

Pedagogy

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**GENDER SOCIALIZATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

(by the experience of the Center of Social and Educational Integration “Without Barriers” in USPU)

The article examined the importance of gender education in universities. The problems of socialization of students with special educational needs, including gender socialization have been revealed. It is noted that the Center of Gender Education was founded in Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, which main work directions are gender socialization, gender awareness of students with certain nosologies and the formation of gender-sensitive institutions. It is emphasized the importance of gender equality in terms of higher education.

Key words: gender socialization, gender equality, students with special educational needs, university.

Анотація. У статті розглянуто значення гендерної освіти у ВНЗ. Висвітлено проблеми соціалізації студентів з особливими освітніми потребами, серед яких основне місце посідає гендерна соціалізація. Зазначено, що в Уманському державному педагогічному університеті імені Павла Тичини створено Центр гендерної освіти, одним із напрямків діяльності якого є гендерна соціалізація, гендерна обізнаність саме студентів із певними нозологіями, а також формування гендерно-чутливого ВНЗ. Підкреслено важливість гендерної рівності в умовах вищої школи.

Ключові слова: гендерна соціалізація, гендерна рівність, студенти з особливими освітніми потребами, університет.

Today one can follow an unacceptable educational system in which students passively receive academic knowledge and do not come into active engagement with

society. The problem of socialization of young people with special educational needs into the general educational area takes a special place and causes a lot of controversy and criticism.

With the development of democratic civil society in our country the international legal acts on social protection of people with special educational needs became effective. First of all, this is the Declaration “On the Rights of the Child” (1991), the Declaration “On the Rights of Disabled People” (proclaimed by UN General Assembly in 1997) and the Law of Ukraine “On Education” (2006), “On the Basis of Social Protection of Disabled People in Ukraine” (1991), “On the State Social Help to Disabled Children” (2000), “On Social services” (2003), and others. The lack of clear sociological understanding of the socially-constructed nature of gender differences and functioning of social institutions, particularly in the area of gender socialization makes often ineffective nature of many political initiatives and legislative acts that are aimed at overcoming gender discrimination, the formation of socially just and democratic society.

Therefore, meaningful and socially relevant is the study of complex processes of gender socialization and education of students with special educational needs in terms of higher institutions taking into consideration the existing socio-cultural context.

On September 26, 2013 the government adopted the State Program of equal rights and opportunities for women and men for the period until 2016. Implementation of this program was aimed to introduce in Ukraine standards of equality between women and men with regard to the best European experience, which is based on the principles of gender balance and gender democracy.

The system of higher education, which nowadays has a powerful scientific and pedagogical potential and works with young people who in the future will be the elite of the country and will lead others, can become a major element in the formation of new approaches and traditions that promote penetration of gender equality in all spheres of Ukrainian society. The Ukrainian universities developed the methods and technologies that can not only produce and spread knowledge but also form skills to appropriate behavior, which will be based on knowledge and gender equality.

An important contribution to the development of gender approach in teacher education was made by: O. Voronina (the problems of development of the theory and methodology of gender studies, determination of the place and role of gender education in the training of students); I. Klotsyna (the ways of gender socialization of a person taking into account age, development of workshop on gender issues for students in order to overcome gender stereotypes).

Such researchers as I. Zvierieva, A. Kapska, A. Kolupaieva, N. Kolyada, V. Lyashenko, M. Perfilieva, O. Raskazova, V. Teslenko, S. Kharchenko and others studied the theoretical approaches that reveal social and educational aspects of a child with special educational needs personality formation, social and pedagogical approaches to work with this child.

Gender socialization has specific characteristics and difficulties in men and women. With the first period of self-awareness as a representative of a particular sex a child connects it with a number of features: with clothing, rules of conduction, manifestations of feelings. In the process of gender socialization parents and family environment play an important role.

The level of civilization of a state and society is determined by the attitude to the most vulnerable its members – students with special needs. Society must do everything possible to create conditions for social activity manifestation and participation to broad social and cultural relations.

Nowadays the public discussions about changing the gender status in the world take place in the Ukrainian society. Universities also play a leading role. We should be responsible for the formation of gender world-view [1].

Thus, the main idea of the gender approach in education is not seen in a description of the biological differences and fixing the difference in social status, roles, norms and rules of life (education, training) of the representatives of different sexes, but in “... the assessment of harmony between sexes interaction”.

After analyzing a number of scientific and statistical literature [1; 2], we concluded that it is important to create Center of Gender Education in the University and direct its work to the students with nosologies, because they are the most vulnerable and least aware of gender issues.

Therefore, the Centre of Gender Education was established on the basis of Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University. Gender socialization, gender awareness of students with special educational needs, as well as the formation of gender-sensitive institution are the main activity directions of the Center.

It is difficult for students with special needs to receive higher education in Ukraine. The vast number of universities are not able to accept students with disabilities to full-time education [2]. Our University provides an opportunity not only to receive quality education, but also creates the conditions for students socialization. University also helps the students with special needs in their employment.

The University collaborates with the Department of Labor and Social Protection in Uman, Uman district center of social services for families, children and youth, the Department of Family and Youth of Uman City Council, the Open International University "Ukraine", charitable organization "Foundation "Modern village and city", Center of social and educational integration of students with special needs "Without Barriers", the All-Ukrainian network of gender education, the foundation "Good Will" (Krakow, Poland).

50 students with different nosologies attend Center of Gender Education. "Creative Workshop" started its work as one of the directions of the Centre. Each student has the opportunity to participate in joint activities and create its individual masterpieces using conventional materials.

Members of the Centre regularly visit dendrological park "Sofiyivka", where study the park's history and share their expectations of joint activities under the project. They have the opportunity to implement in practice all the knowledge received during lectures, seminars, workshops, debates, conversations (e.g. acquaintance with the opposite sex).

One of the major activities is the training program "Training of students to family life", where students with special educational needs study with healthy students. Cinema is an integral part of gender equality ensuring.

Work of the circle “Mars-Venus” is organized on the basis of the Centre. Students are engaged in the study of gender equality, the enforcement of women and the disabled people, gender literacy development.

Development of inclusive tourism is a separate direction, where students of different sexes travel together and establish contacts, overcome certain barriers in communication and relations. It is planned to participate in the national symposium with international participation “Scientific and Practical Implementation of Inclusive Rehabilitation and Social Tourism in Ukraine”.

It is also organized the advisory services for teachers and students on gender issues.

Center of Gender Education caused the introduction of a new discipline “Gender Transformation in the 21st century” into curriculum.

Our special students study together in common groups, have comfortable access to libraries, educational laboratories, dormitory, and canteen. University adapts infrastructure for the students with special needs.

Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University has gained considerable experience in inclusive education, as the students with nosologies from all regions of Ukraine study at the university. Our special students actively participate in social and cultural life of the university and the city.

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