

**INTEGRATING THEORY AND PRACTICE: STUDYING PSYCHOLOGY COURSES
THROUGH APPLIED EXPERIMENTS**

N.D. Palvanova

Asia International University, Uzbekistan Department of Pedagogical Theory

Lecturer in Psychology and Pedagogy

nodirapalvanova166@gmail.com

Abstract

In psychology education, integrating theory and practice is essential for developing students' research skills, enhancing their ability to work with children of different ages, and applying psychological knowledge in pedagogical settings. This article analyzes laboratory exercises, situational examples, and project-based learning methods across experimental psychology, developmental psychology, child and educational psychology, child psychology, and psycho diagnostics courses.

Keywords

psychology, theory, practice, laboratory, project, experiment, inclusive education, autism, developmental delay (DD), child psychology.

Introduction

The primary aim of integrating theory and practice in psychology education is to prepare students for research, enable them to apply psychological concepts in real-life situations, and adapt to pedagogical activities. While theoretical knowledge provides conceptual understanding, relying solely on theory does not ensure practical application.

Modern education emphasizes laboratory exercises, mini-experiments, and project-based learning as primary tools for consolidating theoretical knowledge and developing practical skills. This article examines experiments conducted within the Asia International University psychology curriculum.

Literature Review

Research shows that integrating theory and practice is crucial for developing students' analytical thinking (Bandura, 1977). Project-based learning and case-study methods allow students to reinforce theoretical knowledge and develop experimental skills (APA, 2020).

In inclusive psychology, particularly regarding autism spectrum disorders and developmental delays (DD), integrating theory with practice allows students to monitor individual development and apply pedagogical strategies effectively (Grandin, 2009). Moreover, the theories of Jean Piaget and Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky support assessing cognitive development through laboratory exercises.

Methodology and Experiments

The study employed laboratory exercises, project-based learning, and case-study methods. Laboratory tasks included psychodiagnostic tests, attention and memory assessments, stress response analysis, and emotion evaluation.

Students conducted independent experiments based on situational examples:

Cognitive development assessments through attention and memory tests, analyzing results via graphs and tables.

Stress and emotion analysis by exposing students to various scenarios and monitoring reactions.

Inclusive experiments included examples of autism and developmental delays. Students observed individual development, assessed adaptation and cognitive skills, and applied project-based learning to formulate hypotheses, conduct experiments, and analyze results.

Step-by-Step Practice and Integration

The main goal of integrating theory and practice in psychology education is to prepare students for research and applying psychological knowledge in real-life situations. Implementing practice gradually, starting from the first year, is effective.

Preschool educators – small experiments to enhance children's attention, reduce fear, and restore self-evaluation in group settings.

Primary school teachers – individual exercises to develop memory and attention, and early detection of ADHD.

Psychologists – working with clients, identifying psychological problems through observation, and reducing pre-exam stress.

Step-by-step integration strengthens students' ability to solve any psychological challenge in diploma projects and future practice.

Legal and Normative Basis for Inclusive Education

Uzbekistan has adopted a series of key legislative acts to develop inclusive education and ensure equal access to quality education for all learners. These legal frameworks support interdisciplinary psychological research and pedagogical practice.

Key documents include:

December 1, 2017 — Presidential Decree PF-5270 on improving state support systems for persons with disabilities.

October 13, 2020 — Cabinet of Ministers Resolution PQ-4860 on enhancing educational provision for children with special educational needs.

October 12, 2021 — Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 638 on establishing inclusive education in general education schools.

January 25, 2024 — Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 46 “On Measures to Organize the Education of Children with Special Educational Needs and Improve Their Rehabilitation System”. This decree strengthens inclusive education policies, early identification, and support mechanisms in preschool and general education institutions.

These normative acts provide a legal basis for implementing inclusive education practices, integrating child and developmental psychology, psychodiagnostics, and pedagogical psychology into the curriculum, and supporting practical, evidence-based approaches throughout teacher training and psychology programs.

Results and Discussion

Laboratory and project-based learning activities significantly enhanced students’ ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice. Cognitive development tests and stress analysis confirmed that students could consolidate theoretical knowledge with practical application.

Inclusive experiments showed that integrating theory with practice in cases of autism and developmental delays effectively developed individual adaptation and cognitive skills. Students analyzed experimental results and formulated recommendations for future research.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Integrating theory and practice fosters students’ research skills. Laboratory exercises and project-based learning methods are effective tools for applying theoretical knowledge in practice. Inclusive education elements prepare students for diverse educational situations.

Gradual experiments in preschool and primary education groups allow students to consolidate theoretical knowledge step by step, providing the opportunity to overcome challenges in diploma projects and professional practice.

References

1. Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
2. American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: APA.
3. Grandin, T. (2009). *Thinking in Pictures: My Life with Autism*. New York, NY: Vintage.
4. Jean Piaget. (1972). *The Psychology of the Child*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
5. Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
6. Asia International University. (2026). *Experimental Psychology Course Curriculum*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan.
7. Happe, F., & Frith, U. (2006). The weak coherence account: Detail-focused cognitive style in autism spectrum disorders. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 36, 5–25.
8. Dawson, G., & Burner, K. (2011). Behavioral interventions in children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder: A review of recent findings. *Current Opinion in Pediatrics*, 23(6), 616–620.