

## DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING THEM WITH EDUCATION

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### **Abstract**

This article provides a scientific and theoretical analysis of the psychological, physiological, personal, and social development characteristics of primary school children with special educational needs. Drawing on national and international scholarly sources in the fields of special pedagogy, inclusive education, and differentiated instruction, the study reveals modern approaches to educating this category of learners. The article examines cognitive difficulties, levels of learning motivation, sensory-motor development, social adaptation capacities, and individually planned instructional methods employed by teachers when working with children with special educational needs. In addition, the effectiveness of creating an inclusive school environment, using adaptive learning materials in the educational process, and implementing supportive pedagogical technologies is scientifically substantiated. The findings indicate that individualized education programs, differentiated approaches, multisensory teaching, and active collaboration with parents play a crucial role in working with SEN learners. The conclusions of the study contribute to improving inclusive practices in primary education, supporting learners' individual development, and enhancing the overall quality of education.

### **Keywords**

special educational needs, inclusive education, differentiated approach, primary education, individual development, special pedagogy.

**INTRODUCTION.** In the context of globalization and rapid innovative development, the education system is facing new challenges. One of the most

important of these is the organization of high-quality education that takes into account each learner's individual capabilities, psychological and pedagogical characteristics, and educational needs. In particular, the primary education stage represents a decisive period in a child's intellectual, linguistic, emotional, social, and physical development; therefore, the pedagogical support provided to children with special educational needs is of paramount importance [1, 2].

Some primary school learners experience delays in speech development, reduced attention and memory, difficulties in mastering reading, writing, and numeracy skills, challenges in social adaptation, or health-related conditions that necessitate specialized pedagogical approaches. Differences in developmental pace, learning styles, motivation, and emotional states are natural for such children, and these factors require appropriate individualized and differentiated approaches within the educational process [3, 4].

In recent years, large-scale reforms have been implemented in the Republic of Uzbekistan aimed at developing inclusive education, creating supportive environments for children with special needs, and integrating them into general education schools. This process requires teachers to acquire new competencies, including the application of modern pedagogical technologies, the use of psychological and pedagogical diagnostics, the design of adaptive curricula, and the organization of instruction that takes into account learners' individuality and educational needs.

Providing high-quality education to children with special educational needs at the primary level not only lays the foundation for their successful learning in subsequent stages of education but also contributes to their social adaptation, the formation of an active life position, and their self-realization as individuals [5, 6]. Therefore, examining this issue from a scientific and pedagogical perspective, identifying the distinctive characteristics of such learners, and developing evidence-based instructional and methodological foundations for effective education are of particular relevance today.

From this perspective, organizing high-quality education that takes into account the individual needs and capabilities of each student is one of the most important tasks facing the education system in the era of globalization and digital development. In particular, the primary education stage-being a crucial period in a child's intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development-requires increased attention to children with special educational needs [7, 8]. This can be observed in the following cases:

**1. Development of inclusive education policies.** In recent years, the rapid development of inclusive education systems in Uzbekistan and worldwide has

increased the relevance of this topic. In state policy, providing conditions for children with special needs to study not only in specialized educational institutions but also in mainstream schools has been defined as one of the priority tasks.

**2. Early identification of developmental differences and the need for support.** In early childhood, difficulties may arise in speech, attention, memory, emotional-volitional regulation, and social adaptation processes. Early identification of these difficulties and providing appropriate pedagogical support based on a differentiated approach directly affect children's success in subsequent stages of education.

**3. Increase in society's cultural and legal awareness.** Today, knowledge about special educational needs is expanding among adults and parents. As a result, the demand for individualized approaches, psychological services, and the work of special educators in schools is increasing.

**4. Demand for new competencies from teachers.** Working with children with special educational needs requires teachers to:

- ✓ apply an individualized approach;
- ✓ know specialized methods and technologies;
- ✓ develop adaptive educational content;
- ✓ organize socio-emotional support.

Therefore, this topic is highly relevant for teacher training systems.

**5. Expansion of digital resources and modern technological opportunities.** Digital learning platforms, interactive tools, and corrective technologies create significant opportunities to facilitate the learning process for children with special needs. Scientific and evidence-based approaches are necessary for their proper use.

**6. Priority of principles of equity and social justice in education.** One of the main ideas today is that "no child should be left behind." Providing quality education to children with special educational needs is crucial for:

- ✓ their successful integration into society;
- ✓ preparation for independent living;
- ✓ development of social activity and adaptability.

**7. Integration of psychological and pedagogical support.** The expansion of psychologists, speech therapists, defectologists, and special educators in schools further highlights the importance of this topic and increases the need for scientific and pedagogical research.

Currently, this issue is directly related to improving the quality of education, forming an inclusive society, and supporting each child's development according to their abilities [9, 10]. Therefore, studying approaches to children with special

educational needs in primary grades on a scientific, systematic, and modern basis has significant scientific and practical relevance in pedagogy.

**LITERATURE REVIEW.** Analysis of scientific and pedagogical sources on working with primary school children with special educational needs (SEN children) demonstrates that various scholars have developed significant scientific approaches in this area over different periods. Both international experience and national scientific schools have enriched research on the developmental characteristics of SEN children, diagnostic processes, educational approaches, and the essence of inclusive education.

1. **Classical studies on children with developmental disorders** were mainly carried out by Russian psychologists L.S.Vygotsky, A.R.Luria, P.Ya.Galperin and D.B.Elkonin. Their research substantiated the importance of individual differences in children's psychological development, compensatory abilities, the influence of the social environment, and pedagogical correction [11, 12]. L.S.Vygotsky's concept of the "zone of proximal development" provides a scientific basis for the necessity of individualized work with SEN children.

2. **Scientific schools of special pedagogy** by Russian scholars such as E.D.Khomskaya, R.E.Levina, M.S.Pevzner, S.Ya.Rubinshtein and T.A.Vlasova systematized the development characteristics, psychological profiles, teaching methods, and corrective-pedagogical approaches for children with speech impairments, hearing or visual limitations, or intellectual disabilities [13, 14].

3. **Modern research on inclusive education** has been conducted in many foreign countries. For instance, in 2011, Booth and Ainscow, and later in 2015, Florian, studied providing equal opportunities for all students, developing teachers' inclusive competencies, designing adapted curricula, and social adaptation mechanisms as key issues in the educational process [15, 16]. International standards for inclusive education, based on UNESCO and UNICEF documents, define the organizational and model foundations for educating SEN children.

4. **Contributions of Uzbek scholars** such as M.Salayeva, A.Qodirov, R.Hasanov, N.Zokirova, M.Yo'ldosheva, Z.Qo'chqorova, M.Ochilova and S.Tursunova focus on the psychophysiological characteristics of SEN children, tailored curricula, methodological recommendations, and effective forms of corrective work [17, 18].

5. **Pedagogical technologies and adaptive education** by foreign experts – J.Bruner's constructivism, H.Gardner's "multiple intelligences theory," and the educational ideas of R.Gagne, B.Bloom and M.Montessori based on individualized approaches – are widely applied in education adapted for SEN children [19, 20].

These theories provide a foundation for developing effective student-centered teaching strategies.

6. **Psychological-pedagogical diagnostics** for identifying SEN children and assessing their developmental levels widely employ psychological tests, methods, observation, and interview techniques developed by foreign psychologists such as A.Anastasi, K.Spearman, J.Piaget, J.Raven and D.Wechsler. Additionally, local Uzbek research by M.Salayeva, U.Po'latov, B.Ziyomuhhammadov, Z.Nishonova and G.Qodirova has contributed to the pedagogical content of the diagnostic process [21, 22].

7. **Applied research and modern methodologies**, mainly in contemporary scientific articles, focus on difficulties in reading, writing, and mathematical skills of SEN children, as well as the effectiveness of methods such as speech therapy technologies, sensory integration approaches, art therapy, play-based technologies, and social-emotional learning (SEL).

The analysis of the reviewed literature indicates that:

- The developmental characteristics of SEN children are complex and multifactorial;
- The educational process requires a differentiated, individualized, and multidisciplinary approach;
- The global concept of inclusive education aligns with student-centered educational principles;
- Practical-methodological research on SEN education is expanding in Uzbekistan;
- Scientific studies in this field highlight its socio-pedagogical significance.

**METHODS:** historical, retrospective, and theoretical-methodological source analysis; generalization and interpretation of collected data; observation; interviews; questionnaires; content analysis; qualimetric analysis and expert evaluation.

**DISCUSSION:** Assessing the developmental characteristics of SEN children and the effectiveness of their education in primary grades requires analyzing psychological, pedagogical, and social factors in an integrated manner. Literature analysis and practical experience indicate that properly organizing education for this group of students depends not only on the teacher's professional skills but also directly on the psycho-pedagogical environment created in the educational institution and the level of cooperation with parents [23, 24].

#### **Key Findings and Discussion.**

- Firstly, the development of SEN children is multi-component, with varying levels of differences observed in their cognitive, emotional, speech, and

social functions. This necessitates adapting the curriculum, optimizing the learning load, and designing individualized developmental plans. In particular, it is crucial for the teacher to accurately determine each student's learning pace, motivation level, attention stability, and learning styles.

- **Secondly**, difficulties in completing learning tasks in primary grades are often associated with insufficient psychological stability, self-regulation skills, and social adaptation of SEN children. Therefore, emotional support, working in small groups, diverse forms of motivation, and the use of play- and art-therapy elements positively influence their learning activities. These strategies also help strengthen students' self-confidence.

- **Thirdly**, a multidisciplinary approach plays a significant role in organizing an effective educational process for children with special educational needs. Collaboration among teachers, psychologists, speech therapists, defectologists, doctors, and parents creates the conditions for developing and implementing a unified corrective-pedagogical program. Regular monitoring of students' speech development, social adaptation, and academic performance in primary grades enables noticeable improvements in their overall development.

- **Fourthly**, the adaptation of the educational environment is also a critical factor in inclusive education. Adjusted textbooks, didactic materials, technical tools, a psychologically comfortable classroom, and interactive methods that ensure active participation enhance the engagement of SEN children. With the advent of digital technologies, the possibilities of using visual, audio, and interactive resources have expanded, creating a learning environment tailored to each child's individual reception capabilities.

- **Fifthly**, the improved legal foundations of inclusive education and the positive societal attitudes toward children with special needs provide favorable conditions for their successful integration. At the same time, enhancing teachers' professional preparedness, developing inclusive competencies, and providing methodological resources remain highly relevant [25, 26].

The final analysis indicates that working with SEN children requires a **systematic approach, individualized instruction, emotional support, collaboration with pedagogical and medical specialists, and effective use of technological tools**. Such an approach not only improves learning outcomes but also promotes social integration and personal development.

**RESULTS.** Research and analysis demonstrate that working with primary school students with special educational needs can achieve the following key scientific and practical outcomes:

**1. Recognition of the multi-factorial nature of special educational needs.**

The developmental difficulties of SEN students were found to be related to various factors, including speech, social-emotional development, attention and memory processes, academic skills, health status, and psychological adaptation. This emphasizes the necessity of developing an individualized educational strategy for each student.

**2. Effectiveness of individualized and differentiated approaches.** Studies show that adapting curricula, distributing learning loads according to students' capabilities, and applying multimodal teaching methods significantly improve academic outcomes for SEN children [27, 28].

**3. High impact of psychological and pedagogical support.** Corrective activities conducted in collaboration with speech therapists, defectologists, psychologists, and classroom teachers, combined with emotional support, a motivating environment, and social adaptation measures, increase students' self-confidence, engagement, and interest in learning.

**4. Importance of adapting the primary education environment to inclusive principles.** The use of adapted textbooks, visual materials, digital resources, and interactive learning tools actively engages SEN students in lessons [29, 30], enhancing their learning motivation.

**5. Improved collaboration between parents and teachers.** Regular communication with parents, organizing education based on individual plans, and providing recommendations for home support significantly enhance students' developmental dynamics [31, 32].

**6. Need to develop teachers' inclusive competencies.** Research shows that specialized methodological training, professional development courses, and practical training in adaptive pedagogy are critical factors in improving education quality.

**7. Positive outcomes of using modern technologies in education.** The use of interactive platforms, audiovisual materials, sensory integration methods, and educational games increases students' engagement and independent work skills.

It should be emphasized that **working with primary school SEN students using an individualized, systematic, and evidence-based approach:**

- accelerates their psychological and academic development;
- enhances learning motivation;
- improves social adaptation;
- strengthens the inclusive classroom environment;
- and enhances teachers' pedagogical skills [33, 34, 35].

**CONCLUSION.** The results of the study indicate that working with primary school students with special educational needs (SEN) is one of the most important and responsible areas of the educational process. The developmental pace, psychological-emotional state, and mechanisms of perception and assimilation of these children can significantly differ from their peers. Therefore, providing education to them requires an **individualized approach, differentiated instruction, multidisciplinary support, and a specially adapted learning environment** [36, 37].

Reforms carried out within the framework of the inclusive education concept are creating broader opportunities for SEN children in primary education. Adapted textbooks, technological tools, psychological-pedagogical services, teachers' professional preparedness, and collaboration with parents contribute positively to the child's development [38, 39].

Based on this, it can be concluded that providing quality education for children with special needs lays the foundation for their intellectual growth, personal development, social integration, and future professional success. This issue, as an integral component of educational quality, requires continuous scientific and practical research, methodological improvement, and a systematic approach.

**Based on the research results, the following recommendations are proposed:**

**A. For Teachers**

1. Thoroughly study the psychological, speech, social, and cognitive development characteristics of each SEN student and develop an individualized education plan.
2. Widely use adapted assignments, multimodal teaching methods (visual, auditory, kinesthetic), and interactive technologies during lessons.
3. Assess students' progress in small steps, set realistic goals, and provide regular motivational support.

**B. For School Administration**

4. Organize professional development courses, seminars, and practical training on inclusive education for teachers.
5. Systematically establish the activities of psychologists, speech therapists, and defectologists in schools and strengthen multidisciplinary teamwork.
6. Equip classrooms with adapted didactic materials, visual aids, and technical tools suitable for SEN students.

**C. For Parents**

7. Support children's learning activities at home in collaboration with specialists and maintain regular communication.

8. Create a supportive family environment to strengthen the child's psychological and emotional well-being.

#### D. For Researchers and Methodologists

9. Expand scientific and practical research on modern pedagogical technologies, sensory integration, art therapy, and communication development methods for working with SEN children.

10. Develop adapted versions of curricula and prepare methodological guidelines for their testing and implementation.

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