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PEDAGOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION OF FAMILY AND SCHOOL COOPERATION IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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Abstract. The article analyzes the pedagogical foundations of organizing effective family and school cooperation in inclusive education. The purpose of the research is to identify key contradictions in the current state of family-school cooperation at the primary education stage and to theoretically substantiate a technology for its step-by-step development. Comparative analysis, systematization, generalization, and theoretical modeling methods of scientific and pedagogical literature were utilized. As a result, four levels of family and school interaction—awareness, consultation, participation, and partnership—were identified, which can be utilized by school administrations and special educators.

Keywords: inclusive education, family and school cooperation, parental involvement, pedagogical partnership, special educational needs, individual educational plan, environment of trust, primary education, parental competence.

I. Introduction

The effectiveness of inclusive education is determined not so much by the organizational capabilities of the educational institution, but by the integrity of the educational environment surrounding the child. A child with special educational needs spends part of the day at school and the main part with the family. Therefore, if skills formed at school are not supported in the family, or if family requirements conflict with school requirements, the pedagogical impact loses its strength. In U. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, the connection between microsystems—the mesosystem—is also regarded as an independent developmental factor for child development.

The legal framework for family and school cooperation is established in international and national documents. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities specifies the necessity of family participation and support in the educational process. UNESCO's policy guidelines on inclusion highlight parents as key actors in implementing inclusive education [12; 13]. While the Law "On Education" defines the rights and obligations of parents in the educational process [1], the Concept for the Development of Inclusive Education in the Public Education System for 2020–2025 specifically notes working with parents and enhancing their pedagogical literacy as a dedicated task [2].

At the same time, in practice, family-school relationships often remain within the framework of one-way information provision: parent-teacher meetings, reporting on child progress, and in some cases, presenting demands. In such interaction, the parent appears not as a subject of the educational process, but as a passive recipient of information. However, when working with a child with special educational needs, it is precisely the parent who possesses the most complete information about the child's capabilities, mood swings, fatigue limits, and motivational triggers. If this information is not

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taken into account in the educational process, the individual approach assumes a purely formal character.

The relevance of the problem is explained by the following contradiction: on one hand, the necessity of family-school partnership is recognized in normative documents and pedagogical theory; on the other hand, in primary education practice, a clear pedagogical technology for step-by-step development of this cooperation—that is, transitioning from simple notification to genuine partnership—has not been sufficiently developed.

The purpose of the study is to identify contradictions in the current state of family and school cooperation in inclusive education conditions and to theoretically substantiate a stepped pedagogical technology for its effective organization.

II. Literature Review

The problem of family and school cooperation has been systematically studied in global pedagogy for many years. The theory of "overlapping spheres of influence" founded by J.L. Epstein serves as a major conceptual framework in this direction. The author interprets family, school, and community influences not as isolated domains, but as partially overlapping systems that jointly impact child development, identifying six types of parental involvement: parenting support, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community.

K.V. Hoover-Dempsey and H.M. Sandler propose a model explaining parents' motivation to become involved in the educational process. According to them, parental involvement depends on three factors: how they understand their role, their confidence in their ability to help the child, and how much they are invited by the school. This principle is of special significance for inclusive education, as parents of children with special needs often experience self-doubt in the form of "I am not a specialist, I cannot help."

J. Goodall and C. Montgomery differentiate between parental "involvement" and "engagement," substantiating a continuous continuum between them: from school-initiated participation to the state where parents take responsibility for their child's education. This idea served as a methodological basis for the leveled model developed in this article.

G. Hornby and R. Lafaele proposed a model explaining factors that hinder parental involvement, categorizing them into groups related to parents and family, child, parent-teacher relationship, and societal factors. In a subsequent study, G. Hornby and I. Blackwell noted that a portion of these barriers persisted over a decade, particularly the lack of special teacher training for working with parents.

In the field of special education, A. Turnbull and co-authors developed the family-professional partnership concept, identifying communication, professional competence, respect, commitment, equality, and trust as its key components; the authors emphasize that trust is the central element uniting these components. J.A. Summers and co-authors developed tools to measure partnership quality, proving that families place greater emphasis on the quality of the relationship than on professional qualifications when evaluating specialists.

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The impact of parental involvement on educational outcomes has also been empirically confirmed. In a meta-analysis by H. Fan and M. Chen, a positive correlation was shown between parental involvement and student educational outcomes, with parental expectations regarding child education being the strongest factor. C. Desforges and A. Abouchaar noted that the supportive home environment impacts child educational achievement at a level no less than school factors.

In local studies, A.K. Khalikov substantiates the role of pedagogical cooperation in the social adaptation of youth with special needs, interpreting this process as the result of coordinated activities between various specialists and the family.

The analysis shows that existing research sufficiently covers the theoretical foundations and barriers of family-school cooperation. At the same time, under the conditions of primary education in Uzbekistan, a technology for gradually elevating this cooperation from simple awareness to partnership has not been developed. This article is aimed at filling this gap.

III. Materials and Methods

By nature, the study is a theoretical-analytical research. Its methodological foundation consists of a systemic approach, ecological approach, person-centered approach, and the principles of equality and participation in inclusive education.

The following set of methods was used in the research:
(1) theoretical analysis of scientific and pedagogical literature – foreign and local sources, international organization documents, and national regulatory legal frameworks were studied;
(2) comparative analysis – approaches of J.L. Epstein, K.V. Hoover-Dempsey & H.M. Sandler, J. Goodall & C. Montgomery, G. Hornby, and A. Turnbull were compared;
(3) classification – factors hindering cooperation were grouped according to their source;
(4) generalization and systematization;
(5) theoretical modeling – a leveled model of cooperation and a stepped pedagogical technology were developed.

In forming the leveled model, J. Goodall and C. Montgomery's idea of transitioning from involvement to engagement as well as J.L. Epstein's types of parental involvement were taken as a basis and adapted to inclusive education conditions in primary grades. The classification of barriers was restructured based on the G. Hornby and R. Lafaele model, while taking into account the organizational characteristics of the national education system.

IV. Results

The analysis results indicated that it is expedient to view family and school cooperation not as a single, indivisible state, but as a system of qualitatively distinct sequential levels. Each level differs in the parent's role in the educational process, the school's attitude towards them, and the pedagogical outcome achieved (Table 1).

Level	Parent's Role	Main Forms	Achieved Outcome

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I. Awareness	Information receiver (passive)	Parent-teacher meetings, diaries, newsletters, open door days	Parent is aware of events, but does not affect the process
II. Consultation	Consultee and opinion provider	Individual conversations, educator-psychologist consultations, parents' university	Parental pedagogical literacy increases, mistrust decreases
III. Participation	Active participant in activities	Joint execution of home exercises, participation in class events, keeping observation diaries	School and family requirements harmonize, skills are reinforced
IV. Partnership	Equal decision-making subject	Joint drafting and reviewing of Individual Education Plans (IEP), aligning goals	Unified educational strategy, distribution of responsibility, and trust environment

Table 1. Levels of family and school interaction in inclusive education

These levels are not mutually exclusive, but rather overlay each other: higher levels include lower levels. In practice, relationships in most educational institutions stop at the first and second levels. The pedagogical task consists of consistently raising relationships to the third and fourth levels, because it is precisely at the partnership level that parents share responsibility with the school for their child's education.

The analysis also allowed the identification of factors hindering cooperation. They were divided into three groups based on their origin, which serves to clearly define who bears responsibility for eliminating each barrier (Table 2).

Source	Barrier	Pedagogical Solution for Elimination
Family Level	Parental self-doubt like "I am not a specialist"; social stigma and embarrassment; time and workload constraints; lack of pedagogical knowledge	Building success experience through small and clear tasks; establishing parent mutual support groups; adapting communication time and format to family

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		possibilities
School Level	One-sided communication; contacting only when problems arise; language full of incomprehensible professional terminology; lack of teacher training for working with parents	Implementing a regular and planned feedback system; rule of also reporting child successes; communicating in simple and clear language; dedicated professional development modules for teachers
System Level	Lack of normative formalization of cooperation; lack of time resources for teachers; shortage of specialists (psychologists, defectologists)	Including cooperation as a separate direction in the school's annual plan; maintaining the Individual Education Plan as a mandatory document; establishing network cooperation with specialists

Table 2. Classification of factors hindering family and school cooperation and pedagogical solutions

Based on the above analysis, a four-stage pedagogical technology for organizing cooperation was developed. The core idea of the technology is that partnership is formed not through a one-off event, but through a recurring, consistent cycle throughout the academic year (Table 3).

Stage	Purpose and Main Content	Expected Outcome
1. Diagnostic	Studying family opportunities, upbringing styles, expectations, and difficulties; gathering data on child's home behavior; identifying initial level of cooperation	Holistic understanding of the family; clear starting point for cooperation
2. Designing	Jointly setting child's zone of proximal development goals with parents; agreeing on the IEP; clearly dividing tasks between school and family	Document reflecting agreed goals and distribution of responsibilities
3. Practical	Executing agreed tasks; regular feedback; providing actionable,	Harmonization of school and family requirements;

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	realistic home activity recommendations to family; involving parents in class activities	reinforcement of child's skills
4. Reflective	Jointly analyzing achieved outcomes with parents; discussing difficulties; re-defining goals for the next period	Strengthening relationship of trust; cycle repeats at a new level

Table 3. Stepped pedagogical technology for organizing family and school cooperation

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) was identified as the central mechanism of the technology. This document serves as a tool that unites family and school around a common goal, clearly divides responsibilities, and enables outcome evaluation. When the plan is created jointly with parents rather than merely presented to them, relationships elevate to the fourth level—partnership.

V. Discussion

The results obtained clarify the idea of transitioning from involvement to engagement formulated by J. Goodall and C. Montgomery within primary inclusive education material. The continuum proposed by the authors was categorized into four practical levels accessible to educators, associating relevant cooperation formats with each level. This allows teachers to determine the current level of relationship in their class and outline subsequent steps.

The developed classification of barriers differs structurally from the model by G. Hornby and R. Lafaele. While barriers in the original model were separated by source of influence (parents, child, relationship, society), the proposed classification groups them by responsibility for elimination. Such an approach transforms a theoretical description into a managerial decision: an actor responsible for overcoming each barrier is clearly designated.

Research findings support the conclusions of A. Turnbull and co-authors regarding trust as a central element of partnership, as well as data from J.A. Summers and co-authors indicating that families focus more on relationship quality than professional qualifications when evaluating specialists. Hence, the fourth stage (reflective) of the proposed technology is viewed not as formal reporting, but as a key link that strengthens trust.

Based on the model of K.V. Hoover-Dempsey and H.M. Sandler, building parental confidence in their abilities plays a crucial role in increasing involvement. Therefore, in the third stage of the technology, home assignments given to families must be clear, concise, and manageable: unfeasible recommendations reinforce parental guilt and alienate them from cooperation.

Specific national conditions must also be considered. In the context of Uzbekistan, family reluctance to speak openly about a child's disability, fear of relative and community judgment can present significant hurdles. Under such conditions, the primary task of the educator is not merely delivering information, but creating a trustworthy, non-judgmental communication space.

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Limitations of the study should also be noted. The proposed leveled model and stepped technology were developed based on theoretical analysis, and their effectiveness needs validation through empirical testing. Furthermore, the model is presented in a general form; developing differentiated variants based on socioeconomic family status, urban vs. rural conditions, and specific types of child disabilities remains a task for future research.

VI. Conclusion

In inclusive education, family and school cooperation is not an optional organizational event, but a primary pedagogical condition determining educational efficacy. The development of a child with special educational needs directly depends on the harmonization degree of school and family demands.

Within the framework of the study, four levels of family and school interaction were identified: awareness, consultation, participation, and partnership. The objective of pedagogical activity is not to maintain relationships at lower levels, but to elevate them to the partnership level, where parents participate as equal decision-makers.

Factors hindering cooperation were classified into three groups: family, school, and system levels. Such a classification allows assigning responsibility for overcoming each barrier to a specific entity and constructing targeted action plans accordingly.

The developed four-stage pedagogical technology (diagnostic, designing, practical, reflective) serves to structure cooperation as a recurring, consistent cycle throughout the school year. Its core mechanism is the Individual Education Plan formulated jointly with parents. Future research should focus on experimentally testing this technology's effectiveness and differentiating it for various family categories.

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