

Formation of positive relationships of peers to children with special educational needs in inclusive education

Gaukhar Akhmetova^{1*}, Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Institute of Pedagogy and Psychology 050010, Dostyk Ave., 13, Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6939-1754>

Zhanar Massaliyeva², South Kazakhstan State Pedagogical University, Department of Preschool and Special Pedagogy, 160021, Baitursynov st.13, Shymkent, Kazakhstan <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4523-3812>

Rabiga Ismanova³, South Kazakhstan State Pedagogical University, Department of Preschool and Special Pedagogy, 160021, Baitursynov st.13, Shymkent, Kazakhstan <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3917-0627>

Laura Butabayeva⁴, National Academy of Education named after Y. Altynsarin, Department of Professional Training, 020000, 8 Mangilik El Ave., Nur-Sultan, Republic of Kazakhstan <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3758-8624>

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Abstract

This study aimed to establish a positive relationship between peers and children in need of special education in inclusive education. The research was carried out in the 2021–2022 spring academic year, and the study was carried out with the participation of 142 students in the quantitative research model. In the study, 3 weeks of inclusion and peer training were given to the participant group. In the study, a data collection tool called ‘inclusion and peer’ was used to collect data developed by the researchers. The data collection tool used in the research was delivered to the participant groups by online method and collected. The analysis of the data was made by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences programme, frequency analysis and *t*-test, and the results were added to the research in the presence of tables. As a result of the research, it was seen that the students participating in the research understood how to approach children in need of special education and also had high values as they expected this relationship to be established.

Keywords: Inclusive education, special education, distance education, peer to peer;

* *ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: Gaukhar Akhmetova, Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Institute of Pedagogy and Psychology 050010, Dostyk Ave., 13, Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan
E-mail address: akhmetova-gaukhar2501@okmpu.kz

1. Introduction

In light of various studies that have taken place in today's world, they show that they and their peers have other characteristics, facts and possessions. It is seen that the preschool period gains meaning in terms of rapid development and the effects it has on the life of the individual (Sivrikova, 2021). The first examples of peer relationships emerge as a result of rapid development and preschool education. Peer relationships are at the same age or level of development and maturity. It is the whole of interactions that show reciprocity and continuity between people who share similar backgrounds, values, experiences, lifestyles and social contexts (Bianco, Giaconi, Gison, D'Angelo, & Capellini, 2021). When the related article and field are examined, it is seen that peer dimensions and friendship subject content are generally preferred instead of each other. It is known that when friendship is a situation that affects peer relationships systematically, it is not the same concept (Arante, Sacay, Bocboc, & Baisa, 2020). Peer relationships are known to encompass and form different types of relationships in students' peer classes. Friendship, on the other hand, is seen to form an emotional bond with which the student communicates with the environment that triggers one or more groups. There are regular activities in peer relationships (Sengul & Sunbul, 2017). It should not be forgotten that a child who is preferred as a playmate in friendship also spends time outside of peer activities, and the peer levels in the preschool period shape the social relationships and experiences in that period, but the individual should be in social-emotional harmony in the future (Banks, McCoy, & Frawley, 2018).

When the relevant resources are examined, it is necessary to reveal this situation along with revealing the peer and friendship levels of preschool students, their formation and their characteristics. At the same time, it is thought that the studies that will be created will help to increase the quality of the preschool education level, create a healthier communication environment with their students and provide timely and verbal support to the students who have problems with their peers, and at the same time prevent the problems before they start (Dadashi, Soltani, & Rahimi, 2020). It is among the expectations that there will be positive developments in the short and long term in other areas of development, especially in the social development of children who establish healthy relationships with their peers. It is not enough to support inclusion practices only with laws (Kuutti, Sajaniemi, Björn, Heiskanen, & Reunamo, 2022). It is known that some purposes should not be forgotten and are needed to be carried out together with this dimension gaining a better meaning. It is known that educators, housekeepers, families and students with special needs, regular class students, regulations in meta-analysis areas and simplified curricula and school principals are in this area (Arslanova, 2021). In mainstreaming utilities, it is known that the environment should be well prepared for students to communicate with educators. This will also play a role in the success of the mainstreaming study (Valdebenito Zambrano, Duran Gisbert, & Uzunboylu, 2021). The importance of inclusive education, which will be formed during preschool education, which is one of the most important times in life, in terms of forming the most needed skills and accelerating the development of people in the periods in need of special education, is high (Rubtsov & Konokotin, 2020).

Inclusion, if taken literally, is an important education plan developed to increase the educational opportunities of students with special education, intellectual disabilities and other sub-dimensions. It is known that students with special needs have the right to education together with inclusion in schools and that inclusive education is more effective for these students are two important factors in supporting inclusive education (Travers & Carter, 2022). In recent years, the idea of meeting the educational needs of individuals with special needs in normal educational environments without

separating them from their peers has become widespread (Carter & McCabe, 2021). Inclusive education and the programme must be given successfully for the students with special needs to adapt to people and gain individual life skills. When the educational environments of students with special needs are examined in historical time, it is seen that there is a time from full-term schools to education in an inclusive environment (Panganiban, Shire, Williams, & Kasari, 2022). Based on the views that it is against human rights for children with special needs to be educated in full-time schools, these students have problems adapting to social life and the education of many students with special needs can be better met within the normal arrangement, education in separate schools is a less preferred form of arrangement. While inclusive education is preferred, it should not be forgotten that it comes as an educational arrangement (Laubscher, Raulston, & Ousley, 2022).

1.1. Related research

Loeper, Schwab, Lehofer, and Hellmich (2021) aimed at emphasising the importance of contact experiences concerning students' attitudes towards their peers with maladaptive behaviours. They concluded that there is a relationship between contact experiences and experiencing behavioural difficulties.

Stebljuk et al. (2021), in their study, aimed at addressing the pedagogical and psycho-corrective ways of providing communicative interaction of mildly and moderately mentally retarded young schoolchildren with disabilities in the context of inclusive education, and as a result, the formation of communicative competence and communicative interaction among students with intellectual disabilities. They concluded that the programme of providing positive motivation was validated.

Avramidis, Toulia, Tsihouridis, and Strogilos (2019) aimed at establishing a connection between the reported attitudes towards inclusion and teachers' self-efficacy for inclusion practices and real inclusion practices. They also concluded their studies by underlining the need to offer teachers professional development courses that positively affect their attitudes and increase their sense of self-efficacy in applying peer teaching.

1.2. Purpose of the study

Within the scope of the research, it was aimed to establish a positive relationship between the children in need of special education and their peers in inclusive education, and the answers to the following questions were sought for the determined general purpose:

1. What are the inclusive education use cases of the participant group participating in the research?
2. What is the status of the participant group participating in the research to spare time for special education live events?
3. What is the purpose of using inclusive education for the participant group participating in the research?
4. Is there a significant difference between the views of inclusive education according to the gender variable of the participant group participating in the research?
5. What are the post-study inclusive education views of the participant group participating in the research?

2. Method

When the method part of the research is considered, it will be seen that information such as the source of the data type used in the research is included and the numerical values will be tabulated.

2.1. Research model

When the model or design part of the research is considered, it is seen that the model used in this study is the quantitative research method. In the quantitative research method, the objectification of a dimension that serves as a bridge between future experiences and past experiences reveals the concept of a quantitative today (Uzunboylu, Genç, & Tugun, 2017). In this sense, it will be seen that this method will be supported to establish a positive relationship between peers and children in need of special education in inclusive education.

2.2. Working group/participants

It is seen that the study period is implemented in the spring academic year of 2021–2022, and the participant and data part of the research consists of 142 students, who are called educators and teachers of the future in Kazakhstan. The participant group participating in the research receive their training through live lessons.

2.2.1. Gender

In this section, the gender divisions of the participant groups included in the study are given (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of the participant group participating in the research by gender

Gender	Male		Female	
	F	%	F	%
Variable	72	50.70	70	49.30

2.2.2. Inclusive education use cases of the participant group participating in the research

In this section, inclusive training was given via the online environment so that participants participating in the research could carry the problem situation in the research and they were expected to use this training during the day. Detailed usage information is given in Table 2.

Table 2. Inclusion education use cases of the participant group participating in the research

Inclusion education use	1 hour		2 hours		3 hours or more	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Variable	21	14.79	47	33.10	74	52.11

When the data are analysed by considering the problem situation of the research, it is seen that the participant groups were given information on the use of inclusive education and working time regarding the problem situation of the research and this data was examined. 33.10% (47 people) stated that they spend time using inclusive education for 2 hours and 52.11% (74 people) stated that they use

inclusive education for 3 hours or more. It is seen that the participant group prefer the daily inclusive education usage amount of 3 hours or more, which can support their communication.

2.2.3. Time allocated for special education live events by the participant group participating in the research

In this section, live events for the special education field were organised for the participant groups included in the research, and the situations related to the time allocation status were researched and examined according to the daily usage periods. Detailed information is given in Table 3.

Table 3. Time allocated for special education live activities by the participant group participating in the research

Special education live event making time	1 hour		2 hours		3 hours and above	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Variable	22	15.49	37	26.06	83	58.45

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that the use of live activities for special education during the day and the usage situations they use daily during the time of the day are examined and detailed information is given. In this context, 15.49% (22 people) stated that they spared 1 hour for special education live events, 26.06% (37 people) stated that they spent 2 hours for live events and 58.45% (83 people) stated that they spared 3 hours or more for live events, which appears to be preferred.

2.2.4. Class status

In this section, the class information of the people who participated in the study group research was examined and detailed information is given in Table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of the participant group participating in the research by class status

Class	3rd grade		4th grade	
	F	%	F	%
Variable	58	40.84	84	59.16

When Table 4 is examined, the distribution of the participant group participating in the research according to their class status has been taken into consideration, and the information regarding this section has been added to the table. In this context, 40.84% (58 students) are in the third grade and 59.16% (84 people) are in the fourth grade. In the class situations section, the findings reflect the actual distribution.

2.3. Data collection tools

A draft questionnaire was created by creating an item pool to create an opinion questionnaire to establish peer communication with specially trained students through inclusive education of the participant group participating in the research. The data collection tool, on the other hand, was created by the people who created the research specifically for this study and examined by experts and simplified by removing the unsuitable items from the research. It is seen that the personal information form called the 'inclusion and peer' data collection tool, which was applied to the participants and

developed by the researchers, was used. The content validity of the developed measurement tool was examined by three experts with the title of professor working on inclusive education and special education, and unnecessary items were removed from the measurement tool and simplified and rearranged.

1. Personal information form (demographic data): In the personal information form, information such as gender, class, inclusive education usage situations and special education and live activity time-separation usage environments are included.

2. Inclusion and peer data collection tool: A 5-point Likert-type data collection tool was prepared to obtain information about their views on strengthening peer communication in the field of inclusion and special education to create some values in the participant groups. 18 items of the measurement tool consisting of 21 items in total were used and 3 items were removed from the measurement tool, thanks to experts' opinions. The opinions of the people who participated in the research were consulted from two factorial dimensions, such as 'inclusive education' and 'special education'. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of the data collection tool as a whole was calculated as 0.89. The data collection tool was in the range of 'strongly disagree' (1), 'disagree' (2), 'undecided' (3), 'agree' (4) and 'strongly agree' (5). The measurement tool was also collected from primary schoolteachers in the form of an online environment.

2.4. Application

When this part is considered as an application, it is seen that the approach to the participant groups will be discussed in the research. 142 students, who will be the future of us who continue their education in various schools in the Kazakhstan region, were determined by the researchers and live events were created using Microsoft Teams videoconferencing programme, and transfers such as events, approaches, special education live events times and use cases via distance education were organised by experts in the field of this activity environment. 'Inclusive education' and 'special education' were given to the people who participated in the research within the 3-week training. Information was transferred to the participant group in the form of a live event and they were expected to participate every week. After the 3-week training, the information form and data collection tool were collected by the online application method from the participant group participating in the research, and the data are given in the findings section in the tables. The training was distributed as five sections over the Microsoft Teams videoconferencing application programme, which is preferred by most institutions and organisations, and each determined section was arranged to be limited to a maximum of 30 participants, distributed over weeks. The participants were expected to participate in the training with video and microphone using smart devices during the live events. The measurement tool applied to the people participating in the research was collected using an online questionnaire and transferred to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences programme by coding in the computing software environment.

2.5. Analysis of the data

In the data analysis part, the statistical data obtained from the people participating in the research were analysed in the Statistics programme by using frequency (*f*), percentage (%), mean (*M*), standard deviation (*SD*) and *t*-test, respectively. The numerical values of the data obtained from the programme are given in tables, accompanied by comments in the Findings section.

3. Results

In this section, findings related to the use of project educational technologies and live events of the participants in the research are included.

3.1. Purpose of inclusion education use by the participant group

In this section, the purpose of using inclusive education by the participant group participating in the research was investigated and detailed information is given in Table 5.

Table 5. Purpose of mainstream education use by the participant group of the research

Variable		F	%
Mainstream education purpose of use	Communicating with my peers	75	52.82
	Helping the specially trained individual	60	42.25
	Other	7	4.93
	Total	142	100

When Table 5 is examined, the inclusive education usage timeframes and usage purposes of the participant group participating in the research were researched according to the problem situation of the research and it was seen that the relevant information was added to the table. It is seen that 42.25% (60 people) chose the option 'assisting special education individuals' and 4.93% (7 people) chose the other field. In this context, it can be said based on Table 5 that the research uses, according to the problem situation, most of the segments preferred to communicate with special education children.

3.2. Inclusive education status of the participant group according to the gender variable

In this section, the data obtained from the research and the inclusive education status according to the gender variable of the participant group participating in the research and detailed information is given in Table 6.

Table 6. Inclusive education status of the participant group according to the gender variable

	Gender	N	M	SD	Df	t	p
Inclusive education their status	Male	72	4.34	0.27	142	0.324	0.412
	Female	70	4.32	0.21			

When Table 6 is examined, the inclusive education status of the groups participating in the research was examined according to the gender variable and it was seen that there was no significant difference according to the gender criterion [$df(142) = 0.412, p < 0.05$]. When the inclusive education

status of the participant groups participating in the research is examined, it is seen that male participants had an average score for this area ($M = 4.34$), while female participants had an average score for this situation ($M = 4.32$). In this context, it can be said in the findings part of the research that there is no difference between the scores of male participants in this study compared to female participants, and that the two values are higher.

3.3. Post-study inclusive education views of the participant group participating in the research

In this section, after the training given in the study was completed, the students' opinions were consulted and it is seen that the detailed information is given in Table 7.

Table 7. Post-study inclusive education views of the participant group participating in the research

Substances	<i>M</i>	<i>S</i>
1. I make enough effort for inclusive education	4.41	0.54
2. I understood that teachers can teach in inclusive classrooms with this method.	4.39	0.66
3. I am aware of the problems that may arise in inclusive classrooms and I approach them accordingly.	4.43	0.59
4. Establishing a relationship with specially trained children through inclusive education makes me happy	4.39	0.66
5. I am happy to help children with special learning needs in inclusive classrooms.	4.51	0.59
6. I would be honoured to be in the mainstreaming class	4.43	0.63
7. I know myself and get to know myself through inclusive education	4.60	0.49
8. It makes me happy to tell my family and friends about this education I have received.	4.58	0.59
9. I don't feel lonely when I play computer games.	4.53	0.50
10. When I take inclusion lessons, I find myself saying something.	4.48	0.55
11. I want to get to know my friends in inclusive classes so that they can accept me and I act accordingly.	4.46	0.63
12. I can imagine the education in inclusive classrooms and I know that this education will be beneficial for me.	4.43	0.59
13. I think that I can establish positive communication with my friends in mainstream classes.	4.41	0.63
14. Individuals with special education needs	4.34	0.61
I am confident in helping with activities that suit their needs	4.46	0.63
15. Parents of students with special needs	4.41	0.63
I enjoy being with them in helping them participate in their activities.	4.36	0.69
16. I can control undesirable behaviour in inclusive education classes and be with my friend	4.48	0.52
Total	4.45	0.59

In Table 7, it is seen that the findings were given after the inclusive education of the participant group participating in the research. When the findings after the study are examined, it is seen that there is a significant difference and the values are high. Although it is seen that there is a significant value in all expressions, one of the most prominent expressions of the participant groups participating in the research is 'I know and know myself thanks to inclusive education', with a value of $M = 4.60$, and another most prominent expression is 'I am happy to help children with special learning needs in inclusive classes', with a mean value of $M = 4.51$. In addition, it is seen that another statement in the research 'I am happy to tell my family and environment about this education I have received' had an average score of $M = 4.58$.

Although positive results were seen in each item of the research, among the opinions of the students participating in the research, 'When I take an inclusion course, I find myself saying something' had a value of $M = 4.48$. Also, another information of from the people participating in the research is 'I can imagine the education in inclusive classrooms and I know that this education will be beneficial for me', with a mean value of $M = 4.43$. Finally, it is seen that the overall average of the values in the research is $M = 4.45$. It is seen in Table 7 that the ideas of the participants have developed positively with inclusive education.

4. Discussion

In his study, Tohara (2021) aimed to reveal that students have difficulties in coping with their studies in the digital learning environment due to their limited digital literacy skills, and as a result, technological tools and strategies are used to provide teaching and learning strategies to students, including students with special needs, concluding that its use is beneficial. In this context, when this value is combined with the results of the research, it is seen that the students participating in the research receive inclusive education in the online environment to communicate with special education children and they can use this environment as it is said to be an advantage for children with special needs.

Qu (2022) investigated the application of inclusive education for children with special educational needs and disabilities as learning currently in regular classrooms, and as a result, how these structural barriers unique to the education system of special students also reflect common 'bad problems' for practice. It was stated that they benefit from the basic structure in front of inclusive and inclusive education. In this context, when this value is combined with the results of the research, it is seen that inclusive education benefits the students participating in the research and positive results are achieved such as they learn how to act in this environment. In this context, it can be said that the two positive results of the research are beneficial for education.

Krämer, Möller, and Zimmermann (2021) aimed to evaluate inclusive and segregated educational environments between students with general learning difficulties and their peers without learning disabilities, and as a result, in inclusive and segregated environments, there was a small to moderate positive effect for the cognitive outcomes of students with general learning difficulties. In this context, when this value is combined with the results of the research, it was concluded that the students

participating in the research have high results in inclusive education and they can communicate with special education students in inclusive education.

5. Conclusions

When the results of the research are mentioned, it is seen that the numerical values that make up the participant groups are in the first place. In this context, it is seen that 142 people voluntarily participated in this research. Another result of the research is that the participant groups' time to repeat and use inclusive education about the problem situation of the research in their daily lives was examined and it was concluded that it was used for a maximum of 3 hours or more. Another value of the research is that the periods were examined during the use of live activities and time allocation for special education during the day, and this value was applied to strengthen the special education dimension. As a result, it is seen that they allocate time to live activities for 3 hours or more. In this context, it is seen that high values of this dimension have been reached in terms of allocating time to special education live activities and communicating. It is thought that these values of the research will have a positive effect on the communication of the students participating in the research.

Another value of the research is that the purpose of using inclusive education of the participant group participating in the research was investigated according to the problem situation of the research, and it was seen that they answered 'communicating with my peers' and 'helping the person with special education' according to the problem situation of the research. In addition to these positive values, another result is that the inclusive education status of the groups participating in the research according to the concept of gender was examined and it was concluded that there was no significant difference according to the gender criterion. High values were achieved. Finally, considering the values of the research, the findings of the participant group after the inclusive education were examined and the post-study results were found to be high. It is seen that values are high for them wanting to explain education to their families and their environment, finding themselves saying something when they take inclusive lessons and imagining the education in inclusive classrooms.

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