

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

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Abstract:

This article is devoted to the main problems and solutions in the process of introducing and developing inclusive education in the Republic of Uzbekistan. It analyzes the theoretical foundations of inclusive education, the reforms being implemented in Uzbekistan, the legal framework, infrastructural challenges, the teacher training system, and the attitude of society. Based on the best practices of various countries, the paper presents proposals and recommendations for improving inclusive education under Uzbekistan's conditions.

Keywords: Inclusive education, disability, educational reforms, legal framework, infrastructure, teaching staff, social readiness, Uzbekistan.

Introduction

Inclusive education is a system based on the principle that all children — including those with different abilities and disabilities — study together in general education institutions. Worldwide, inclusive education began to develop in the late 1980s and is now widely practiced in many developed countries.

After gaining independence, the Republic of Uzbekistan began implementing large-scale reforms in the field of education. The Law “On Education” (2012) and the Regulation “On Inclusive Education” (2020) established the legal foundation for the development of inclusive education. However, in practice, this process is still associated with a number of challenges.

The purpose of this article is to identify the main problems in the development of inclusive education in Uzbekistan and to propose effective solutions.

1. Theoretical Foundations and International Experience of Inclusive Education

The theoretical basis of inclusive education is grounded in the principles of human rights, equality, and justice. International experience demonstrates that a successful inclusive education system depends on several key factors:

- Strong legal framework: Many countries have well-developed legislation supporting inclusive education (for example, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the United States).
- Developed infrastructure: School buildings and classrooms are adapted to the needs of students with various disabilities.
- Qualified personnel training: Specially trained teachers are prepared to implement inclusive education.
- Social readiness: Parents and the public maintain a positive attitude toward inclusive education.

The experiences of countries such as Sweden, Canada, and Finland show that inclusive education is effective not only for children with disabilities but also for all students, as it promotes tolerance and mutual understanding.

2. Current State of Inclusive Education in Uzbekistan

A number of reforms have been implemented in Uzbekistan to promote inclusive education:

- Legal framework:
- Law “On Education” (2020)
- Regulation “On Inclusive Education” (2020)
- Law “On the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” (2021)
- State programs:
- The Concept for the Development of Inclusive Education for 2022–2026 has been adopted.
- Practical projects:
- Within the “Education for All” initiative, inclusive education is being introduced in a number of schools.

However, according to statistics, only 15–20% of children with disabilities currently study in general education institutions; the rest continue their education in special boarding schools.

3. Main Problems in the Development of Inclusive Education in Uzbekistan

The development of inclusive education in Uzbekistan faces several major challenges:

- Infrastructure issues:
Many school buildings are not adapted for students with disabilities — there are no ramps, elevators, or special restrooms.
- Teacher training deficiencies:
Higher education institutions in pedagogy have not yet fully developed specialized programs for training teachers in inclusive education.
- Insufficient didactic and methodological materials:
There is a shortage of adapted curricula, textbooks, and learning aids for students with disabilities.
- Lack of social awareness:
Many parents — and even some teachers — still doubt the effectiveness of inclusive education.
- Financial constraints:

Funding allocated for the development of inclusive education remains insufficient.

4. Ways to Solve the Problems of Inclusive Education

To address the above challenges, the following measures should be taken:

- Modernizing infrastructure:

All new school buildings should be constructed according to universal design principles, while existing facilities should be gradually renovated to ensure accessibility.

- Improving the teacher training system:

Introduce “Inclusive Education” as a separate specialization in pedagogical universities and organize professional development courses for practicing teachers.

- Developing educational and methodological materials:

Create special curricula, textbooks, and didactic resources for students with different types of disabilities.

- Raising public awareness:

Conduct public campaigns through mass media to highlight the importance and effectiveness of inclusive education.

- Expanding international cooperation:

Strengthen partnerships with countries experienced in inclusive education and actively participate in international projects.

Conclusion

Reforms to develop inclusive education in Uzbekistan are ongoing, but many issues remain unresolved. Inclusive education is not only a means to ensure the right to education for children with disabilities but also a crucial factor in promoting tolerance and mutual respect throughout society.

The following recommendations will contribute to the successful development of inclusive education:

- Develop and fully fund a state program for the advancement of inclusive education.
- Introduce the “Inclusive Pedagogy” subject into all pedagogical university curricula.
- Establish at least one resource center in each district to provide methodological support for children with disabilities, their parents, and teachers.
- Develop individual education plans for students with disabilities.
- Create an incentive system for schools successfully implementing inclusive education.

The development of inclusive education is a long-term process whose success depends on the joint efforts of the state, society, and families.

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