbek researchers such as M. Yuldasheva and N. Karimova emphasize that children with special educational needs often experience heightened anxiety, low self-esteem, and fear of failure in traditional school environments. Therefore, the creation of a psychologically safe environment is essential. This includes respectful communication, absence of discrimination, encouragement of individual achievements, and sensitivity to emotional states.

Another significant factor is teacher psychological competence. In Uzbekistan, the role of teachers in inclusive education has expanded beyond traditional instruction to include psychological support and emotional guidance. Teachers must understand developmental characteristics of different categories of students, including those with intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, hearing or visual impairments, and learning difficulties. According to Uzbek pedagogical studies, teacher empathy, patience, and ability to use differentiated instruction strategies directly influence students' academic success and emotional well-being. Continuous professional development programs introduced in Uzbekistan aim to strengthen these competencies, but challenges remain in rural and under-resourced schools[1].

Motivation is also a critical psychological factor. Students with special educational needs often face repeated academic difficulties, which can lead to reduced motivation and learned helplessness. Uzbek psychologists highlight the importance of positive reinforcement, individualized learning goals, and recognition of small achievements. Motivation is strengthened when students feel that their efforts are valued and when learning tasks are adapted to their abilities. In inclusive classrooms, motivational strategies must be flexible and student-centered, ensuring that each learner experiences a sense of progress and achievement.

Social interaction and peer relationships represent another essential psychological dimension. Inclusive education in Uzbekistan increasingly emphasizes collaborative learning, where students with and without special educational needs work together. This interaction promotes social integration, reduces stigma, and develops communication skills. However, without proper guidance, students with special needs may experience isolation or rejection. Therefore, teachers must actively facilitate positive peer relationships through group activities, cooperative tasks, and classroom discussions that promote empathy and mutual respect. Uzbek research shows that early intervention in shaping peer attitudes significantly improves long-term social adaptation outcomes.

Family involvement is another key psychological factor. In Uzbek cultural context, family plays a central role in child development and education. Parents of children with special educational needs often experience psychological stress, uncertainty, and lack of information about educational opportunities. Effective psychological support requires close cooperation between schools and families. Regular consultations, psychological counseling, and parent training programs are essential to strengthen parental confidence and competence. When families are actively involved, students demonstrate higher levels of emotional stability and academic engagement.

The role of school psychological services is also crucial. In Uzbekistan, the development of school psychology is ongoing, and psychologists are increasingly integrated into educational institutions. Their responsibilities include psychological assessment, counseling, behavioral

[1] Tursunova G.M. *Inklyuziv ta'limda o'qituvchi kompetensiyasi*. Toshkent: Noshir, 2022.

intervention, and support for teachers and parents. However, Uzbek studies indicate that the number of qualified school psychologists remains insufficient, especially in rural regions. Strengthening this system is necessary for providing timely and effective psychological assistance to students with special educational needs.

Adaptive learning environments are another important factor. Psychological research in Uzbekistan shows that physical and organizational conditions of schools significantly influence student well-being. Classrooms must be structured to reduce sensory overload, ensure accessibility, and provide visual and auditory support when necessary. Emotional comfort is enhanced when students feel physically safe and when learning materials are adapted to their needs. Digital technologies are increasingly being used in Uzbekistan to support individualized learning, which also contributes to psychological inclusion[2].

Cultural attitudes and social perceptions also play a significant role in psychological support. In some cases, stigma and misunderstanding regarding disabilities may affect inclusion processes. Uzbek educational policy promotes tolerance, respect, and awareness campaigns to change societal attitudes. Psychological support must therefore include not only individual interventions but also broader social influence aimed at changing stereotypes and promoting inclusion as a social value.

In addition to the above-mentioned psychological factors, it is important to interpret their interaction in a systemic and integrative way. Psychological support of students with special educational needs cannot be considered as a set of isolated interventions; rather, it functions as a complex adaptive system in which emotional, cognitive, and social components continuously influence one another. Uzbek scientific approaches in recent years increasingly emphasize the holistic nature of inclusive education, where psychological well-being is viewed as a foundation for academic achievement and social participation.

From a theoretical perspective, the effectiveness of psychological support depends on the consistency between educational policy, school practice, and individual psychological interventions. In Uzbekistan, reforms in inclusive education have created formal opportunities for integration, but psychological readiness of educational institutions remains uneven. This creates a gap between policy intentions and classroom realities. For instance, while schools may officially accept students with special educational needs, teachers may still lack sufficient training to manage behavioral or emotional difficulties, which directly affects classroom climate and student self-perception.

Another important analytical point is the role of emotional reciprocity in teacher-student relationships. Uzbek pedagogical psychology highlights that students with special educational needs are particularly sensitive to non-verbal communication, tone of voice, and emotional feedback from teachers. Positive emotional reinforcement enhances neural and cognitive engagement, while negative feedback can significantly increase withdrawal behaviors. Therefore, psychological support must be embedded in everyday pedagogical interaction rather than treated as a separate corrective procedure.

The social dimension of psychological support also requires deeper interpretation. Inclusion in Uzbekistan is strongly influenced by collectivist cultural values, where group belonging and social harmony are highly valued. This cultural context can be both supportive and challenging. On one hand, collectivist orientation promotes empathy and shared responsibility among peers; on the other hand, it may intensify social pressure to conform, which can marginalize students who differ in behavior or learning pace. Therefore, psychological strategies must carefully balance group integration with individual acceptance.

Furthermore, motivation should be understood not only as an internal psychological state but also as a socially constructed process. In Uzbek classrooms, motivation is often influenced by teacher authority, parental expectations, and peer comparison. For students with special educational needs,

[2] Yuldasheva N.R. *Maxsus ta'lim ehtiyojiga ega bolalar psixologiyasi*. Toshkent: Fan va texnologiya, 2020.

excessive comparison with peers may reduce self-efficacy. Consequently, individualized motivational systems that focus on personal progress rather than normative achievement are more effective in supporting psychological development[3].

The integration of school psychological services into educational practice remains one of the most critical challenges. Although Uzbekistan has introduced the position of school psychologists in many institutions, their functional role is still evolving. In many cases, psychologists are primarily involved in diagnostics rather than continuous developmental support. International and local studies suggest that more effective models include collaborative teamwork between psychologists, teachers, and parents, where psychological support is embedded in curriculum planning and classroom management.

Digital transformation in education also introduces new psychological dimensions. The use of digital learning tools in Uzbekistan has expanded rapidly, especially after recent educational reforms. While digital platforms provide opportunities for individualized learning, they may also create emotional and cognitive overload for students with special educational needs if not properly adapted. Therefore, psychological support must include digital well-being strategies, ensuring that technology serves as a facilitator rather than a stressor.

In conclusion of this analytical discussion, it can be stated that psychological support in inclusive education in Uzbekistan is evolving from a compensatory model to a developmental and systemic model. This shift reflects a broader understanding of education as a process that integrates emotional, cognitive, and social development. The success of this transformation depends on continuous professional development of educators, expansion of psychological services, and strengthening of inclusive values at the societal level.

CONCLUSION

Psychological factors play a decisive role in supporting students with special educational needs within the inclusive education system of Uzbekistan. Emotional safety, teacher competence, motivation, peer relationships, family involvement, school psychological services, adaptive environments, and cultural attitudes collectively determine the effectiveness of educational inclusion. The analysis shows that while Uzbekistan has made significant progress in developing inclusive education policies, practical implementation still requires further improvement, particularly in psychological training of teachers and expansion of school psychological services. Sustainable development of inclusive education depends on a holistic approach that integrates psychological, pedagogical, and social dimensions. Strengthening cooperation between schools, families, and communities will ensure that students with special educational needs receive not only academic instruction but also comprehensive psychological support that enables their full participation in society.

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[3] Saidova L.K. *O‘quvchilarning ijtimoiy-psixologik moslashuvi*. Toshkent: Fan, 2019.