

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT OF THE FAMILY EDUCATION THROUGH OFFSITE CONSULTATION CENTRES: AN ENTREPRENEURIAL CASE STUDY OF RUSSIA

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ABSTRACT

This Article covers not only the issue of the family education quality improvement, but also the creation of infrastructure of support centres (services) for parents having children of early and preschool age, including from 0 to 3 years old, to implement the programs of psychological and pedagogical, diagnostic, consulting support for parents having children of early and preschool age, including from 0 to 3 years old. It details the municipal model of open network space for family education of the offsite consultation centre. It is obvious that there appears a fair bit of options for the family education organization, and the offsite provision of the psychological and pedagogical, diagnostic, consulting support to parents has its advantages. Consequently, the main focus of the article is the modelling of different forms of assistance to and consulting of parents having children of early and preschool age with the aim of the family education quality improvement.

Keywords: Family Education, Improvement, Offsite Consultation Centre, Parents, Children.

INTRODUCTION

The modern Russian education is aimed at improving the quality of the preschool education assuming the creation of new forms of the children's access to general education, at this, the main responsibility for upbringing rests with the parents. Appearance of such form as "family education" in the context of the modern civilization is due to a combination of the interrelated social, cultural and political processes constituting the objective trends being characteristic for majority of countries (orientation towards training and upbringing in the conditions of individualization and humanization, increase of the educational level of parents, liberalization of public life) (Yakunina, 2014). Currently, there is no international classification of such forms of education, that is the term "home schooling" is used in the English-speaking countries, and "family education" - in the Russian Federation. The modern Russian science interprets the family education as the organization of education within the family by the efforts of parents and invited teachers with the help of preschool educational establishment (Weiner, 2014). In the foreign literature, the term "home schooling" describes a phenomenon when children (of all ages) do not attend the educational institutions, as a rule, due to convictions of

their parents (Cheng et al., 2016), the education is mainly provided for these children home-based according to the educational directives that are, first of all, determined by the parents (Harding & Farrell, 2003; Lyman, 1998; Neuman & Aviram, 2003). The family education in the modern context is an alternative for public and private schools, this option of education is legal both in Russia, and in many countries (Polivanova & Lyubitskaya, 2017). The category “family education” is considered as the form of the child’s mastering the educational program in the family when the parents (legal representatives) individually choose the educational trajectory, organize and realise the educational process in the course of which they are entitled to use the services of the consulting centre at own discretion (Stepanova et al., 2017). The quality of the family education depends on the level of training and competence, methodological skills of parents, planned training system, both by content and periods of mastering the training materials (Belousov, 2016). Of course, this does not mean that every parent who trains a child at home should get the diploma of teacher education (Ray, 2009), but the importance of the role of parents in the organization of the home-based education necessitates the management and maintenance of the family education by the educational system, in general, and educational institutions of different degrees, in particular (Collom, 2005; Green & Hoover-Dempsey, 2007).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The model represents an integral interaction structure of the OCC “ISTOK” and consultation points, social partners and institutions, as well as the content of each component of the model and the factors ensuring its integrity. Such structure of the model allows for teachers to forecast the development and timely to modify the activity of the OCC “ISTOK” and consultation points as per the parents’ requests is shown in Figure 1. The model is represented as a combination of such components as target, content-related, meaningful. The content of the components demonstrates the features of formation of specific educational tasks, mechanisms of the model functioning; control algorithms of activity and development of the model (Ochirova, 2011). The target component of the model is based on the concept. The concept, as a system of theoretical views on the terms “consultation centre”, “consultation points” and their place and role in the networking cooperation of the preschool educational establishments, represents the basis for organization of all stages of the project implementation. In the course of design of the, the aim was not only to improve the quality of the preschool education, ensure access to it, but also stimulate the interest of the participants of educational relations to the family education. The content-related component of the model reflects that the parents play different roles: parents-customers, parents-consumers, parents-participants of educational relations, parents-evaluators. The important function of teachers of the OCC “ISTOK” in the frameworks of the project implementation is the reflective activity of parents. Accordingly, when developing the mechanisms of the model functioning, the following provisions should be

1. Determination and consideration of functional features of all components of the model (content, organization, characteristic features of improving the educational culture of parents, peculiarities of professional activity of a teacher in the new conditions).
2. Selection of optimal trajectory for achieving the goal set (level of development of the psychological and educational culture of parents, level of their independent behaviour, using the distance form of learning).
3. Selection of the model content (programs).

Internal consistency of the model is provided by the following factors:

1. Compatibility of basic components of the model, i.e. “capability of interaction without mutual destructions.
2. Cross ability of elements of the model, i.e. “complementarity and interchangeability (at some stages) of elements of the model.
3. Contingency of elements, i.e. their “capability of matching with each other in the course of co-functioning” (Ochirova, 2011).

The factors causing the movement within the structural and inclusive design of the model, its target, should include:

1. Considerable share of parents is composed of those living in the remote areas (cattle-breeding stations, farms, rail junctions, military points, etc.).
2. Necessary achievement of the maximum degree of satisfaction of individual educational needs of parents having children of early and preschool age.
3. The networking approach provides to timely and flexible structure of management of the created educational space.
4. Many preschool educational establishments in the district do not have the relevant staff, materials resources, training and methodological materials for consultation support of parents.
5. The distance educational technologies provide for organization of the parents’ training at a convenient pace, convenient place and convenient time and
6. The necessary development in the preschool children of the qualities shown as the indicators of the model implementation efficiency assessed by parents. To identify the implemented model efficiency, 3 groups of criteria with conventional names are determined: “quality criteria”, “fact criteria”, “performance criteria”, including the following assessment criteria: “assessment of the level of satisfaction of the project participants”, “assessment of the level of the parents’ attainments”, “assessment of the created conditions”.

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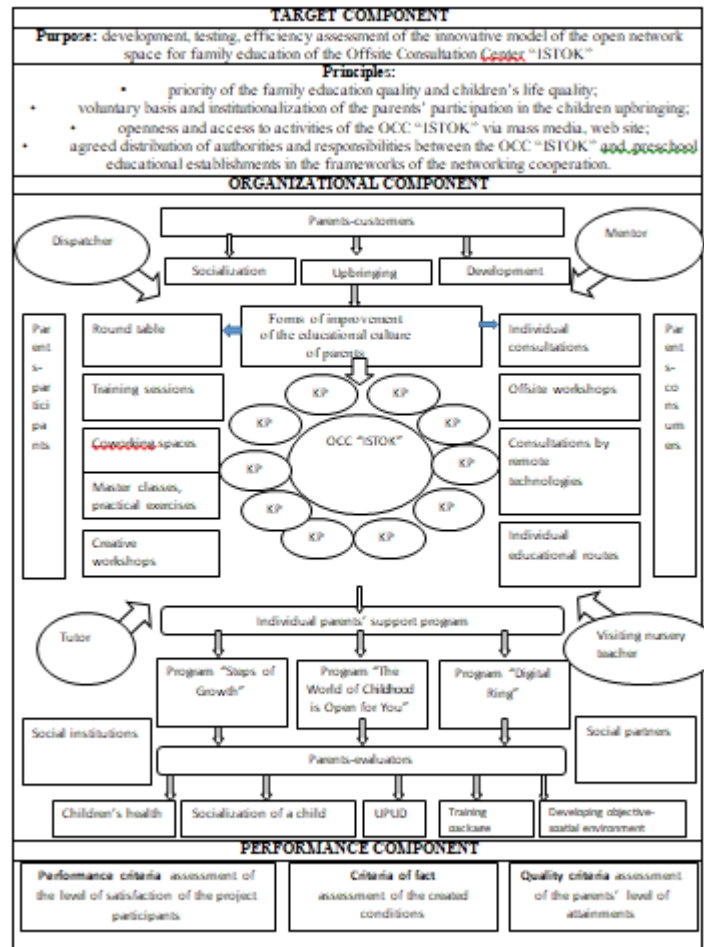


FIGURE 1
MUNICIPAL MODEL OF OPEN NETWORK SPACE FOR FAMILY EDUCATION OF THE OFFSITE CONSULTATION CENTRES “ISTOK”

Source: Authors' Compilation

METHODOLOGY

In the course of research, the theoretical analysis of the literature showing that the preschool education system includes a fair bit of the psychological and pedagogical literature aimed at the children’s development in the family, at the implementation of different forms of interaction of the preschool educational establishment and family. Using the method of analysis and summary of the modern meaningful experience in the study area made it possible to identify that the consultation centres for psychological and pedagogical, diagnostic, consulting support to parents in the conditions of the family education have been established and realised in many preschool educational establishments, but there are few methodological developments on organization of educational activities in the conditions of the family education, systemic interaction of teachers and parents in the conditions of the family education, as well as the model of the offsite consultation centre has been developed. On the basis of the method of the structural and inclusive design of the educational process, the municipal model of the open network space for family education of the offsite consultation centre has been developed. The diagnostics

method supposes the implementation of the hermeneutical approach and includes the initial survey, secondary survey of parents. The diagnostics of the educational results is realised by subjective “projection” of a teacher into the educated nature of parents and children.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The municipal model of the open network space for family education of the Offsite Consultation Center “ISTOK” includes the resource center at the Kindergarten “Tuya” and consultation points at preschool educational establishment of the Mogoytuysky district. The model implementation leads to the required detailing of a number of managerial, organizational, educational and social characteristics of the networking cooperation of the educational establishments.

1. The managerial aspect supposes the development of the regulatory and methodological documentation (Statement on the OCC “ISTOK”, “On Activities and Duties of the Visiting Nurse Teacher”, “On Individual Educational Program”, “On the Services Provided by the OCC “ISTOK”; “On Distance Services”; Agreement of the preschool educational establishment with parents on provision of the educational services by the visiting nursery teacher and others; job descriptions of dispatcher, mentor, tutor; staff schedule),
2. The organizational aspect supposes the provision of consulting services by tutors to parents of the preschool-aged children in the facilities of the consultation points; mentorship by means distance educational technologies; offsite consultations for parents of the preschool-aged children held by the visiting nursery teachers in villages, shepherd's points, etc.; advancement of the professional competence of teachers on the issues of interaction with parents and others; highlighting the activity of the OCC “ISTOK” in mass media, Internet, familiarization of the representatives of the authority and Department of Education, teachers’ and parents’ communities, and specialists with the work experience of the OCC “ISTOK”,
3. The educational aspect is focused on implementation of the additional educational programs for adults on improvement of the educational culture of parents,
4. The social aspect supposes the analysis of the parents’ need in consulting support on the issues of individual and differentiated approach to the development and upbringing of the preschool-aged children; monitoring and control of the level of satisfaction of consumers with the activity of the OCC “ISTOK”, formation of summary information materials, analytical reports.

The systematic activities of the OCC “ISTOK” will be provided by the coordinating role of the preschool educational establishment with the planned inclusion of dispatcher of the OCC “ISTOK”, tutors, and mentors into the staff schedule. The main element of the organization of the consulting support to parents is the determination of the job duties of teachers of the OCC “ISTOK”, including:

1. The responsible person for organizing the activity of the OCC “ISTOK” shall ensure management and control; coordination of the networking interaction of the preschool educational establishment,
2. The dispatcher shall perform: registration the parents’ applications; grouping the parents according to their requests; coordination of activities in the groups; drawing up the schedule, appointment of specialists, and selection of the preschool educational establishment,
3. The tutor shall provide the consulting support to the parent in upbringing and development of children in the facilities of co-working spaces of the resource centre, as well as in drawing up of individual educational routes (IER) for development of children receiving the family education,
4. The functional duties of a tutor include the methodological support of teachers (tutors and visiting nursery teachers); feedback with parents by means of distance technologies; methodological support of teachers; assistance in drawing up of individual educational routes (IER), methodological recommendations on working with parents of children receiving the family education,

5. The duties of a visiting nursery teacher includes visits of families where the children receive the preschool education in the form of the family education (according to the flextime); improvement of the psychological and educational culture of parents by means of individual consultations, training sessions, master classes.

The support service includes a teacher-logopedist, special needs teacher, educational psychologist, social teacher. It should be noted that the activities of the OCC “ISTOK” suppose the supplement of functional duties of the listed specialists. When selecting the form of the family education, parent will proceed according to the following algorithm:

1. Submission of application to the department of Education when selecting the form of the family education. Familiarization with the Statement on the OCC “ISTOK”.
2. Registration on the OCC “ISTOK” web-site, and filling-in the questionnaires by specifying the full name of the service receiver.
3. Visiting the OCC “ISTOK” to familiarize with additional educational programs, co-working spaces, options of the consulting support plans.
4. Depending on the parents’ selection of the individual plan and consulting support schedule in the network space of the OCC “ISTOK”, the dispatcher will appoint tutors, visiting nursery teachers, and mentors for parents and assign to the preschool educational establishment included into the network space. Parents have an opportunity to create individual planning for co-working visits via the on-line application.

The social effects of activity of the OCC “ISTOK” are the increased satisfaction of parents of the municipal Mogoytuysky district with a range and quality of the provided consulting, methodological services of the OCC “ISTOK”; inclusion of parents into the upbringing, development and socialization of children; formation of a feeling of the parents’ involvement into the child’s life, understanding the principles of its development as the basis of the responsible parenthood. The specific weight of the number of parents of children receiving the family education is 63%. The number of constant applicants for the services of the OCC “ISTOK” in 2018 makes 98 persons. According to the municipal monitoring of the Mogoytuysky district, the number of parents who constantly apply for the services of the OCC “ISTOK” increased from year to year.

CONCLUSION

In the frameworks of the innovative activities of the municipal Mogoytuysky district, the innovative model of the open network space for family education of the OCC “ISTOK” has been developed, tested and subjected to the efficiency analysis. The innovative vector of development of the model consists in that the educational services will be provided not by a separate educational institution, but by the educational network, in general, in intramural, distance and offsite forms. The consultation points are chosen on the basis of implementation of innovative practices at the preschool educational establishments, territorial availability of these points for parents having children of early and preschool age. The activity of the OCC “ISTOK” assumes the supplement of the list of the provided services considering the parents’ needs through providing the support and consulting of parents by tutors, visiting nursery teacher, mentors and specialists in the frameworks of the networking cooperation with the preschool educational establishment of the municipal district. The networking cooperation between the resource centre and preschool educational establishment is performed on a contractual basis. The status of the resource centre is determined by the Order of the Department of Education and Youth Policy of the Administration of the municipal Mogoytuysky district. The information, consulting,

methodological, organizational, technical, and expert and analytical support of the OCC “ISTOK” is provided by social partners and institutions on a contractual basis (Ulzytueva & Zhapova, 2015).

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