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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**THE MEDICAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES OF CHILDREN
AND ADOLESCENTS WITH DISABILITIES WITHIN THE
FRAMEWORK OF SOCIAL WORK**

Speciality: 6310.01 – Social Problems

Field of Science: Sociology

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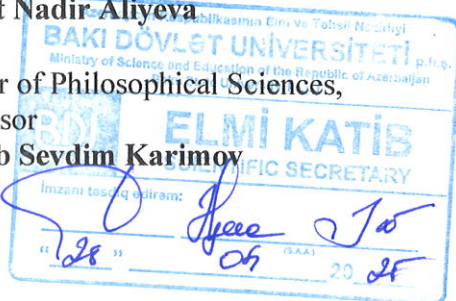
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INTRODUCTION

Relevance of the Topic and Degree of its Development

In contemporary society, individuals are stratified into various social groups based on diverse criteria. This form of social categorization not only facilitates more efficient governance but also contributes to the realization of individuals' rights and the satisfaction of their specific needs. Among these groups, one of the most vulnerable and in need of targeted support comprises children and adolescents with physical and intellectual disabilities.

The comprehensive protection of the rights of individuals with disabilities-particularly children-necessitates the fulfillment of a set of foundational preconditions enshrined in the Constitution. These include legal, organizational, technical, financial, and social mechanisms that must be systematically implemented. The enhancement of these structural frameworks facilitates the more effective realization of interrelated socio-political objectives. Accordingly, the degree to which the fundamental rights and freedoms of each citizen are upheld must be subject to continuous evaluation and refinement.

A core strategic objective of the Republic of Azerbaijan's social policy is to provide robust support mechanisms for individuals whose ability to fully exercise their rights is constrained by various limitations. This encompasses the creation of inclusive environments for their medical treatment, education, and social integration. Thousands of children and adolescents with physical and intellectual disabilities require the establishment of appropriate and supportive conditions to enable their full participation in society. Such conditions serve as a foundation for these individuals to obtain quality general and vocational education, thereby empowering them to develop their potential and lead autonomous, dignified lives.

Undeniably, the provision of specialized educational settings, assistive technologies, and accessible infrastructure is critical to supporting children with disabilities in both their academic and everyday lives. These measures are essential to ensuring that, upon completion of rehabilitation processes, these individuals can acquire

relevant vocational skills and competencies that allow for their meaningful integration into society. To adequately respond to their unique needs, the implementation of accurate and comprehensive diagnostic evaluations must be prioritized. A precisely formulated diagnosis serves as a pivotal foundation for guiding these children toward successful developmental trajectories and facilitating their inclusion in the broader social fabric.

In the Republic of Azerbaijan, the pedagogical, psychological, and social dimensions concerning the upbringing of children requiring special attention across various categories have been the subject of investigation by a number of specialists. For instance, S. A. Gasimov has explored special education, focusing particularly on the diagnosis and correction of children experiencing delays in physical and intellectual development; N. T. Huseynova has contributed significantly to the field of speech therapy; E. M. Karimova has addressed the educational strategies for children with delayed cognitive development; D. A. Dostuzade has examined the organization of educational and support services for children with visual and auditory impairments; T. A. Agayeva has concentrated on issues related to speech development; L. H. Imanova has conducted research on corrective strategies for stuttering in preschool-aged children; and M. A. Mammadova has studied the development of temporal and spatial cognition in preschoolers with intellectual disabilities.

Despite these contributions, there remains a noticeable deficit in comprehensive scientific research pertaining to the personal development of children and adolescents with disabilities, particularly with respect to their integrated social rehabilitation alongside typically developing peers. In recent years, scholarly articles and practitioner-oriented publications – often issued by non-governmental organizations – have addressed the social rehabilitation and instructional methodologies applicable to children with special needs. Notable examples include *Inclusive Education*, *A Guide to the Development of Children with Special Needs*, and *Child Development Methodology*, among others.

The topic of social rehabilitation for children and adolescents with disabilities has also been extensively examined by international scholars. Research addressing the formation of individual identity within group contexts has been conducted by A. V. Petrovski, K. K. Platonova, L. I. Umanski, A. S. Chernyshev, and Y. L. Kolominski. Investigations into the psychophysical development of children with disabilities and the application of individualized humanistic approaches in educational settings have been carried out by L. S. Vygotsky, V. V. Lebedinsky, M. A. Vlasova, M. V. Pevzner, G. E. Sukhareva, and A. E. Lichko. Additionally, the importance of enriched developmental environments has been highlighted in the works of L. I. Umanski, E. A. Shakhin, L. I. Akatov, and A. S. Chernyshev. Notably, L. I. Umanski has also investigated the stages of group development and the social mechanisms underlying the formation of collectives. He asserted that, unlike general social groups, collectives are characterized by organizational, intellectual, and volitional coherence, as well as heightened activity. A. V. Petrovski further emphasized that collectives are formed through shared activities and interpersonal communication and constitute a significant factor in the individual's process of self-awareness [26].

Among Turkish scholars, I. H. Diken has studied the inclusion of children with special needs, S. Batu has examined support services, and H. Chulhaoglu İmrak has investigated teacher and parent attitudes toward inclusive education in early childhood, as well as the development of peer relationships within inclusive classrooms. D. Chaglar has conceptualized inclusion as a form of full social integration, proposing that it encompasses the coexistence, education, employment, recreation, and overall communal satisfaction of individuals from diverse backgrounds in shared environments. He has delineated four progressive stages necessary for achieving inclusion: physical, functional, social, and full social integration, the latter of which represents the comprehensive realization of inclusive practices.

Over the course of the last century, issues related to the diagnosis, treatment, education, and upbringing of children and adolescents with physical and intellectual disabilities have remained

central to both academic inquiry and professional practice. Scholars have consistently argued that, irrespective of the type or severity of a child's developmental limitation, every individual possesses a certain degree of latent developmental potential. It is therefore imperative that social activity and engagement be oriented in a way that reveals, cultivates, and actualizes these intrinsic capacities, thereby enabling individuals to assume a productive and dignified role within society.

The analysis involved the examination of legal documents pertaining to the observance of children's rights, the material and legal guarantees afforded to children and adolescents with disabilities, as well as the possibilities for their rehabilitation. In addition, scholarly studies were reviewed concerning the role of social workers within the social protection system, methodological recommendations for working with children in this category, and the identification and classification of such individuals. Particular attention is paid to the realization of the educational rights of children with disabilities, especially within the context of inclusive education. Specialists in the early diagnosis and prevention of musculoskeletal disorders have also contributed to the analysis of the issue.

Special emphasis is placed on the challenges related to the socialization of children with learning difficulties. Moreover, professional experiences in the rehabilitation of children with disabilities are critically evaluated. Scholars also address the challenges associated with the professional preparation of personnel working with children in this category. Psychologists are engaged in supporting the mental well-being of these children and have conducted substantial work in analyzing their emotional and volitional spheres. The dissertation incorporates relevant scholarly works addressing this area of research.

Furthermore, both theoretical and practical efforts are being undertaken to improve the legal framework governing this domain. Pedagogues and psychologists have also contributed to this process through targeted initiatives. However, the current measures implemented in this field remain insufficient in addressing the evolving needs and capabilities of children and adolescents with

physical and intellectual disabilities. The treatment, education, upbringing, and overall social integration of such children must be carried out using modern technical equipment and the latest innovative technologies.

The study of this subject as a scientific and practical problem may contribute to the resolution of several existing contradictions, including:

- The increasing number of children with physical and intellectual disabilities contrasted with the limited availability of educational and vocational training opportunities;
- The discrepancy between the current legal framework and newly emerging real-life situations (in some cases, resulting in children with disabilities being unable to access necessary assistance);
- The rising number of families with children with disabilities versus the inadequate material support and overall living standards of those families;
- The urgent need for specially trained pedagogical staff for children with physical and intellectual disabilities contrasted with the insufficient quality of professional preparation and the lack of ongoing qualification programs;
- The contradiction between the intended reintegration of children with disabilities into their families and the existing socioeconomic limitations and intra-family conflicts that may hinder this process;
- The growing demand for inclusive education and the lack of preparedness of general education schools to implement it effectively.

These and other unresolved issues highlighted above further substantiate the relevance and timeliness of the research being undertaken.

Object of the Research. The object of this research is children and adolescents with disabilities in Azerbaijan.

Subject of the Research. The subject of the research encompasses the identification of solutions to the medical and social

challenges faced by children and adolescents with disabilities, the restoration of their social status, their rehabilitation, and their adaptation to society.

Aim and Objectives of the Research. The primary aim of this dissertation is to explore the organization of rehabilitation processes for children and adolescents with disabilities, the involvement of their parents in these processes, and to examine the positive impact of collaborative roles between parents and professionals in facilitating the children's adaptation to society.

The primary objectives of the research can be outlined as follows:

- To define the theoretical and methodological foundations of the medical and social issues of children and adolescents with disabilities, and to analyze and evaluate the development history of this field in Azerbaijan.
- To analyze the normative-legal framework for the life activities of children and adolescents with disabilities, as well as their educational opportunities (both general and vocational education forms).
- To identify the various forms of medical, psychological, pedagogical, material, and other services provided to children and adolescents with disabilities, and to explore the characteristics of creating a special adaptive environment.
- To monitor and assess the organizational, pedagogical, and psychological work carried out with children and adolescents with disabilities, both within families and in specialized institutions.
- To study the social adaptation of these children and adolescents through sociological research methods, analyze the current situation, and investigate ways of their integration into society.

The methods used in the research include observation, surveys, tests, and various methodologies that have undergone prior validation. The materials obtained have been enriched with statistical data. In particular, surveys were conducted with parents,

and interviews were conducted with them. The surveys were held during the 2022-2023 period.

Key Propositions Submitted for Defense.

The key propositions presented for defense in the dissertation are as follows:

- A deeper theoretical analysis of the integration process of people with physical and mental disabilities into society in the history of Azerbaijani social thought is needed.
- The resolution of the practical aspects of working with children and adolescents with physical and mental disabilities is primarily dependent on the level of social services in the country.
- The impact of the social environment on the mental and physical development of children and adolescents begins with the family.
- The preventive work undertaken to prevent limitations in the health of children and adolescents and to increase their effectiveness primarily depends on the application of scientific and technological advancements.
- The successful implementation of comprehensive social adaptation measures for adolescents with physical and mental disabilities is significantly dependent on the professionalism of educators and specialists.
- The psychological and emotional turmoil experienced by children and adolescents with cerebral palsy within families is a primary contributing factor in the creation of pathological conditions in their health.
- The negative stance of future professionals (such as sociologists, psychologists, etc.) who are expected to work with children and adolescents with disabilities has not yet been resolved.

Scientific Novelty of the Research. The scientific novelty of the research consists of the following propositions:

- A comprehensive approach has been applied to solving the social problems experienced by children with disabilities, and the issues regarding the integration of children and

adolescents with disabilities into society have been investigated. Conclusions have been drawn and recommendations have been made.

- The stages of work with children and adolescents with disabilities, as well as the uniqueness of each stage, have been examined. Based on this, the diagnostic process, correctional and social adaptation work, as well as the analysis of speech, overall health, intellectual development, and other developmental areas have been explored through the method of individual approach.
- The integration of children and adolescents with disabilities into rehabilitation centers after corrective and preventive work with both their families and themselves has shown positive results.
- Positive outcomes can be achieved if higher education institutions cooperate with volunteer internship programs for organizing the integration process. Since trainees are familiar with the social and correctional work with children and adolescents with disabilities during their studies, their interests and inclinations can be identified more quickly, enabling faster development in this field.
- It is crucial to create the conditions for future professionals working with children and adolescents with disabilities to adapt to the respective working environments, and to conduct social-psychological work with the children and adolescents, as well as their caregivers.
- The establishment of organizations, committees, or other structures by the state for the application and development of the scientific innovations mentioned above can ensure the accessibility of services for caregivers and contribute to specialists' self-improvement. It will also facilitate the easier involvement of society in these activities. The development of various integration conditions will positively influence the organization of future work.

Theoretical and Practical Significance of the Research.

The stages of scientific analysis of the social problems of children and adolescents with disabilities in Azerbaijan have been determined, and the main issues under analysis have been identified. Furthermore, key directions and fields for analyzing the social problems of this group of children in both local and foreign literature have been outlined. Various approaches to the diagnosis, treatment, education, correction, and social adaptation of children and adolescents with disabilities in Azerbaijan have been revealed, analyzed, and evaluated.

The dissertation substantiates the necessity of complex study and resolution of the medical and social problems of children and adolescents with disabilities. The research will contribute to the theoretical and practical field of identifying social problems faced by children in this category within the country.

Based on the obtained materials, it will be possible to develop a professional development program for pedagogical staff working with children with disabilities in special schools, boarding schools, as well as secondary schools and family environments. Additionally, the gathered materials could be beneficial for social workers, practicing psychologists, and educators in enhancing their practical experience. Furthermore, these materials may be utilized as teaching content for specialized courses in the "Social Work" program for university students. Overall:

1. Early diagnosis of children and adolescents with disabilities should be based on the latest achievements in modern medical, psychological, and pedagogical sciences.
2. In the education of children and adolescents with disabilities, an individual approach should be implemented alongside the use of inclusive education opportunities.
3. Since children and adolescents with disabilities are primarily from underprivileged families with low living standards, one of the key directions of social policy implemented by the state should be to increase social assistance for this group,

create new job opportunities, develop regions, and strengthen the fight against hereditary and social diseases.

4. Professional staff working with children and adolescents with disabilities must continually work on improving their expertise, periodically upgrading their qualifications, and utilizing international experience.

The overall framework of the findings is structured based on the conceptual basis formulated by the author and fully aligns with the proposed goals and objectives.

Appropriation and Application of the Research.

The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters with eight subchapters, a conclusion, a list of references, and an appendix. The main propositions of the research have been published in articles in local and international journals recommended by the Higher Attestation Commission under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as in the materials of local and international scientific conferences.

Institution where the Dissertation was carried out The dissertation was carried out at Baku State University, Department of Sociology.

Total Volume of the Dissertation The total volume of the dissertation is 181,635 characters without spaces and 207,141 characters with spaces.

- Introduction: pp. 4-14, 18,950 characters (21,485 with spaces)
- Chapter I: pp. 15-45, 52,227 characters (59,670 with spaces)
- Chapter II: pp. 46-87, 65,860 characters (75,037 with spaces)
- Chapter III: pp. 88-110, 32,526 characters (37,232 with spaces)
- Conclusion: pp. 110-117, 12,072 characters (13,717 with spaces)
- Appendix: pp. 131-144, 18,125 characters (19,514 with spaces)

THE MAIN CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION

In the "Introduction" section of the dissertation, the significance and degree of development of the topic, as well as the research goals and objectives, the object and subject of the study, its scientific novelty, theoretical and methodological foundations, empirical base, and both scientific-theoretical and practical importance, have been thoroughly examined.

The first chapter, titled "Working with Children and Adolescents with Physical and Mental Disabilities as a Social Problem," consists of two paragraphs and is of a theoretical nature. The author investigates the theoretical and methodological dimensions of the sociological study of the issue. This section clarifies the essence, content, and distinctive characteristics of working with children and adolescents with physical and mental disabilities and presents a comprehensive review of the principal approaches in the scientific literature regarding this population.

In the first paragraph, titled "Theoretical and Methodological Analysis of the Integration of People with Physical and Mental Disabilities into Society in the History of Sociological Thought," the author begins with the following assertion: Every discipline possesses its own research object, and by selecting a particular research object, multiple disciplines may investigate various aspects and dimensions of that object. The research object can be regarded as a specific portion of the world, including the social realm, that exists independently of our consciousness. By considering the research subject, one can delineate the boundaries of the study of the object and the scope of its investigation. The subject can thus be conceptualized as a set of categories and concepts that assist in the representation of objective reality. Defining the research subject helps to identify particular characteristics of the object for study, thereby distinguishing these characteristics from others.

Society is defined as a collective of individuals engaged in mutual relationships, bound by a shared space and culture, and

organized to meet social needs. Society possesses several defining features:

- It serves as an indicator of the demographic structure formed by individuals living and interacting within a common geographic area.
- It consists of several primary groups, each aligned with distinct functions – such as economic, political, religious, familial, educational, and healthcare dimensions.
- It is composed of groups that share a common language, similar behaviors, and a shared culture. Given that society fully reflects social systems, it is regarded as a complex entity and is recognized as a generalized social system.

The second paragraph, titled "Characteristics of the Analysis of the Application Aspects of Working with Children and Adolescents with Physical and Mental Disabilities," emphasizes that a review of legislative acts pertaining to individuals with disabilities reveals that the organization of work with children and adolescents with disabilities – who share the same diagnosis – varies according to the degree of their disability. Social workers and specialists structure their interventions based on these varying degrees of disability. The adaptive behaviors of parents in response to the diagnoses of their children and adolescents, in conjunction with their level of psychological resilience, as well as the development of emotional exhaustion due to social pressures, must be addressed. The effectiveness of the organizational work with parents will significantly influence the achievement of the set objectives, leading to tangible improvements in the development of the child and adolescent. These changes will, in turn, have a positive impact on the relationship between society and these children. When considering social-psychological theories in their entirety, the primary factors influencing the development of children and adolescents with disabilities are the attitudes of parents toward their children, the family environment created for them, and the dynamics of sibling relationships.

Based on legislation and global practice, as a necessary procedure, a corresponding degree of disability should be determined for these children after the age of 18¹.

At every stage of societal development, considerable emphasis is placed on the social-demographic and physical development of the younger generation, alongside the cultivation of their inherent qualities, with the aim of ensuring intergenerational continuity. The factors that influence the life activities of children and adolescents, their maturation as individuals, and their potential to become responsible citizens and members of society are multifaceted and often contradictory. Among these, the role of information and communication technologies (ICT) stands out as particularly significant. Specifically, ICT plays a pivotal role in the education and upbringing of children and adolescents, significantly contributing to their socialization processes. It is well-established that "various factors, including the ecological conditions in the country, the quality of food products, and the standards of domestic living, exert a direct impact on the health and safety of the population"². Therefore, the analysis and in-depth study of this aspect can provide clearer insights into the future development prospects of this age group in society. Modern quality indicators of families also reveal that many challenges arise during the upbringing of children and adolescents. The increasing rates of divorces and the growing number of problematically structured families contribute to significant difficulties in the smooth transition of individuals in this age category to the next stage of development. Furthermore, the influence of the social environment cannot be overlooked³.

¹ Əlilliyi olan şəxslərin hüquqları haqqında Azərbaycan Respublikasının Qanunu. Bakı: 2018

² Səhiyyə, sosial təminat, idman // <http://www.stat.gov.az/source/healthcare/>

³ Gürzəliyev S.A., Məmmədova Z.B., Balayeva Ş.M., İsmayılova Z.Q., Məktəblilər arasında dayaq-hərəkət aparatının patologiyası və onun profilaktikası yolları // ATU, prof. Felin 100 illik yub. Həsr olunmuş konf. mat-rı. Bakı: 2006, səh. 52-57

One of the forms of organizing social assistance for families raising children with physical disabilities and psychological impairments is the implementation of social rehabilitation programs, facilitated by the parents. These programs aim to develop and cultivate specific skills in the children, while simultaneously fostering and shaping their internal emotional and volitional development⁴.

Social workers can assist parents in investigating and analyzing complex family issues. Clinical social workers provide individual, family, and group consultations, which, in turn, can help parents and adolescents improve communication and interpersonal relationships, resolve conflicts, and address significant issues in the areas of mental and physical health⁵. In the United States, numerous centers operate to provide various types of social assistance to children with physical and mental disabilities (for example, schools and programs for children and adolescents with complex educational and behavioral needs, as well as those suffering from autism, such as the Central School and programs)⁶.

Researchers emphasize that a child's physical and emotional condition, as well as their social and cognitive development, are largely dependent on the developmental dynamics of their family. The increase in illness and behavioral problems in children may confirm that some families are trying to cope with the stress they experience, but this is not always successful⁷.

The second chapter, titled **"Description of the Ways to Solve the Social and Medical Problems of Children and Adolescents**

⁴ Nəcəfova Z.S., Əlilliyi olan uşaqların reabilitasiyası prosesində günərzi qayğı xidmətinin rolu // “Azərbaycan sosial müdafiə sisteminin inkişafı: dünən, bu gün və sabah” mövzusunda Beynəlxalq Elmi-praktiki konfransın materialları, Bakı: 2019, s. 99-101

⁵ Children with special educational needs // <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles>

⁶ Sağlamlıq imkanları məhdud uşaqlar müasir reabilitasiya sistemi ilə əhatə olunublar // https://www.sosial.gov.az/post_409447

⁷ Children with special educational needs // <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles>

with Physical and Mental Disabilities in Azerbaijani Society," explores the impact of social environment on the physical development of children and adolescents, and examines the social factors affecting human health.

The first paragraph of the chapter, titled "**Characteristics of the Impact of the Social Environment on the Physical Development of Children and Adolescents,**" investigates the influence of the social environment on the physical development of individuals, including children and adolescents. It is noted that, in the modern era, a wide range of factors, conditioned by scientific and technological progress, significantly impact human health. These factors include harmful agents associated with the development of nuclear and chemical industries, industrial waste, increased pace of life, and mental activity. Such influences have fundamentally altered the structure of disease and mortality rates. Whereas infectious diseases were predominant at the beginning of the 20th century, today, cardiovascular diseases, cancer, mental and neurological disorders, and injuries have become more prominent.

Social Factors and Their Content. Let us now consider the social factors affecting the health of children and adolescents:

1. Family and household environment;
2. Educational institutions and social environment;
3. Global social factors: Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), urban environment, mindset, and forms of communication.

The family, as a comprehensive unit, is studied across all areas of sociology. It reflects the characteristics of social unity, structure, institutions, and small groups. The sociology of the family encompasses the domains of socialization, education, politics, labor, culture, law, and other areas. The study of the family enables a clearer understanding of processes such as social control and social disorder, social mobility, migration, and demographic changes⁸.

⁸ Vahidov F., Ağayev T., Sosiologiya: Ali məktəblər üçün dərslik, Bakı: 2019, 323-347 s.

The sociologist A.G. Kharchyev has defined the concept of family as follows: the family is a system of certain relationships formed by the members – spouses, parents, and children – through marriage and kinship ties, shared domestic life, and mutual responsibility. It is a small group whose social significance is conditioned by the demands of society for the physical and spiritual development of its population⁹.

How Do Educational Institutions and the Social Environment, as Social Factors, Impact the Health of Children and Adolescents?

The formation of education as a social institution has occurred in interaction with theories of education and upbringing, social stratification, labor division, and public processes. This process manifested itself during the 1920s of the 20th century¹⁰. The scope of the sociology of education is comprehensive and addresses several key issues, which include:

- The formation and ongoing improvement of contemporary education systems;
- The technical and social demands imposed on education during periods of scientific and technological revolutions, as well as the era of globalization;
- The exploration of social equality and inequality within educational contexts;
- The examination of educational institutions as a social issue or problem;
- The relationship and interactions between educational institutions and political entities, social structures, national relations, and the moral and spiritual domains of individuals;
- The significant role of education and its subsystems in the process of individual socialization and personal development.

⁹ Vahidov F., Ağayev T., Sosiologiya: Ali məktəblər üçün dərslik, Bakı: 2019, 323-347 s.

¹⁰ BMT-nin Əlillərin Hüquqları haqqında Konvensiyası. <https://www.udpo.az>

The term "social environment" specifically refers to the social context in which children and adolescents live, including their immediate surroundings such as the area, city, village, street, or neighborhood. The opportunities for communication within these settings can vary considerably, influencing the overall social dynamics that impact health. Additionally, a variety of social factors—such as the behaviors of those around them, harmful habits, and actions—play a significant role in shaping children's health outcomes. Cultivating a healthy lifestyle is foundational in ensuring that children grow up in a physically and psychologically sound manner. The cornerstone of this process is work education, which provides the necessary tools for individuals to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Finally, the third category encompasses global social factors, including Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), the urban environment, mindset, and forms of communication. In the context of ICT, the emphasis lies on the Internet and its far-reaching influence. Communication mediums, such as social networks and mobile communication, have fundamentally altered the course of human life. The early exposure of children to devices such as mobile phones and computers has been shown to have significant adverse effects on their health. These include not only psychological dependence but also the increased risk of developing malignant tumors and various other health issues. For example, radiation from mobile phones negatively affects children's nervous and endocrine systems and interferes with the normal development of brain cells. Research suggests that children's bodies absorb this radiation at rates 2 to 4 times greater than adults. The classification of internet addiction as a disorder is increasingly acknowledged, with numerous studies – such as those conducted by McMaster University – demonstrating its link to depression, anxiety, impulsivity, and cognitive distraction¹¹. This condition is particularly relevant to young internet users. Psychologists are expanding their research in

¹¹ Вред от мобильного телефона для детей // <http://nashi-de-ti.ru>

this domain, developing methodologies aimed at addressing the issue. However, it is evident that a collaborative effort is required, involving schoolteachers, parents, and professionals from various fields, to effectively tackle this problem.

The second section is titled "Preventive Measures for Addressing Limitations in Child Health." The analysis of ongoing societal processes reveals a growing prevalence of various health-related issues, which, as a result of their cumulative impact, have led to an increasingly deteriorating situation. A particular emphasis is placed on the health of children and adolescents. Statistical data indicate that certain illnesses, which result in disabilities, have evolved into significant social challenges for the state. Notably, it is crucial to recognize that individuals requiring social care, particularly within this group, are often marginalized and excluded from broader social participation. This is especially evident in the case of certain parents. In some instances, children experiencing health issues are separated from their families and placed under state guardianship under various pretexts. Moreover, children who either lose their parents or are deprived of parental rights are also placed under state care. In Azerbaijan, substantial efforts are being made in this area. Specialized institutions exist where children and adolescents are raised, educated, and adequately prepared for the future. The identification and resolution of challenges in this field, particularly those relating to the adolescent stage in the development of children, are of paramount importance in addressing the overarching issues and ensuring more effective intervention strategies¹².

The prevention of disability is, in many instances, not feasible. Consequently, it is imperative to establish the necessary conditions that enable individuals with disabilities to effectively access and benefit from societal resources. In cases where individuals with disabilities are unable to utilize public

¹² Əlil və sağlamlıq imkanları məhdud olan uşaqların aşkarlanması üzrə metodik vəsait. Tərtibatçılar: C.Məmmədov, t.f.d., Ş.İsmayılova, İ.Əlizadə, L.Orucova, S.Qızıyeva, X.Eyvazova, F.Abdullazadə. Bakı: 2013, 36 s.

transportation, transportation systems should be re-equipped accordingly, and infrastructure modifications such as the installation of ramps at building entrances and passageways should be prioritized. Additionally, targeted projects and programs aimed at enhancing their employability, educational opportunities, and vocational skills must be implemented. Simultaneously, there is a pressing need for the improvement of the legislative framework. To ensure the effective execution of these initiatives, it is essential to accurately assess the number of individuals with disabilities within society, understand the underlying causes of their disabilities, and identify their primary needs¹³.

Furthermore, it is essential to consider the historical development path of the country or region and the current stage it is undergoing. The development from the earliest stages of civilization to the present has significantly impacted people's lifestyle, thinking, and their relationship with the world. Moreover, there are concepts related to the evaluation of both material and spiritual wealth, which, in turn, influence social life forms and shape the functioning of social institutions, ensuring their continuity. Some of the oldest and most significant social institutions with high moral value include the family, religion, and ethics¹⁴.

In the third paragraph of Chapter II, titled **"Organization of Corrective Work with Children and Adolescents with Physical and Mental Disabilities,"** it is stated that correction is a system of pedagogical measures applied to eliminate or alleviate psychophysical developmental deficiencies. These measures are tailored to the individual characteristics of each child based on their

¹³ "Azərbaycan 2020: gələcəyə baxış" İnkişaf Konsepsiyası" haqqında Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin 29 dekabr 2012-ci il Fərmanı. Bakı şəhəri, № 800, 39 s.

¹⁴ Егорова, Т.В. Социальная интеграция детей с ограниченными возможностями / Т.В. Егорова – Балашов: Николаев, 2002. – 80 с.

age, the type and severity of their diagnosis, as well as the onset of the condition¹⁵.

The aforementioned paragraph examines the factors that are of significant importance in the development of children and adolescents. The general characteristics of developmental disorders, as outlined by V.I. Lubovski, are classified as follows:

- Disruption in the reception, storage, reprocessing, and use of information;
- Disruption in speech communication;
- A prolonged formation of the surrounding environment;
- An increased risk of social-psychological maladaptation.

The clinical symptoms of individuals with musculoskeletal system issues, including voluntary movement difficulties and defects, lead to the division of these children into two groups¹⁶.

The corrective pedagogical work for individuals with musculoskeletal system disorders is classified according to age stages.

The fourth paragraph, titled "**Social Problems of Children and Adolescents Diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy**," examines what cerebral palsy is and investigates the developmental characteristics of children affected by this diagnosis. The main issues for sensory education of children with cerebral palsy are formulated as follows¹⁷

1. The development of various forms of visual perception, including but not limited to vision, color recognition, shape identification, size differentiation, spatial awareness, and muscle-joint perception;
2. The enhancement of auditory perception and the remediation of auditory impairments;
3. The cultivation of tactile-motor perception;

¹⁵ Hüseynova N.T., Aslanova S.R., Xüsusi Psixologiya : Dərslik: 2 cildə I c., Bakı: 2018

¹⁶ Hüseynova N.T., Aslanova S.R., Xüsusi Psixologiya : Dərslik: 2 cildə II c., Bakı: 2018

¹⁷ Hüseynova N.T., Aslanova S.R., Xüsusi Psixologiya : Dərslik: 2 cildə II c., Bakı: 2018

4. The formation and refinement of gustatory perception.

In addition, the varying degrees of intellectual disability (oligophrenia) and the presence of visual and auditory impairments are systematically evaluated. When working with children who have these conditions, the following recommendations should be incorporated into their individualized intervention strategies:

1. Enhancement of visual and color perception,
2. Correction of auditory and taste perception deficits,
3. Development of tactile-motor perception.

Furthermore, it is essential to introduce "Sensory Stimulation" programs for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID), tailored to their specific needs. To ensure the effectiveness of these interventions, the learning environment must be optimized for maximum efficacy, with particular attention to the psychological characteristics of the individuals. When selecting toys and educational materials, it is crucial to consider the child's specific needs: for children with passive tendencies, larger and more audibly stimulating toys should be utilized, whereas for children who are highly sensitive or emotionally reactive, calming, soft, and low-noise toys that do not provoke overstimulation should be preferred¹⁸.

The third and final chapter, titled **"Organization of Work with Children and Adolescents with Physical and Intellectual Disabilities and Their Study through Sociological Research,"** focuses primarily on two key issues: (a) the psychological and emotional disturbances experienced by children and adolescents diagnosed with cerebral palsy and their impact on health as a contributing factor, and (b) the examination of the social problems related to the organization of work with children and adolescents with physical and intellectual disabilities, with the results presented through diagrams.

In the first paragraph of this chapter, titled **"Methodology of the Survey Conducted with Parents of Children and Adolescents**

¹⁸ Azərbaycan Respublikası Təhsil Nazirliyi – Xüsusi qayğıya ehtiyacı olan uşaqlarla korreksiya işinin təşkili. Bakı: 2019.

Diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy: Sociological Analysis," the core hypothesis posited in the research is empirically tested: the health condition, social status, and personality traits of parents exert a detrimental influence on the development of children and adolescents with physical and intellectual disabilities. The study was conducted over a period of three months, specifically in the post-pandemic phase.

The concluding paragraph of the dissertation is titled **"An Investigation into the Preparation of Students Specializing in Sociology and Psychology for Professional Work with Children and Adolescents with Physical and Intellectual Disabilities, as Well as Sociological Research into Societal Attitudes Toward These Individuals."** A survey was conducted on this issue among students pursuing psychology and sociology. The key areas of focus in the survey include: the organization of services for children and adolescents diagnosed with cerebral palsy, the nature of their social-psychological development interventions, and the challenges faced during their integration and rehabilitation into society.

In the second paragraph of the third chapter, a large-scale study was conducted with 500 respondents. The primary objective of this research was to assess societal attitudes toward children and adolescents with disabilities, as well as to evaluate the general public's level of awareness regarding this issue.

Overall, the results derived from the research conducted throughout the dissertation indicate that several factors negatively impact the living conditions and developmental trajectory of children with physical and intellectual disabilities. Among these factors, the deteriorating ecological environment must be emphasized as a significant contributor. Consequently, the number of children born with congenital disabilities is on the rise. The underlying causes of congenital disabilities are multifactorial and include the consumption of artificial foods, sedentary lifestyles, the exacerbation of hereditary diseases, consanguineous marriages, the urbanization of populations, and exposure to ecologically hazardous environments.

The conclusions drawn from the research are as follows:

- If the family relationship dynamics are effectively regulated with the support of psychologists and sociologists;
- If parents' awareness regarding social benefits and entitlements is enhanced;
- If institutional structures are adapted to support atypical development;
- If specialists are involved in elevating parents' educational levels;
- If individualized development plans are collaboratively formulated with specialists, taking into account the parents' resources;
- If the quality of specialists' work is optimized by ensuring parents complete assigned home tasks;
- If any parents engaging in harmful behaviors discontinue these practices;
- If a psychologically conducive environment is established for children and adolescents with cerebral palsy;
- If the social integration and interaction of children and adolescents requiring special care with the broader community is effectively facilitated;

In such circumstances, if the process is organized comprehensively and systematically, it will provide a substantial boost to the development of children and adolescents, leading to the successful rehabilitation and societal integration of these individuals.

In exploring the resolution of this issue within the framework of state social policy, it has been noted that the number of specialized institutions in this area has been steadily increasing year by year, alongside improvements in their technical infrastructure and material conditions. Nevertheless, a number of challenges remain unresolved, the resolution of which would have a significant positive impact on the social adaptation and overall future prospects of children and adolescents with disabilities. These issues are presented below in the form of recommendations:

1. The effective organization of treatment and social adaptation services for children and adolescents with disabilities is one of the most effective means of promoting their social

integration. Both medical and educational interventions enable these individuals to integrate into the broader social structure, allowing them to meet their basic needs and realize their personal values.

2. The rapid changes occurring in society, social upheavals, and crises disproportionately affect the most vulnerable segments of the population, including children and adolescents with disabilities, rendering them vulnerable and marginalized. The situation becomes especially difficult when state support diminishes or is completely withdrawn, exacerbating the challenges these individuals face. These negative consequences must be addressed. In particular, state support in this area must be strengthened, and specific social policies for working with vulnerable groups must be clearly defined and implemented.
3. While efforts to facilitate the reintegration of children and adolescents with disabilities into a healthy life vary in scope and approach, such initiatives have been successfully implemented in many countries around the world. The objective is to establish optimal conditions in the social, medical, psychological, and legal spheres, enabling these individuals to engage in social interactions, participate in productive work (within their capabilities), and achieve successful social adaptation. It is well known that this group often encounters significant difficulties in fulfilling their needs due to a mismatch between their expectations and the reality of their circumstances. Therefore, the establishment of specialized organizations is recommended to provide comprehensive information about inclusive education, psychological support services, and rehabilitation centers.
4. It is crucial to provide children and adolescents with disabilities the opportunity to gain valuable social experience. The realization and scope of this opportunity require the coordinated efforts of professionals working in the field. To facilitate this, specialized social programs should be created, centers dedicated to social adaptation should be established,

and individualized programs should be designed based on the needs of each person. These programs should define clear developmental goals and directions.

5. Despite significant research into the social and socio-psychological characteristics of children and adolescents with disabilities, their social status, and challenges, comprehensive studies on their social adaptation, its key factors, and its effectiveness have not yet been fully conducted within the context of Azerbaijan (excluding international projects). This gap also extends to the management of social adaptation as part of broader social policy. A model of social adaptation that reflects the unique realities of Azerbaijan and addresses public demands should be developed and implemented.
6. The analysis of the current state of diagnosis, rehabilitation, and social adaptation for children and adolescents with disabilities must be carried out in accordance with modern standards and requirements. A specialized management model should be employed, utilizing state support for its effective realization. Management principles should be based on real-world adaptation criteria for each child and family, with a focus on systemic and comprehensive approaches.
7. In addressing the challenges faced by children and adolescents with disabilities, both technical tools and the human factor play critical roles. As such, the management system (including relevant authorities) must prioritize these areas. Contemporary scientific and technological advancements provide substantial opportunities to improve the conditions of children and adolescents with disabilities.
8. When integrating children and adolescents with disabilities into society, it is essential to take into account each individual's personal characteristics. Factors such as career choices, employment opportunities, access to education, health recovery, social-psychological status, and the potential for social interaction should be carefully evaluated. The proposed network should also serve as a resource for volunteers, professionals planning to work in this field, and

individuals seeking information on job vacancies, events, and initiatives concerning people with disabilities.

9. Targeted measures must be implemented to improve the health restoration and social adaptation of children and adolescents with disabilities, as well as to reduce the overall number of children in this category. Creating a positive moral-psychological climate within families, improving material conditions, and ensuring that family relationships are based on high cultural values are crucial. The roles of physical activity, artistic creativity, communication, household management, and education in this process are highly significant. Adequate social inclusion is necessary to ensure that these individuals are satisfied with their lives and can establish meaningful social connections. Research has shown that dysfunctional or incomplete family structures often fail to provide such opportunities.
10. The management system for optimizing the social adaptation of children and adolescents with disabilities should be improved. The work carried out in this area must be structured and enhanced with a focus on both material and social parameters. It is important to draw upon international experiences to ensure the adoption of best practices. Relevant institutions, including the Ministries of Health, Education, Labor and Social Protection, Economy, Justice, and the State Oil Fund, should collaborate to develop a unified, long-term state program that adheres to international standards.
11. Experts from various fields and the academic community must closely examine the current state of affairs in this area and offer evidence-based recommendations. The research agendas of relevant institutions should include the analysis of the challenges faced by children and adolescents with disabilities and the development of strategies to address these challenges.

In the “**Conclusion**” section of the dissertation, the research is summarized, with the scientific and theoretical findings presented in a consolidated form. The innovative contributions of the study, along

with a series of practical proposals and recommendations, are outlined.

The "**Appendix**" section of the dissertation contains the text of the conducted surveys.

The core content of the dissertation is reflected in the author's previously published theses and articles, as listed below.

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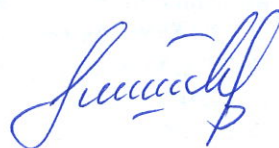
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