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DIAGNOSIS OF LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL IN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN THE ENVIRONMENT OF AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

DIAGNOZA POTENCJAŁU PRZYWÓDCZEGO
UCZNIÓW SZKÓŁ ŚREDNICH ZE SPECJALNYMI
POTRZEBAMI EDUKACYJNYMI W ŚRODOWISKU
INTEGRACYJNEJ INSTYTUCJI EDUKACYJNEJ

Keywords:
inclusive education,
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qualities, high school
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Summary: There is a need in Ukraine to create special conditions in higher educational institutions to serve the increasing number of people with special needs. Inclusive education involves the creation of an educational environment that meets the needs and capabilities of the child, regardless of the characteristics of his or her psychophysical development.

Our work focuses on the study of the “leadership potential of the individual.” This is defined as a socio-psychological characteristic of the individual, reflecting the ability to influence the environment through one’s own personal resources.

Słowa kluczowe:
edukacja włączająca,
lider, cechy przy-
wódcze, licealiści,
diagnostyka

It has been found that a leader should have the maximum influence on the group's life. A leader must represent the group values. Also, he or she should be able to take responsibility for the group and be focused on the common tasks. The task was to determine whether the level of leadership development depends on the availability of special needs for high school students. A set of diagnostic methods was used for the purpose of pedagogical diagnostics: the technique "Diagnosis of motivation for success and fears of failure," the technique for determination of leadership potential and the method "Leadership Self-assessment."

The conducted diagnostic research made it possible to state that the students' special needs are not significant obstacles for the development of their leadership qualities. The results showed that high and average levels of leadership potential prevail. We believe that if proper conditions in a general school for children with special needs are created, they can become active civic activists and charismatic leaders.

Streszczenie: Na Ukrainie istnieje potrzeba zapewnienia uczniom ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi odpowiednich warunków w szkołach średnich. Edukacja włączająca zakłada stworzenie takiego środowiska edukacyjnego, które zaspokoiłoby potrzeby i wspomagałoby możliwości ucznia, niezależnie od cech jego rozwoju psychofizycznego.

Niniejszy artykuł koncentruje się na zbadaniu „potencjału przywódczego jednostki”, definiowanego jako społeczno-psychologiczna cecha odzwierciedlająca zdolność wpływania na środowisko przy wykorzystaniu własnych zasobów. Założono, że lider powinien mieć maksymalny wpływ na życie grupy, reprezentować wartości grupy, być w stanie wziąć odpowiedzialność za grupę i skoncentrować się na wspólnych zadaniach. Zadanie polegało na ustaleniu, czy specjalne potrzeby edukacyjne uczniów szkół średnich przekładają się na poziom przywództwa. Do diagnostyki pedagogicznej wykorzystano zestaw metod diagnostycznych: technikę „Diagnozy motywacji do sukcesu i obaw przed porażką”, technikę określenia potencjału przywódczego, oraz metodę „samooceny przywództwa”.

Przeprowadzone badania diagnostyczne pozwoliły stwierdzić, że szczególne potrzeby uczniów nie stanowią istotnych przeszkód w rozwoju ich zdolności przywódczych. Wyniki



pokazały, że przeważają wysokie i średnie poziomy potencjału przywódczego. Można więc założyć, że jeśli stworzone zostaną odpowiednie warunki w szkole dla uczniów o specjalnych potrzebach, nie ma przeszkód, by stali się oni aktywnymi działaczami obywatelskimi albo charyzmatycznymi liderami.

Introduction

Solving the many urgent social problems is becoming particularly important in Ukrainian society. The socialization of children with special needs is among these social issues. Nowadays, the development of society and the education system is under the pressure of the global tendency of the increasing number of people with disabilities. According to the UN, every tenth person on the planet has a physical, mental or sensory disorder. Twenty-five percent of the population suffer various health disorders. The Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine has already registered about 3 million people with disabilities, including 168 thousand children. In addition, their number is increasing: 200–220 thousand people are annually registered. According to this statistic, from 450 thousand pregnancies, 150 thousand children are born with birth defects, including 20 thousand with severe disorders.

The constant decline in children's health is a global concern. Over the past ten years, the overall rate of children with physical disabilities in Ukraine has increased 1.2 times, and the prevalence of diseases 1.3 times (Chaikovskiy, 2016). Diseases of the nervous system account for 1.5%. The prevalence of physical diseases among children accounts for 3.14% (Korytskyi, 2013). The overall global trend is also characterized by an increase in childhood disability.

According to UNESCO, there were 514 million people with disabilities in the world in 1989. Nowadays, this number is close to 680 million, among whom, more than 100 million are children.

In the context of the social transformations taking place in Ukraine, the priority task of educational policy is to develop the younger generation's activity. One of its aspects is "leadership – the ability of the individual to influence others, to be the initiator and participant of the social changes" (Volkivska, 2016, p. 3). Currently, a humane, tolerant attitude toward children with special needs is common in Ukraine.

We believe it is necessary to create such conditions in educational institutions that would contribute to the restoration of their natural potential, the development of children's cognitive, physical, emotional and spiritual-moral forces. At the same time, combining the educational and rehabilitation processes, we understand the importance of inclusive education. The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education views inclusive education as providing high quality education in schools. Such education values the rights, equality, access and participation of all students (Symeonidou, 2018, p. 13).

Due to limitations in communication, self-care, movement and control over their behavior, these children's development depends on meeting their needs with other people. The integration of children with disabilities into society largely depends on the creation of a positive image of such children and fostering their leadership potential's formation and development. Further, the development of leadership potential promotes successful self-realization. It increases the young person's future prospects. That is why research of the leadership potential of high school students with special needs in an inclusive educational environment of secondary educational institutions is an urgent subject of modern socio-pedagogical science.

Literature review

The subject of the inclusive education of children with special needs has been investigated by A. Bitova, A. Kolupayeva, S. Lebedeva, N. Malofeev, N. Shmatko and others. Theoretical and practical aspects of management, the key ideas of which can be used to prepare leaders, have been addressed in the work of foreign scientists: G. Gantt, L. Hilbert, G. Emerson, A. Maslow, E. Mayo, D. Muni, F. Taylor, L. Urvik, A. Fayol, M. Follett, G. Ford, M. Friedman, L. Iacocca and others.

The problem of studying in an inclusive environment is also actively researched in the Polish best practices. Thus, the key aspect of Z. Gajdzica's article is that the disability defines the person's functioning in many aspects. It enhances a person's uniqueness and, at the same time, favorably emphasizes their individuality (Gajdzica, 2016, p. 49). An interesting article in the context of our study is G. Szumski and M. Karwowski's *Psychosocial functioning and school achievement of children with mild intellectual disability in Polish special, integrative and mainstream schools* (2014). The authors sought to assess the effectiveness of integrative and inclusive education in Poland. Also, they wanted

to determine the relations between the psychosocial functioning and school achievement of pupils with mild intellectual disabilities attending special, integrative and mainstream schools.

Problems of the formation and development of children's and adolescents' leadership qualities have been the subject of study in thesis research. Thus, V. Yahodnikova focused on the formation of leadership qualities of high school students in a personally oriented educational process of the general education school (2006); A. Semenov investigated the education of leadership qualities in primary school students by means of action-oriented games (2014); I. Myskiv studied the development of school leadership in the United Kingdom (2009); D. Alfimov analyzed the theory and methodology of leadership qualities training of the individual in the modern secondary school (2012). Nevertheless, the question of the development of leadership potential of high school students with special needs in an inclusive educational environment at secondary educational institutions has not been systematically investigated.

Inclusive education is a rather flexible, individualized system of training for children with psycho-physical impairments in their place of residence in a secondary school. The training is conducted according to an individualized curriculum. Medical, social and psychological-pedagogical support is provided. Inclusive education involves the creation of an educational environment that meets the needs and capabilities of the child, regardless of his or her psycho-physical development. On the other hand, the concept of inclusive education reflects the main idea that all children are valuable and active members of the society. Education in inclusive schools is useful for children with special educational needs as well as for children with typical levels of development, their family members and society in general (Voroshchuk, 2016). Inclusive education involves the creation of a special educational environment that must meet the needs and capabilities of each child. It must provide adequate conditions and opportunities for education within the special educational standards for treatment and rehabilitation, education and training, and the correction of disorders of psychophysical development and early socialization.

The legislative and regulatory instruments in the field of inclusive education are the following: the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine "On approval of the Action Plan for the introduction of inclusive education in higher educational institutions for 2009–2012," the concept of "State standard of the special education" (2000), the Concept development of inclusive education (2010). These documents focus on the formation

of a new philosophy of society that involves the following: fostering a positive attitude towards people with disabilities; improving the education and rehabilitation system for children of this category; the use of innovative inclusive learning technologies using adapted international experience. Thus, in the law of Ukraine on education, an inclusive educational environment is a set of conditions, methods and the means of implementation for the joint training, education and educational development of its recipients, taking into account their needs and opportunities (Zakon, 2017).

We can distinguish an inclusive educational environment as “a space of an educational institution that provides comfortable conditions for children with special needs who need correction and rehabilitation of psychophysical development. This comfort is the foundation that can foster a humanistic approach and ensure the success of the educational process of adolescents. It can contribute to the preservation and enhancement of their health” (Soroka, 2018, p. 210). We believe that the most comfortable inclusive educational environment has significant benefits for children with special needs. It contributes to improving the cognitive, social, emotional, motor and language development of children with special needs as a result of interaction with adults and peers; it also contributes to establishing friendly relations with peers. In addition, the organization of the educational process is based on the orientation of the children’s strengths, taking into account their abilities and interests.

To understand the essence of the concept of “leadership potential,” it is necessary to deal with the components of this concept. These components are the following: *personality potential*, *leader*, *leadership*. Thus, in D. Volkivska’s thesis research, “personality potential” is defined as a person’s capabilities that can be realized in the presence of certain resources and conditions (2016, p. 8). “Personality potential” is mainly regarded as a meaningful characteristic, reflecting the set of innate and acquired abilities the person draws from to relate to the surrounding reality. It is the determining norm of one’s possible response to the changing conditions of the social environment. At the same time, the potential of the individual contains innate potential (abilities, personal qualities, hereditary factors) as well as helps in restoring intellectual, psychological and volitional resources. These resources contribute to the successful personal and social development of the individual.

Leadership means social activity – an active life position – which is a certain guarantor of fresh ideas, extraordinary approaches and bold decisions (Palakh, 2002). Leadership is compared to administration and management

in Kalashnikova's study. It sees leadership as management that is implemented by influencing the behavior of followers. Personal leadership exerts influence in order to achieve socially important goals and in accordance with socially important values (Kalashnikova, 2011). D. Volkivska emphasizes that leadership is a group value, the commitment of which is the key to the personal development of the leader and the followers in the process of achieving a common goal (2016, p. 9). The author argues that leadership can manifest itself: in the presence of groups and individuals with adequate leadership potential; in a specific social or professional situation that requires non-standard, leadership influence; where there is the perception and support of participation in the situation of groups of followers; where there is community commitment. T. Hura's research emphasizes that "leadership" is impossible without the influence that emerges between people who seek changes. Therefore, leadership implies influence on others, as a result of which people seek changes aimed at achieving the desired results in the future (Hura, 2015).

Summarizing the above achievements of scientists, we understand "leadership" as one of the processes of the organization and management of a small social group which contributes to the achievement of group goals in the best possible time.

Methodology and results of research on the leadership potential of students with special needs

For the practical organization of research on leadership potential, it is helpful to consider the scientific definition of "leader." For example, in an explanatory dictionary of the Ukrainian language, a leader is a leader of a political party, a leading figure of a public organization or a person or team that is in first place (Ivchenko, 2002). The Great English-Ukrainian Dictionary treats "leader" as leader, head; chief; commander; a group member whose authority or power in one or more areas of activity is unconditionally accepted by the remaining members of a small group (Mazur, 2011). Based on the scientific approaches of D. Volkovska, S. Kalashnikova and B. Parygina, we understand the phenomenon of "leader" as the following: the member of the group who can best manage the group in a particular situation; the most authoritative person who regulates relationships within the group; the person in whom the group recognizes the right to make decisions that reflect group interest; a person who realizes the public interest while satisfying his or her own self

fulfilment. We believe that a leader must be the most socially active person with the highest level of trust in the group.

Hence, we define the “leadership potential of the individual” as a system of resources and capabilities. Their realization will serve the acceptance of the person in the group as a leader in a particular situation. Based on the scientific achievements of Vasil’ev, Lyubchak and Kuppenko (2010), we define leadership potential as a socio-psychological characteristic of the individual. It reflects the ability to influence the environment through one’s own personal resources. This phenomenon envisages the development of abilities and opportunities to successfully demonstrate leadership qualities in the peer group.

We have chosen teenage children with special needs as the object of leadership potential diagnostics in our practical research. The most common and acceptable standard definition of “special needs” in the International Standard Classification of Education is the following: “Persons whose education requirements need additional resources and have special educational needs. Moreover, additional resources may include: staff (to assist in the learning process); materials (various teaching aids, including auxiliary and corrective); financial resources (budgetary allocations for additional special services)” (Vygot’skiy, 2003, p. 104).

Defects can be multifaceted in children and manifest variously as, *inter alia*, an inability to make contact, communicate; misunderstanding for others; difficulties in performing considerable physical activity, intellectual tasks; hearing problems. One can observe social maladaptation, the violation of social contacts and low sociometric status in children with special educational needs. This deepens the violation of their mental development and can negatively affect the emotional-volitional sphere.

From a practical point of view, we conducted an experimental study that can be summarized as follows. We conducted it in order to determine the leadership potential of adolescents with special needs. The experiment was conducted on the basis of specialized secondary school of I–III degrees with in-depth study of foreign languages. The experiment involved 14 students from forms 9–11 (five students with emotional and volitional disabilities, three with reduced vision, four with hearing impairment and two students with impaired locomotor system). It should be noted that selected high school students are taught in high school No 7 in accordance with typical educational programs since their disabilities are not too expressed and do not significantly affect the educational process. Diagnosis of the leadership potential of children with

special needs made it possible to identify the “starting” leadership opportunities of these children.

Complex methods were used for conducting the pedagogical diagnostics: the technique “Diagnosis of motivation for success and fear of failure” (A. Rean), the technique for determination of leadership potential; the methodology of “Leadership Self-assessment” by N. Fetyskina, V. Kozlova and G. Manuilov.

Motivation for leadership was tested in children using the method of A. Rean “Diagnosis of motivation for success and fear of failure.” The results of the methodology showed the prevalence of motivation for success (positive motivation) in seven (50%) students. The tendency for motivation for success was defined in four (28.6%) respondents and the tendency for motivation to fail was noted in three (21.4%) of the students, whereas the motivation for failure (negative motivation) was not inherent in any of the teenagers. Thus, it can be stated that the motivation for success in children who have special educational needs is almost indistinguishable from that of healthy children.

The presence of high school students with special needs leadership potential was determined using the method – “Determining the level of leadership potential.” The results of this methodology indicated the following: five (35.7%) of the respondents had a strong leadership potential; an average level of leadership was observed in six (42.9%) students; a low level of leadership potential was noted in three (21.4%) students. We were pleased to note that none of the high school students were shown to be prone to dictation.

In addition, we suggested that the high school students take the self-assessment test of leadership using the methods of N. Fetyskina, V. Kozlova and G. Manuilova. This test allowed us to determine the current level of leadership in joint activity. The results showed that a high level of leadership is inherent in six (42.9%) of the students, an average level of leadership in five (35.7%) of the students and a low level in three (21.4%) of the students. Destructive leadership was not identified in any of the respondents. The generalized results of the study of leadership potential in children who have special educational needs by the three methods are presented in table 1.

Table 1

Summarized indicators of the level of leadership potential of high school students with special needs

Leadership potential level	Diagnosis of Motivation for Success and Fear of Failure		Evaluation Identifying Leadership Potential		Leadership Potential Self-Assessment		Summarized Results	
	Abs. count	%	Abs. count	%	Abs. count	%	Abs. count	%
High	7	50	5	35.7	6	42.9	6	42.9
Average	4	28.6	6	42.9	5	35.7	5	35.7
Low	3	21.4	3	21.4	3	21.4	3	21.4

Source: own research.

Conclusion

The study has allowed us to make several generalizations. Firstly, a leader must have maximum influence on the group's life and personalize the group values; a leader must be able to take responsibility for the group and be oriented towards the common tasks. Secondly, we have not found that the special needs of the students present a significant impediment to developing leadership skills. Thirdly, the generalized results of the diagnostic study showed a predominance of high (42.9%) and average (35.7%) levels of leadership potential among children with special needs. Fourthly, high school children with special needs can achieve a high personal level of leadership development under proper conditions. We attribute this to the fact that high school students with special needs strongly expressed leadership qualities. They are actively involved in school life. Some of them are representatives of the school board. Therefore, they show leadership qualities and abilities to best meet their duties.

We will devote our further research to the study of psychological and pedagogical conditions for establishing a positive inclusive educational environment that would positively influence the formation of leadership qualities.

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