

**METHODS OF TEACHING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM IN GENERAL
EDUCATION SCHOOLS****Rakhimova Gulbahor Valijonovna**

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the ways of organizing inclusive education for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in general education schools. The fundamental principles of inclusive education, pedagogical approaches, necessary adaptations, and the role of teachers are examined.

Keywords: autism, inclusive education, general education school, individualized education program, pedagogical adaptation.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern education system, the need to account for each student's unique needs, knowledge level, and abilities is becoming increasingly important. Consequently, one of the key tasks of the education system is to provide all children, regardless of their abilities, with equal access to quality education. From this perspective, the inclusive education approach is gaining critical relevance.

One of the ongoing reforms in Uzbekistan's education sector is the organization of inclusive education in general education schools and the inclusion of children with disabilities. This process is regulated by Presidential Decree PQ-4860, dated October 13, 2020, "On Improving the Education System for Children with Special Educational Needs," particularly in Chapter 4 of the approved regulations.

However, it is important to note that not all categories of individuals with disabilities can be included in the inclusive education process. According to Resolution No. 638 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, dated October 12, 2021, "On Approving Regulatory Legal Documents on Education for Children with Special Educational Needs," the following children may be included in inclusive education:

- Children with hearing impairments or weak hearing;
- Children with visual impairments;

- Children with speech development delays;
- Children with severe speech disorders;
- Children with musculoskeletal disorders;
- Children with autism.

Based on the above, it is essential to acknowledge that among the children included in general education schools, there are those who present significant challenges for educators. One such group consists of children on the autism spectrum.

The World Health Organization still relies on conservative statistics, indicating that autism spectrum disorder is diagnosed in 1 out of every 100 children. Research from the Russian Federation shows that in Russia alone, the number of children under 14 diagnosed with autism nearly doubled between 2018 and 2022.

The increasing prevalence of autism, growing at a rate of 13% annually, demands that general education schools prepare to work effectively with this category of students. Children with autism have unique needs, requiring tailored learning conditions and methodologies.

Main Part

Based on analytical and methodological approaches, it is evident that there are several challenges in teaching children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in general education schools. The key findings were derived from scientific articles, psychological-pedagogical literature, educational laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and methodological recommendations. Additionally, practical teaching experiences involving students with autism in some general education schools were examined.

The analysis revealed that addressing the following challenges in teaching children with autism in general education schools—while implementing appropriate approaches—can lead to positive outcomes:

1. **Adapted Environment:** Creating a sensory-friendly and structured learning space.
2. **Individualized Approach:** Developing a personalized education plan for each child with autism.
3. **Support Specialists:** Ensuring the active involvement of specialists such as speech therapists, defectologists, psychologists, and teaching assistants.
4. **Methodological Adaptations:** Conducting lessons using visual aids, short tasks, and demonstrative materials.
5. **Teacher Training:** Organizing specialized professional development courses on inclusive education.

6. **Social Adaptation:** Helping children integrate into the group through social skill-building activities.

Key Approaches to Teaching Children with Autism in General Education Schools

Organizing inclusive education for children with autism requires specific strategies and an adapted environment. Below are the primary methods for working with autistic students:

1. Creating an Adapted Learning Environment

- The classroom should be quiet, structured, and free of distracting stimuli.
- Lessons should incorporate visual schedules, signs, and demonstrative materials.
- A designated sensory-friendly space (for relaxation or sensory play) should be provided.

2. Individualized Approach in Teaching

- An **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** should be developed for each student.
- The curriculum should be adjusted to the child's developmental level, language, social, and cognitive skills.

- Teaching should be based on small, manageable tasks and repetition.

3. Collaboration with Specialists

- Specialists (defectologists, speech therapists, psychologists, and teaching assistants) should be involved.

- They provide direct support to the student and collaborate with parents.

4. Teacher Training

- Teachers should receive training on autism and inclusive methodologies.
- Workshops and professional development courses should be conducted.

5. Developing Social Skills

- Role-playing activities and social scenarios should be used.
- A supportive environment should be fostered to encourage positive peer interactions.

6. Utilizing Technological Tools

- Computers, tablets, and specialized apps (e.g., visual learning programs) should be integrated.

- Interactive and audio-based games can enhance learning effectiveness.

Seventh, Organizing Collaboration in Education and Maintaining Constant Communication with Parents:

- Continuously working and consulting with the parents of children with autism.
- Providing recommendations to ensure consistent approaches at home and school.

It is well-known that one of the key aspects of working with autistic children is fostering emotional connections with others. Naturally, during the process of establishing communication, children develop their own unique interaction skills. If the communication environment is comfortable and understandable for the child, it leaves a positive impression. It is crucial for the child to first adopt a comfortable form of communication, and only then can deeper and more complex forms of interaction be gradually developed. Specialists working with autistic children are advised to select games and technologies that align with each child's individual characteristics.

When working with these children, it is essential to gather knowledge about how they process sensory impulses and identify the necessary tools and methods to support them. While applying methodologies, diagnosing their levels of hypersensitivity or hyposensitivity is also a critical aspect. An individualized approach, along with the development and effective implementation of targeted correction programs based on the degree of sensory disintegration observed in each child, can significantly mitigate this challenge.

Challenges in Including Autistic Students in General Education

Integrating students with autism into the general education system is a vital part of inclusive education. However, in practice, several obstacles arise:

- Insufficient teacher preparedness.
- Limited material and technical resources.
- Social stigma and misconceptions.

To address these issues, it is crucial to implement additional state-level programs, enhance teacher training, and strengthen collaboration with families.

Conclusion

Effectively teaching children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in general education schools requires an approach based on the principles of inclusive education. Collaboration between the state, schools, and society plays a pivotal role in this process. Improving teachers' professional skills, introducing methodological adaptations, and applying individualized approaches ensure the socialization and development of children with autism.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurological condition that primarily affects a child's development, communication, and ability to form social relationships. It is often lifelong, meaning there is typically no "complete recovery." However, the individual's condition can significantly improve. Key aspects include:

- **Variability:** The autism spectrum is broad—some individuals may experience severe symptoms, while others may exhibit milder traits.

• **Support, Not Cure:** Autism cannot be entirely eliminated with medication, but early diagnosis and proper education and therapies (e.g., speech therapy, behavioral therapy) can substantially improve quality of life.

• **Adaptation Over Elimination:** Some individuals may no longer display obvious signs of autism in adulthood, but this does not mean they are "cured." Rather, they may have successfully adapted and integrated into society.

In conclusion, while individuals on the autism spectrum do not "outgrow" autism, with proper support, they can find their path in life—studying, working, and actively participating in society.

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