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## THE ISSUE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN RUSSIA

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### **Abstract**

The problems of inclusive education in Russia on the example of the Republic of Tatarstan are considered. The results of monitoring of representations of teachers on the status and trends of inclusive education in the Republic of Tatarstan are given. Description of the features of the understanding by teachers the ideas and concepts of inclusion and ways of its development, taking into account the age of the teachers, their education and teaching experience is given. Undertaken in the article, analysis of current teachers views on the issue of inclusive education suggests that the understanding of the idea of inclusion in the Russian society is facing a number of challenges, while it is at the beginning of the development. This process requires a comprehensive study on the integration of the people with restricted abilities in the Russian society. Complete socialization of the people with disabilities is possible only in conditions of full understanding of the issues of inclusion, as well as a comprehensive approach to its implementation.

*Keywords:* inclusion, integration problems, children, restricted abilities, Russian society

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### **1. Introduction**

According to the estimates of the World Health Organization in 2011, almost 15% of the world's population has a disability (which exceeds earlier estimates of the United Nations by 10%) [1]. According to the official statistics, in Russia live about 10 million people with disabilities, and to the estimates of the Social Information Agency - not less than 15 million [*Persons with disabilities*, accessed on 26.01.2014, [www.ecitizen.nnov.ru/handicapped/](http://www.ecitizen.nnov.ru/handicapped/)].

Education of the children with restricted abilities and children with disabilities is one of the fundamental and inalienable conditions for their successful socialization [2], to ensure their full participation in the society, the effective self-realization in a variety of professional and social activities [3].

Within the state program of the Russian Federation 'Accessible environment for people with disabilities 2011-2015', it is planned to increase the number of regional and municipal educational institutions eligible to establish the conditions for unhindered access for the disabled to 10 million units by 2016

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[[www.doorinworld.ru/stati/251-czelevaya-programma-ldostupnaya-sreda-20112015r-dlya-invalidov/](http://www.doorinworld.ru/stati/251-czelevaya-programma-ldostupnaya-sreda-20112015r-dlya-invalidov/)].

## **2. Method**

Due to the acute problem of non-ownership of the information about the federal program ‘Accessible Environment’ by teachers from mass schools, who at the moment do not have to work in an environment of inclusion, we have attempted to further examine the issue.

The study ‘Monitoring of representations of teachers on the status and trends of inclusive education in the Republic of Tatarstan’ was conducted among teachers in urban and rural schools in the Republic of Tatarstan from October 2013 to January 2014. The study involved 69 people aged from 22 to 65 years, higher education had 64 people, high-school degree - 5 people. Pedagogical experience ranged from two to forty years. Place of work distributed as follows: schools, kindergartens, gymnasium, orphanage.

After filling shared information about themselves by the teachers, they were given 3 questions:

1. “How do you think, which of the subjects of the educational process the inclusion of children with disabilities in the general education environment institutions (preschool, school, university) is the most useful for?” On this question, we proposed 6 answers. The teacher could choose from the answers one or more answers or leave in additional graph his variant.

2. “What difficulties and barriers do you see in the development of the inclusive education?” Teachers were offered 13 variants of barriers and difficulties, where each item was given a place on the degree of their influence on the situation from 1 to 13 (the 1<sup>st</sup> variant assumed the greatest difficulty, the 13<sup>th</sup> - the lowest). Also, teachers could write their own answer.

3. “Give your opinion on the state of the inclusive education in the Republic of Tatarstan?” Teachers were offered 8 statements on each of which they could answer ‘strongly agree’, ‘tend to agree’, ‘neutral’, ‘tend to disagree’, ‘strongly disagree’, ‘difficult to answer’.

## **3. Results and discussion**

Summarizing the results of our study, we can say that professional teachers - 69 people with higher pedagogical education (93%) as well as significant work experience - from 4 to 40 years old (57%) working in educational institutions (99%) and living in the city (75%) believe that the integration of children with RA in the environment of the educational institution will be useful primarily for children with restricted abilities) RA ( 45 responses - 65.21%), for the children with norm - 21 responses (30.43 %), to improve social relations in Russian society - 45 responses (68.18%). However, teachers see a large number of barriers to inclusion (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Difficulties and barriers in the development of inclusive education.

<b>Variants of the barriers</b>	<b>Number of people</b>	<b>%</b>
Lack of financial support	15	21.73%
Lack of staff with appropriate training	12	17.39%
Individual features of the children with RA	10	14.49%
Lack of methodical support	7	10.14%
Resistance of the parents of schoolchildren	6	8.69%
Lack of the normative base	5	7.24%
Lack of teachers' competence	4	5.79%
Resistance of the schoolchildren	3	4.34%
Resistance of the administration and staff of the educational institute	2	2.89%
Resistance of the teachers	2	2.89%
Resistance of the parents of schoolchildren with RA	1	1.44%
Resistance of the teachers from special schools	1	1.44%
Resistance of the founders of the educational institute	1	1.44%

Also, considering the broad view of teachers on the problem of the status of inclusive education in the territory of the Republic of Tatarstan, we came to the conclusion that the majority of the respondents - 36 people (52%) believe that the development of inclusive education will change the situation in the education system of the Republic of Tatarstan for the better while 18 people (27.5%) do not see the positive direction of the development. Despite the positive outlook on the future of inclusive education at the moment, now only 11 persons (15.9%) are willing to admit that the educational institution in which they work is ready for the introduction of inclusive education. The majority of respondents - 38 people (55%) admit that about the full implementation of inclusion at a particular educational institution is too early to speak. In continuation of this quite acute theme, 44 teachers (63.7%) believe that the country and society of Tatarstan really have to develop on a par with European states and to accept people with RA in society of the healthy people. Proving this direction, they said that inclusive education infiltrating into every school and kindergarten in any republic, territory, city, village, will not turn back, will develop, growing into the roots of the whole system of education in Russia.

#### **4. Conclusions**

We understand that talking about the success of it now is premature. Introduction of the inclusive education in Tatarstan faces a number of acute issues that require quick and correct decision. Inclusive education should be one of the strategic directions of the Program of Education Development in the Republic of Tatarstan until 2020. Now mass schools are not ready to take on the education children with RA, as they are not equipped to meet the needs of persons with disabilities for hearing, vision, in violation of the musculoskeletal

system [4], are not equipped with special equipment, there are no teachers - speech pathologists.

Solving the problem of integration of the child with RA in educational environment can be aided by the following measures, on which the focus should be: the organization of a permanent support in the process of learning for special assistant-tutors (child may need permanent accompaniment or accompaniment during a period of adaptation) [5]; support of the educational process with psycho-pedagogical correction of cognitive and other problems of the child [6, 7]; organization of a child's education on an individual plan.

General education system needs to become more flexible and able to ensure equal rights and opportunities for all children - without discrimination and neglect. Following the principles of the social model, society needs to overcome negative attitudes to childhood disability, to provide RA children full participation in all aspects of school and extracurricular activities in the general education system. We should remember about the basic principles of inclusive education, which argue that the value of person being does not depend on his abilities and achievements. He is valuable in himself.

Thus, the content of our article, we want to say that the beginning of a great and laborious work on the implementation of an accessible environment for people with RA is given, and therefore their worthy and full life in modern society.

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