

# Teachers of Inclusive Education: A Typology of Problematic Situations

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**Keywords:** Inclusive Education, Direction of Social Interaction, Problem Situation, Coping Behavior.

**Abstract:** An inclusive approach to teaching people with disabilities today is put forward as one of the main strategic paradigms of modern education. In the course of their professional activities, teachers who implement inclusive practice often encounter a number of problem situations, the typology of which is described in the article and is based on taking into account the orientation of social interaction, professionally important qualities, risk factors, functions and strategies of coping behavior, competencies. The authors identified several main types of problem situations (interpersonal, intrapersonal, extrapersonal interaction) and gave their detailed characteristics depending on the characteristics of personal and professional development and the typological group of professional coping behavior, noted statistically significant differences in the assessment of problem situations of the subjects.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The success of a person's adaptation to a rapidly changing social environment and the study of its adaptive capabilities are directly related to coping behavior, which can be understood as a dynamic system for coping with problem situations. The main tasks of coping behavior are the quick adaptability and response of a person in a crisis situation, which makes it possible to moderate its demands, neutralize emotional stress, and thus make the search for a productive solution as successful as possible, correct self-esteem or regulate relationships with others, and ensure the personal development of a person.

The study of coping behavior is of interest in relation to identifying the features of the professional behavior of teachers and specialists who carry out their activities in the context of the spread of a new educational paradigm - inclusive education.

Inclusive education is seen as ensuring equal access to education for all learners, taking into account the diversity of special educational needs and individual opportunities. At the same time, this type of educational practice creates many problematic situations both for teachers and specialists and for other subjects of the educational process.

It should be noted that most of the methods used to diagnose coping behavior state its general features, while interest is represented by the specific typology of coping behavior of teachers who implement the inclusive practice, as well as the classification of problem situations faced by such teachers and specialists.

## 2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological basis of the research is formed by the psychological and pedagogical theories of the formation and development of personality Asmolov, A.G. (Asmolov, 2019), Petrovsky, A.V. (Petrovsky, 1987), Zimnyaya, I.A. (Zimnyaya, 2007), Yasvin, V.A. (Yasvin, 2020), etc., as well as an acmeological approach to the analysis of professional activity (Derkach, A.A., Selezneva, O. V. Mikhailov (Derkach, Selezneva and Mikhailov, 2008), Kriskovets, T.N. (Kriskovets, 2017), Martirosova, T.A., Poboronchuk, T.N., Trifonenkova, T.A., Yatskovskaya, L.N. (Martirosova, Poboronchuk, Trifonenkova and Yatskovskaya, 2019) and others).

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In modern conditions, with a change in views on the professional activity of a specialist, the competence-based approach considered in the works of Kuramaeva, T.A. (Kuramaeva, 2018), Ulyanina, O.A. (Ulyanina, 2018), Rakhimov, Zh.B. (Rakhimov, 2018), Repina, E. G. (Repina, 2017) and others, seems to be relevant.

The problem of coping and getting out of critical, stressful situations, including the professional sphere, is devoted to the works of both domestic and foreign scientists, such as Ponikarova, V.N. Pokudina, T.N. (Ponikarova and Pokudina, 2019), Starovoi, N.V. (Starovoi, 2018), Chernomyrdina, T.N. (Chernomyrdina, 2018), Wilfried F. Admiraal, Fred A.J. Korthagen and Theo Wubbels (Wilfried, Korthagen и Wubbels, 2000), Abdukadirova, L.Y. (Abdukadirova, 2020).

In the modern dynamic and competitively active world, high requirements are imposed on the competencies of specialists, the formation of soft skills as the basis for the success of employees in their professional activities (Gluzman, Yu.V. (Gluzman, 2019), Batsunov, S.N., Derecha I.I., Kungurova, I.M., Slizkova, E.V. (Batsunov, Derecha, Kungurova and Slizkova, 2018), Ivenskikh, I.V., Sorokoumova, S.N., Suvorova, O. V. (Ivenskikh, Sorokoumova and Suvorova, 2018), Ponikarova, V.N. (Ponikarova, 2020), Chulanova, O.L., Ivonina, A.I. (Chulanova and Ivonina, 2017).

### 3 RESULTS

The study was conducted in the period from 2007 to 2020, the general population of the sample was more than 1,500 people, the representative sample was 782 people, pupils, students, teachers and specialists who implement inclusive education in the Northwestern Federal District of the Russian Federation. Of the total number of subjects, 30 people were selected who went through all stages of the study (experimental group).

To study professional coping behavior, we used a set of complementary methods, which included questionnaires "Methods of coping behavior" (according to R. Lazarus and S. Folkman) (Clayburgh, 2004); determination of individual coping strategies (according to E. Heim) (Clayburgh, 2004); leading ways to overcome professional difficulties in the field of inclusive education (according to Ponikarova, V.N.) (Ponikarova, 2000); expert assessment "The level of risk in professional activity" (according to Zmanovskaya, E.V.) (Clayburgh, 2004) and others.

Based on the results of the ascertaining part of the study, we identified the following types of professional coping behavior - Adaptive (34% of the subjects in the control group and 50% in the experimental group) and the Crush type (24% of the subjects in the control group and 23% in the experimental group).

Based on the assessment of coping behavior in terms of productivity and non-productivity, we can classify the following types of professional behavior: Creative, Adaptive, Mix - to conditionally productive; Smash type - to productive; Crush - unproductive professional coping behavior.

The Mix type was most often noted by us among students of secondary vocational educational organizations, the types of coping behavior Creative and Smash were observed among students of higher education, while among students under conditions of additional vocational education - Adaptive and Crush.

The problems that teachers face in their work are due to stressful situations in working with children with disabilities in inclusive educational institutions. The study made it possible to identify the following circumstances that present significant difficulties for teachers:

- The main activities of the teacher of inclusive education;
- Forms of organization of subjects of inclusive education;
- Acquaintance with the legislative and legal framework for the activities of the teacher of inclusive education and the implementation of legal acts;
- Providing special educational conditions for people with disabilities;
- Meeting the special educational needs of people with disabilities;
- Professional burnout and professional deformation.

The study of problem situations was carried out according to a number of criteria: the orientation of social interaction, professionally important qualities (PIQ), risk factors, functions of coping behavior, coping strategy, competence, etc.

The analysis of the results of studying the professional coping behavior of the respondents made it possible to create a generalized description of the most significant problem situations.

In accordance with the direction of social interaction of the subjects of inclusive education, we have identified three groups of situations: interpersonal, intrapersonal and extrapersonal.

It should be noted that these types of interaction to one degree or another, directly or indirectly, are

represented in all problem situations, but some of the types of interaction will be the leading ones.

So, interpersonal interaction implies direct communication between participants in inclusive education: teacher - child (children) with disabilities; teacher - teachers (specialists of inclusive education), teacher - parents of children with disabilities, etc.

Intrapersonal - implies personal growth, self-development of the teacher as a professional of inclusive education;

Extrapersonal implies cooperation: the teacher - official representatives (for example, representatives of government bodies), etc.

Most of the problem situations (four out of six), we attributed to situations with leading interpersonal interaction of the participants: "The main directions of the teacher of inclusive education"; "Forms of organization of subjects of inclusive education"; "Providing special educational conditions and meeting the special educational needs of people with disabilities".

We classified the situation "Acquaintance with the legislative and legal basis for the activities of a teacher of inclusive education and the implementation of legal acts" as an extrapersonal position, and we associate "Professional burnout and professional deformation" with intrapersonal interaction.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND TECHNOLOGICAL

The problem situations under consideration with predominantly interpersonal interaction of participants are characterized by the fact that for their resolution they require teachers to have such professionally important qualities as the ability to act in extreme (emergency) situations; the ability to form and maintain a favorable socio-psychological climate in the team; adherence to generally accepted norms of behavior and the ability to coordinate their work with the work of others. At the same time, three of them are necessary PIQs, and adherence to generally accepted norms of behavior is significant.

The necessary PIQs are determinative and define the very essence of professional activity. Significant PIQs have the status of complementary ones and allow performing professional activities at a sufficiently high level.

It can be concluded that in order to solve problem situations with a predominant interpersonal interaction, it is precisely the necessary PIQs that are required, which ensure the most optimal social and

professional functioning of the teacher's personality in the conditions of inclusive education.

An analysis of the risk factors for the activities of an inclusive education teacher in relation to the problem situations we have identified allows us to note that the following factors are leading in them:

in the situation "The main directions of the teacher of inclusive education" - extreme situations in professional activities;

in the disposition "Forms of organization of subjects of inclusive education" - excessively intensive communication in professional activity is a risk factor;

in the case of "Providing special educational conditions and meeting the special educational needs of people with disabilities" - the dominance of negative emotions and experiences and a high degree of responsibility in professional activity are the main ones.

These factors can be characterized as rather negative, creating a high likelihood of developing negative experiences and, as a consequence, the possibility of professional burnout.

Of particular interest is the study of using the potential of coping behavior to resolve problem situations with interpersonal interaction of participants. The leading coping strategies are seeking support, problem solving, and avoidance. The strategy of seeking support is used to resolve situations "The main directions of activities of a teacher of inclusive education" and "Forms of organization of subjects of inclusive education", while problem-solving and avoidance are characteristic of "Providing special educational conditions and meeting the special educational needs of persons with disabilities".

It can be noted that conditionally productive coping strategies turned out to be the leading ones, which do not fully allow us to constructively resolve the existing problem.

The main functions of coping behavior for resolving problem situations with interpersonal interaction of participants were the following: imitative, assistive, prognostic and reflexive.

The imitative function allows to form the skills and abilities of the productive use of coping behavior in the process of resolving problem situations.

Assistive - helps to make the right decision to a problem situation.

The predictive function of coping behavior allows one to present and assess the risks and possible consequences of problem situations.

Reflexive - reduces difficulties in the process of choosing solutions to eliminate a problem situation.

More often than others, special competencies of coping behavior were in demand: "The ability to consciously choose coping behavior as a means of resolving problem situations" and "The ability to use coping behavior broadly and flexibly as a means of resolving problem situations", as well as basic "Owns predominantly applied knowledge of coping behavior" and key competencies "Owns the ways of using coping behavior as a means of resolving problem situations".

It is worth reminding that key competencies are mainly general versatile abilities and skills that provide a person with the opportunity to understand the situation and achieve the final result in their personal life and professional activity in the context of the increasing dynamism of modern society. Key competencies can be acquired only in the process of education and in an independent social life (professional, personal).

Basic competencies are determined by the ability to independently make decisions and resolve general tasks of professional activity.

Special competencies are associated with the employee's ability to solve specific problem situations within the framework of professional activity. Most often, special competencies are used in non-standard situations and express the position of the subject.

The possession of special competencies can be assessed as the use of soft skills, while the use of key and basic competencies can be regarded as hard skills.

Hard skills are those that can be freely tracked, measured and demonstrated, necessary to perform a well-defined type of activity efficiently enough.

Soft skills are primarily social skills. They are not as obviously measurable as hard skills, but, precisely, they are necessary for any kind of activity. These include the ability to communicate, work in a team, persuade, solve problems and take responsibility, manage your time, and motivate yourself and others.

These skills are undoubtedly necessary for teachers, especially if they work with people with disabilities, or implement inclusive educational practice.

Thus, the situations "The main directions of activities of the teacher of inclusive education" and "Forms of organization of subjects of inclusive education" were resolved through the use of soft skills, while in the case of "Providing special educational conditions and meeting the special educational needs of persons with disabilities" mostly hard skills were used.

We classified the situation "Acquaintance with the legislative and legal framework for the activities

of a teacher of inclusive education and the implementation of legal acts" as extrapersonal interaction and the "Professional burnout and professional deformation" disposition - with intrapersonal interaction.

In these situations, the most demanded PIQs were "Compliance with generally accepted norms of behavior" and "Balance, self-control". We classify both qualities as essential PIQs. The risk factors for professional activity are "Information overload in professional activity" and "Increased physical and emotional stress in professional activity". In the first situation ("Acquaintance with the legislative and legal basis of the activities of the teacher of inclusive education and the implementation of legal acts"), the solution of the problem is the leading strategy of coping behavior, while in the second case - avoidance. As the leading functions of coping behavior, the detective functions are noted - the recognition of problem situations, the separation of useful (productive) coping behavior from unproductive ones, and the preventive - which helps to prevent difficulties in the process of resolving problem situations using coping behavior.

For the "Acquaintance with the legislative and legal framework for the activities of a teacher of inclusive education and the implementation of legal acts" disposition, the respondents more often used the basic competence "Owns mainly applied knowledge of coping behavior", and for the "Professional burnout and professional deformation" situation - the special competence was in demand: "The ability to consciously choose coping behavior as a means of resolving problem situations".

Therefore, to solve the non-standard case "Familiarity with the legislative and legal framework for the activities of the teacher of inclusive education and the implementation of legal acts" hard skills were mainly used, while to resolve the "Professional burnout and professional deformation" situation - soft skills.

It should be noted that in the control group, the most problematic were "Providing special educational conditions for persons with disabilities" and "Acquaintance with the legislative and legal framework for the activities of a teacher of inclusive education and the implementation of legal acts" (interpersonal and extrapersonal orientation of interaction), in the experimental group the "Professional burnout and professional deformation" disposition has an intrapersonal orientation of the interaction of subjects. The least difficult problem situations for the control and experimental groups are the same - "The main directions of the teacher of

inclusive education" and "Forms of organization of subjects of inclusive education" (interpersonal orientation of interaction). All data are confirmed by the ranking method.

Thus, the most difficult forms of interaction for teachers are situations with an extrapersonal and intrapersonal orientation, in contrast to a situation with an interpersonal orientation of interaction. This is explained by the fact that the first group of situations is less common, while in the second group of solutions teachers have more experience.

The use of Spearman's rank correlation coefficient showed the presence of statistically significant differences ( $r = 0.85$ , significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ ) in the assessment of problem situations by the respondents in the EG and the CG.

## 5 CONCLUSION

So, based on the above, a number of conclusions can be drawn.

The typology of problematic situations faced by teachers and specialists implementing inclusive practice can be based on the orientation of social interaction of subjects: interpersonal, extrapersonal or intrapersonal.

Most of the critical situations we have considered, we attributed to situations of interpersonal interaction, which require teachers who implement inclusive educational practice the necessary professionally important qualities, while in other cases -significant PIQs.

These situations are resolved through the use of a strategy of seeking support, while in others, problem solving or avoidance is more often demanded. The competencies are more often special ones, which we consider as soft skills, which are used in non-standard conditions and express the position of the subject.

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