

# Research on Social Work and Special Education Strategies Based on Special Needs Groups

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**Keywords:** Special Needs Groups; Social Work; Special Education; Strategy Research; Social Integration

**Abstract:** In the current social development, equal educational opportunities and social participation rights for special needs groups are gradually being valued. This paper studies the social work practices and special education measures of children and adults in special needs groups, exploring how to provide more effective support and ensure they have access to necessary educational resources and social services to better integrate into society and achieve self-development. Research indicates that the main challenges faced by special needs groups include inadequate public education systems, social discrimination, a shortage of professional service personnel, and a lack of corresponding regulations and policies. The paper proposes targeted strategies, including developing comprehensive special education regulations, establishing interdisciplinary professional teams and individualized education plans, and strengthening support systems for families and communities. The study emphasizes integrating social work and special education services and creating a comprehensive support network for special needs groups through policy guidance and social support. The study advocates for the use of diversified teaching methods and evaluation tools, considering the diversity of individuals with special needs, so that support measures are targeted and flexible, adapting to individual changes. This study establishes a continuous evaluation and feedback mechanism to ensure the feasibility and effectiveness of the strategy, so that it can be adjusted and optimized according to the actual situation.

## 1. Introduction

With society's continuous progress and development, the public's attention to special needs groups gradually increases. How to assist this group in better integrating into society, achieving self-development, and improving their quality of life has become an important issue. Special needs groups typically refer to those who have physical, psychological, intellectual, or other disabilities or special circumstances that require additional support and services to meet their specific needs. These special needs groups include but are not limited to people with physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, mental illness patients, and those in difficult situations due to environmental factors such as war and disasters.

Social work and special education are crucial in supporting special needs groups. They work together to improve the living standards of this group and overcome challenges related to their needs by providing professional services, developing personalized intervention plans, and promoting the improvement of social policies. This study aims to explore social work and special education strategies based on special needs groups in-depth, analyze the effectiveness of current implementation strategies, identify existing problems and shortcomings, and propose targeted improvement measures.

The research focuses on constructing a cross-disciplinary and mutually supportive framework to strengthen the rights and interests of special needs groups in education, employment, social participation, and other areas. We need to pay attention to policy-level promotion. Still, more importantly, we need to delve into practical operations, plan resources reasonably, innovate service methods, build platforms, and encourage and promote participation from all sectors of society. The ultimate goal is to provide comprehensive and precise support to special needs groups through

diversified channels, assisting them in achieving a life of autonomy, equality, and dignity.

## **2. The Definition and Characteristics of Special Needs Groups**

### **2.1. The Definition of Special Needs Groups**

Special needs groups are a broad social group that refers to those who require additional assistance and special care in education, life, social participation, and other aspects due to differences or obstacles in physical and mental development. This definition not only includes people with physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, or sensory impairments but also individuals who suffer from mental health problems and long-term illnesses and are marginalized in terms of social environment and cultural background. In addition, special needs groups also include individuals who cannot live independently due to old age, children, or other reasons [1].

The characteristics of this group are strong diversity and heterogeneity, involving a wide range of needs, including medical rehabilitation, educational adaptation, social function enhancement, psychological support, daily life assistance, and legal rights protection. Therefore, the design of social work and education strategies for serving special needs groups must be flexible and adaptable, with a high degree of individualization.

### **2.2. Analysis of the Characteristics of Special Needs Groups**

The main characteristics of special needs groups are reflected in the following aspects:

(1) Diversity: There are significant differences within special needs groups due to the inclusion of multiple reasons and conditions. Their respective needs and advantages differ, so personalized methods must be adopted when providing services.

(2) Persistent demands: Many special needs conditions, such as physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, etc., are long-term or even permanent and require the support and assistance provided by society to also have sustainability and stability.

(3) Cross-disciplinary needs: Special needs groups typically have additional needs in multiple areas, such as health, education, employment, and social participation, which require cross-disciplinary resource integration and collaboration.

(4) Limited social participation: Due to the physical environment, social attitudes, and institutional barriers, people with special needs often face limitations regarding social participation.

(5) Legal and policy needs: The rights and needs of such groups are often not fully reflected in legal and policy development and require special legal protection and policy attention.

Understanding the characteristics of special needs groups can help policymakers, service providers, social workers, and special education workers design more precise and systematic service strategies, effectively supporting this group to realize their potential and social participation rights [2].

## **3. Application of Social Work in Special Needs Groups**

### **3.1. The Role and Function of Social Work**

Social work plays a crucial role in special needs groups. Firstly, social workers assess individual situations and identify specific needs. Through comprehensive assessment, social workers can identify the difficulties individuals with special needs face in education, life, and social participation and propose solutions. Secondly, social work aims to enhance individuals' abilities and promote self-reliance. For example, by providing psychological counseling, skill training, and other means, we can assist special needs groups in developing their self-care and social participation abilities.

Social work also has the function of liaison and coordination. Social workers build bridges between individuals and various social resources, enabling special needs groups to access and utilize a variety of social welfare and services. They are also responsible for coordinating different service providers to ensure the continuity and comprehensiveness of services. Finally, social workers are advocates, representing special needs groups to propose policy recommendations and promote

changes in the legal and social environment to achieve social justice and inclusivity [3]. As shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1: The role and function of social work

### 3.2. Social Work Strategy

Effective social work strategies can greatly improve the quality of life for special needs groups. Individualized service plans (strategies) must be adopted, with specific services and goals set according to each individual's unique needs and circumstances. These services may include Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), employment counseling, skills training, and more.

Emphasizing cross-functional teamwork is key. Professionals from different fields, such as social workers, teachers, psychologists, etc., must collaborate closely, share information, and provide balanced and seamless services for special needs groups. In addition, implementing early intervention strategies is also very important. Early support for children with special needs can enhance their development potential more effectively. It is also necessary to adopt advocacy strategies, enhance public awareness, and change society's bias and discrimination against individuals with special needs. Community education and awareness-raising activities will enhance public understanding and acceptance of this group [4].

### 3.3. Linking and Integrating Social Resources

The linking and integration of social resources are crucial for providing efficient and comprehensive services. Social workers must be able to identify and link resources within a region, including public services, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, healthcare services, etc. Social workers can help special needs groups find suitable services through resource maps and databases.

Social workers also need to perform a case management role, coordinating and tracking various individual services to ensure continuity and integration of services. Communication and cooperation among professionals from all parties can be achieved through case conferences, interdisciplinary discussions, and other methods [5].

Social workers also need to collaborate with policymakers to ensure the effective allocation of social resources and promote the development and implementation of inclusive policies. Social workers should actively participate in policy-making and use their frontline experience to gain more attention and support for special needs groups. Through these strategies, social work can play its unique and critical role in serving special needs groups, helping individuals overcome barriers, realize their potential, and better integrate into society.

## **4. Application of Special Education in Special Needs Groups**

### **4.1. Goals and Principles of Special Education**

Special education aims to ensure that all students with special needs receive the specific educational services they need, enabling them to maximize their potential and have equal educational opportunities. These goals include providing them with an adaptable learning environment and ensuring they receive appropriate support and promotion in their academic, social, and emotional pursuits.

Special education follows a series of core principles, starting with individualized teaching plans (IEPs) that tailor teaching content and methods based on each student's unique needs and abilities. The second principle is the principle of minimal separation, which means striving to educate students with special needs together with other students and providing special assistance only when necessary. The principle of undifferentiated education requires that all children, regardless of their abilities, have the right to receive education. The principle of comprehensiveness also emphasizes integrating education, psychology, healthcare, and social services to provide a comprehensive support network [6].

### **4.2. Special Education Strategies and Methods**

Special education strategies and methods need to be designed based on the specific needs of individual students. These methods may include multisensory teaching, behavioral intervention programs, social skills training, and assistive technologies. Introducing a student-centered approach is necessary, as it encourages students to explore and learn in a comfortable and supportive environment.

Case assessment and regular review are key strategies in special education used to monitor students' progress and adjust teaching plans as needed. Meanwhile, the inclusive classroom model, which supports students with special needs in a regular classroom environment, is also widely advocated. Collaborative teaching, the collaboration between special and general education teachers, can provide a wider range of resources and support.

### **4.3. The Allocation and Utilization of Special Education Resources**

The allocation of special education resources should be based on precise needs assessment and principles of fairness, ensuring that resources can effectively meet the requirements of all students with special needs. These resources involve material resources such as educational tools and technology and human resources such as professional special education teachers and support personnel. The utilization of resources should also be flexible and innovative, fully considering the learning styles and needs of different students.

Devices and assistive technologies, such as hearing aids, voice output devices, and computer-assisted learning software, are important special education resources. Teachers must have sufficient professional development opportunities to adopt the most suitable teaching methods and techniques.

The allocation and utilization of resources should also ensure cross-departmental collaboration and promote the integration of education, healthcare, and social service resources. Establishing cross-functional teams can facilitate effective communication and resource sharing across different fields, supporting students with special needs [7].

## **5. Collaborative Strategy of Social Work and Special Education**

### **5.1. Construction of Collaborative Mechanism**

Social work and special education must establish a collaborative mechanism to serve special needs groups more effectively. This mechanism involves interdisciplinary collaboration, information sharing, joint development of service plans, and team decision-making. Collaborative mechanisms aim to break down barriers between professional fields and achieve optimal allocation of resources and implementation of services.

An effective collaborative mechanism requires establishing clear cooperation policies and

processes defining each professional role's responsibility boundaries and cooperation methods. Among them, establishing a multidisciplinary team is key, covering experts in social work, special education, mental health, healthcare, and family support services and regularly holding team meetings to jointly discuss and evaluate service effectiveness [8].

Another key point of the collaborative mechanism is to ensure seamless integration of various services and interventions, achieving a smooth transition from education to vocational training and from schools to communities. Good communication among professionals from all parties and an efficient information feedback system are required to achieve this, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Data Table of Social Work and Special Education Collaborative Mechanism Construction

Collaborative Mechanism Elements	Concrete Contents
Collaborative Target	Break the barriers between professional fields, realize the optimal allocation of resources and the best implementation of services, and serve the special needs groups more effectively.
Collaborative Policy	Establish clear guidelines for collaboration, clear direction, and principles of collaboration.
Collaborative Process	Define each professional role's responsibility boundaries and cooperation methods to ensure the orderly progress of collaborative work.
Multidisciplinary Team Building	Team members: experts in social work, special education, mental health, medical care, family support services, and other fields. Team activities: Regular meetings should be held to discuss and evaluate the service effect. Team Objective: To provide a comprehensive, personalized service plan through interdisciplinary cooperation.
Information Sharing	Establish information sharing platform or system Regularly update and share information on special needs groups Ensure the accuracy and confidentiality of information
Service Convergence	Achieve a seamless transition from education to vocational training and ensure a smooth transition from school to community. Maintain good communication between professionals to ensure service continuity and consistency.
Information Feedback System	Establish an efficient information feedback mechanism. Regularly collect and analyze service effectiveness data. Adjust service plans and strategies promptly based on feedback results.

## 5.2. Collaborative Practice Cases

Collaborative practice cases can provide practical experience on how social work and special education can effectively collaborate. For example, through the collaboration of social workers and special education teachers, a comprehensive intervention plan has been developed for students with autism, including in-school learning support, social skills training, and home environment intervention, to help students succeed in school and at home. A school's social work and special education team has partnered to launch a cross-departmental youth vocational training program. This project invites local business and community participation, providing work experience opportunities and career guidance to help students transition smoothly into the workplace.

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project invites local business and community participation, providing work experience opportunities and career guidance to help students transition smoothly into the workplace.

These cases reflect the feasibility and practical effects of cooperation between social work and special education, providing reference and inspiration for future collaborative strategies.

### 5.3. Innovation and Development of Collaborative Strategies

Collaborative strategies must constantly innovate and develop, requiring professionals in social work and special education to maintain an open mindset, actively explore more effective service models and work methods, and meet increasingly complex service needs.

Innovation collaborative strategies can include utilizing emerging technologies, adopting creative therapeutic techniques, and developing personalized learning tools. At the same time, we attach importance to the voice of service users, actively involve special needs groups and their families in the service design and evaluation process, and ensure that strategies are more targeted and effective.

Continuously pursuing policy-level support is also key to the development of collaborative strategies. Efforts should be made to enhance the awareness of decision-makers and the public towards special needs groups and to strive for more resources and a more favorable policy environment for these groups. A more inclusive and supportive social atmosphere can be created through policy advocacy, and the implementation of collaborative strategies and sustainable development can be promoted, as shown in Figure 2.

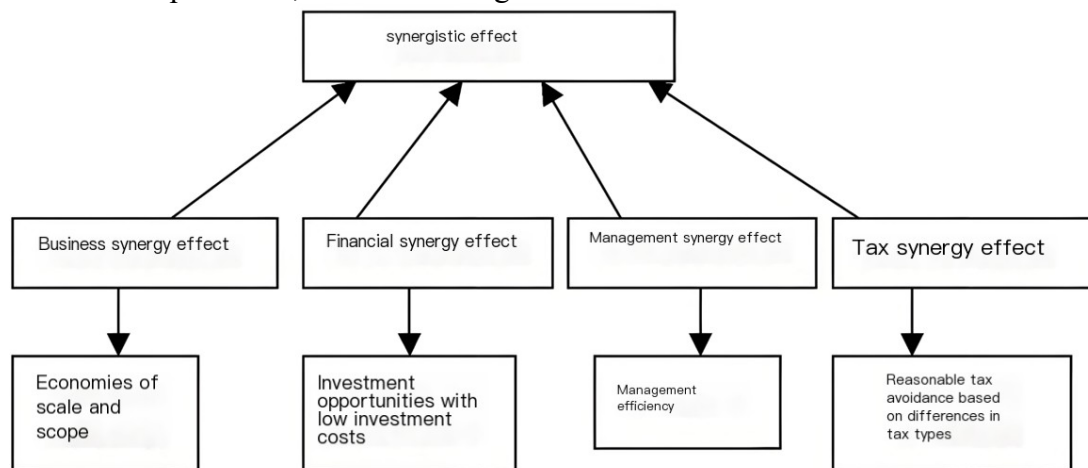


Figure 2: Innovation and development of collaborative strategy

## 6. Conclusion

This study explores the social work and special education support required by special needs groups, aiming to understand and enhance their participation in society and the quality of education and other services they enjoy. Through detailed analysis, we have identified some key points and suggestions to promote cross-disciplinary professional cooperation, develop targeted and inclusive strategies, and integrate effective resources to meet the diverse needs of special needs groups. The synergy between social work and special education is the foundation for providing comprehensive services to people with special needs. This cooperation ensures seamless integration of various services and support, making them more personalized and effective.

The conclusion's key point is that to truly achieve the above goals, all aspects of work need to work closely together, including families, schools, medical institutions, and social service agencies. Support work for special needs groups should not be limited to a single field or department but a joint effort of society. Policymakers need to adjust and formulate policies based on feedback from professionals and direct experience of special needs individuals and their families to ensure that services are sufficient and effective.

Interdisciplinary teamwork can adopt a more inclusive perspective to understand and meet the needs of special needs groups while requiring professionals to establish good communication, share

important information, and maintain collaboration and consistency in developing and implementing intervention measures. At the same time, continuing to research and innovate practical strategies in special education and social work is crucial for improving services, promoting social participation, and self-development of members of special needs groups. In addition, recognizing the uniqueness of each individual and emphasizing the importance of personalized services are also key to integrating special needs groups into society.

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