INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION: PRACTICAL APPROACHES

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Abstract:
This article analyzes the significance, relevance, and future development prospects of inclusive education. Based on global and Uzbek experiences, the article provides a detailed discussion of current trends, pressing challenges, and future directions of inclusive education. It also explores the socio-economic impact of inclusive education, drawing upon scientific sources, official documents, and statistical data.

Keywords: inclusive education, children with special needs, pedagogical approaches, education quality, modern trends, inclusion, education policy.

Currently, inclusive education is recognized as one of the most relevant directions in global education. The system of inclusive education has been developed to ensure that every individual has the right to quality education, providing equal opportunities for children and adults with different abilities.

The Republic of Uzbekistan has also prioritized the development of inclusive education, making it a crucial aspect of state policy. The "Law on Education" adopted in 2019 and the "Concept for the Development of Education in Uzbekistan until 2030" are key legislative documents aimed at fostering inclusive education (Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2019).

Inclusive education aims to guarantee educational rights for all children and is based on the following key principles:
• Creating equal educational opportunities for every child;
• Adapting children with physical or intellectual disabilities to society;
• Establishing necessary conditions for children with special needs in educational institutions.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), countries that have implemented inclusive education have witnessed improved education quality and better social adaptation of children with special needs (WHO, 2019). In Uzbekistan, more than 150 schools established inclusive education classes in 2021 as part of the "Program for Improving Educational Conditions for Children with Special Needs" (Ministry of Public Education of Uzbekistan, 2021).

To fully understand the concept of an inclusive society, it is essential to analyze related scientific terms, such as social integration. Social integration refers to a process aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for individuals regardless of their background, allowing them to reach their full potential. This process is a multidimensional system focused on expanding participation in various areas, including civic, social, economic, and political activities, as well as decision-making processes. Social integration is also considered one of the key factors in addressing issues of poverty and social exclusion.

Social isolation, on the other hand, serves as a barrier to social integration. This occurs when individuals or groups are excluded from full participation in society due to factors such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, language, or physical, economic, and social conditions. Social isolation can manifest in different ways, such as denial of voting rights, lack of recognition by society, and restrictions on participation in decision-making processes. It may also be associated with limited access to stable employment, property, land, education, social services, and political representation.

Current Trends in Inclusive Education

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In recent years, the following key trends have been observed in the implementation of inclusive education:

1.	Legislative and Political Support: Many countries, including Uzbekistan, have developed new projects for the modernization of education programs tailored to children with special needs. In 2022, Uzbekistan introduced new policies for inclusive education.

2.	Pedagogical Approaches: Innovative pedagogical technologies and special teaching methodologies are being developed (Florian, 2017). For example, Uzbekistan has increased the number of special schools and boarding institutions while organizing new pedagogical training programs.

3.	Digital Technologies: Inclusive education is integrating artificial intelligence, adaptive learning programs, and other digital technologies (Ainscow, 2021). In Uzbekistan, the "Electronic Education System" has been launched to provide digital resources for children with special needs.

The development of inclusive education is expected to focus on the following areas:
• Designing adaptive educational programs for children with special needs;
• Enhancing the qualifications of educators specializing in inclusive education;
• Promoting positive public attitudes toward inclusive education;
• Expanding and developing digital education platforms.

According to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), inclusive education plays a crucial role in improving global education quality and fostering sustainable social development (United Nations, 2022).

Inclusive education is an integral part of modern education systems, benefiting not only children with special needs but also society as a whole. The widespread adoption of inclusive approaches in educational institutions can lead to improved education quality and equal opportunities. Therefore, supporting the development of inclusive education remains a critical direction for societal progress.

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