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Research on the Inclusive Education Adaptability of Visually Impaired College Students in China

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ABSTRACT

The education of visually impaired students in China has also gone through a developmental stage from "segregated education" to "special education" and then to "inclusive education". In this paper, we take the visually impaired students at Binzhou Medical College, the first university in China to provide higher education for the disabled, as the research object. The study was carried out to investigate the adaptability of visually impaired students, using various research methods such as literature review method, questionnaire method and case study method, we investigated and researched the adaptation of visually impaired students to inclusive education from several aspects such as quality of life, social support, mental health level, self-esteem and self-efficacy study. Finally, the study proposed several countermeasures and suggestions, such as attaching importance to the physical and psychological rehabilitation of visually impaired students, emphasising the inclusive of education and rehabilitation, strengthening the training of professional teachers for visually impaired students, emphasising the complementarity between schools and professions, and improving the employment support service system for visually impaired students, which are of great significance in promoting the development of the cause of inclusive education for visually impaired students and improving the adaptability of inclusive education for visually impaired students.

Keywords: Visually Impaired College Students, Inclusive Education, Adaptability

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INTRODUCTION

For the education of visually impaired students, although China has had many years of practical experience, there is still a long way to go before it is a mature and well-developed stage of education due to various reasons. From the establishment of China's first school for the blind in 1874, to the introduction of the idea of "studying with the class" in 1988, to the admission of visually impaired students to Changchun University for the first time in 1987, the education of visually impaired students in China has gradually changed from traditional segregated education to inclusive education. At the basic education level, education for visually impaired students was incorporated into the overall plan of national education development; at the higher education level, in response to the special characteristics of the visually impaired group, a pattern of education for visually impaired students was gradually formed, with inclusive education as the educational model and special education colleges affiliated with ordinary universities as the mainstay. Since then, education for visually impaired students in China has entered a stage of rapid development, while providing more visually impaired students with a fair and equitable opportunity to enter university education.

The education of visually impaired students has followed the pace of development of education for persons with disabilities, and the full implementation of inclusive education at the tertiary level has become the trend of education for visually impaired students. However, compared with the education level of foreign developed countries, China's higher inclusive education for visually impaired students is still at an exploratory stage. How to build an inclusive education model and system that suits China's national conditions and conforms to the laws of higher education for visually impaired students, and how to maximize the adaptation of visually impaired students during their schooling has become a concern of universities and society.

Researcher take the inclusive education of visually impaired students as the main line, and take the visually impaired students in Binzhou Medical College, a university that has been carrying out inclusive education for more than 30 years, as the research object, to investigate and study the adaptability of inclusive education, and put forward constructive opinions and countermeasures for improving the development of inclusive education for visually impaired

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students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

History of the Development of Inclusive Education for Visually Impaired Students in China

Inclusive education in China began in the late 1980s with the introduction of the government-initiated placement of children in regular classes. The model of integrating children with disabilities into ordinary classes in China is a product of the combination of local special education practice and the trend of inclusive education. After more than two decades of development, the placement of children with disabilities in ordinary classes has made great progress and has become the main form of education for children with disabilities in China (Jing, 2013). It has gone through the process from the title and the substance of "attending classes" to "inclusive education".

In 1784, the Frenchman Hovey founded the world's first school for the blind in Paris, inaugurating modern human education for the visually impaired (Fang, 2002). The first school for the blind in China, the Beijing School for the Blind, was founded in 1874 by a German missionary, Guo Shihun, who adapted the Braille of the Frenchman Blair and devised a set of Braille characters suitable for China, thus opening the door to education for the visually impaired in China. Article 45 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, promulgated in 1982, states that "the state and society shall help to arrange for the work, life and education of blind, deaf, mute and other disabled citizens (Zhao, 2008). This was the first time that the issue of education for the visually impaired was written into the fundamental law of the country. For higher education for the visually impaired, Changchun University became the first general higher education institution in China to admit visually impaired students in 1987, and the first school in China to carry out inclusive education for visually impaired students. After that, Beijing Union University, Binzhou Medical College and Zhengzhou Normal University started to enrol students with visual impairment in the form of "single entrance examination". In September 2012, Binzhou Medical College was approved by the Ministry of Education to admit visually impaired students to its undergraduate programme in

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Chinese medicine (acupuncture, moxibustion and massage), making it the first medical school in China to offer undergraduate education for visually impaired students. Higher education for visually impaired students in China has become an integral part of education for people with disabilities.

Current Development of Inclusive Education for Visually Impaired Students in China

Enrolment Methods

With the development of higher education for persons with disabilities in China, in 2011, with the approval of the Ministry of Education, China began to adopt the "single examination, single admission" admission method for students with visual impairment for the first time, and all students with visual impairment who take the college entrance examination are given separate questions, separate examinations and separate admissions, further guaranteeing the fairness and justice of higher education for students with visual impairment. As of 2017, more than 20 colleges and universities in China and five undergraduate colleges and universities, including Binzhou Medical College, Beijing Union University and Changchun University College of Special Education, have adopted this method of admissions (Du, 2010) .

Placement Forms

At the stage of higher education, inclusive education for visually impaired students in China is mainly based on the mainstream placement method of special education colleges in colleges and universities, and new models of inclusive education are actively explored to adapt to the growth of visually impaired students, including environment sharing, inclusive of disability and health, accompanying classes, independent minor, etc.（Du, 2010. Unlike the segregated special education for visually impaired students in the basic education stage, the school places the basic support system of teaching, second classroom, learning environment and living environment for visually impaired students in the environment of normal students, and encourages visually impaired students to give full play to their autonomy and independence, open their hearts and minds to communicate with normal students and live and study together. The school encourages visually impaired students to give full play to their autonomy and independence, to open up their hearts and communicate with normal students, to learn and live

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together, and to ensure fairness and equity in the education they receive.

Individualized Teaching

Visually impaired students at the tertiary level are at one of the most important developmental stages of their lives, both psychologically and physically. They are eager for more care from the school and to eliminate and overcome their negative feelings of inferiority and conceit and to interact with society on a reciprocal basis. To address this phenomenon, the school will assess and build up a file for each student with visual impairment from the time of admission, so that students with problems can be identified and individualised teaching techniques can be implemented in a timely manner. The school will develop a professional and targeted individualised teaching programme based on the various problems of the visually impaired students and after discussion with a team of experts, the school will provide psychological guidance and values guidance to the visually impaired students so that they can face their future studies and life positively, sunny and confidently. In addition, the school will cultivate students' hobbies and interests. For students with genuine talent, the school will invite professional teachers to provide professional training and guidance, and even encourage them to use their hobbies as a livelihood skill.

Specialities

The school's specialization is mainly based on two traditional majors: Chinese medicine, acupuncture and massage, and music. These two majors, after years of practice and exploration, are highly adaptable to visually impaired students and are good at giving full play to their own strengths (Zuo & Li, 2016). But with more and more visually impaired college students receiving higher education, these two majors can no longer meet the growing interests, so emerging majors such as law, psychology, special education, Chinese language and literature, and English have carried out inclusive education in the form of minors for visually impaired students, that is, Chinese and Western medicine, acupuncture and massage and music majors The major is Chinese and Western Medicine, Acupuncture and Massage and Music, with other majors as optional second majors that require the appropriate number of credits to be taken for

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the minor.

Adaptation Survey Impact Factors

Firstly, physical health is the prerequisite and foundation of education. In order to study the adaptation of visually impaired students to inclusive education in school, we must first start with the quality of life of visually impaired students in school. Visually impaired students are physically weaker due to their visual impairment and the long-term lack of regular exercise and exercise. Research is carried out in terms of physiological functions, physical functions, energy, emotional functions and changes in health. If their scores in the main aspects have improved significantly, this indicates that visually impaired university students have improved in one aspect with the increase in time spent in school or are moving in a good direction, which means that they are becoming more and more adapted to their current university life.

Secondly, the development of inclusive education for visually impaired students cannot be achieved without the support of the state, society and other special education resources. Social support among universities is mainly divided into the following aspects: firstly, objective support, such as the support of relevant policies received by visually impaired students during their school years and the creation of an environment with humanistic care; secondly, subjective support, which is mainly reflected in the care and assistance of professional teachers and students around; thirdly, support Utilisation, which is mainly based on the degree of accessibility of the school's infrastructure for visually impaired students and the degree of perfection of educational aids and equipment for visually impaired students in the Learning Resource Centre. If the scores in these areas can steadily improve as the visually impaired students' grade level increases, it indicates that the visually impaired students are more adaptable to the study and life during the university.

Thirdly, the degree of psychological health is one of the most important indicators for the growth and success of visually impaired students, and the degree of psychological health is a major factor in measuring whether a student has adapted to university life. Due to the isolated education and dark environment for a long time before going to university, visually impaired

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students, coupled with their physical defects, are prone to negative emotions such as low self-esteem, anxiety, depression and fear, and are more emotionally sensitive. Through corresponding research studies, we can analyse the changes in the mental health of visually impaired students after receiving inclusive education during their school years, which is of great significance to the study of the adaptability of inclusive education for visually impaired students.

Fourthly, because of their physical and mental differences from ordinary students, visually impaired students have certain difficulties in self-confidence, self-esteem and independent handling and solving of problems. The self-efficacy scale and self-esteem scale can be used to find out the overall changes in self-esteem, self-confidence and self-efficacy of visually impaired students during their school years, so that the adaptation of visually impaired students to inclusive education in schools can be further analysed.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In this paper, 70 visually impaired students from freshman to junior year in the School of Special Education of Binzhou Medical College were selected to study their adaptation to inclusive education by using five specialised scales, including the Health Status Questionnaire (SF-36), Social Support Rating Scale (SSRS), Symptom Self-Efficacy Scale (SCL-90), General Self-Efficacy Scale and Self-Esteem Scale. The study and analysis were conducted on the adaptation of inclusive education for visually impaired students. The data was collected through the Red Spider, a common software for the visually impaired in China, which can be administered to both low vision and totally blind students.

ANALYSIS OF STUDY RESULTS

Quality of Life Research

In this study, the MOS item short from healthy survey (SF-36) was used to survey the quality of life of 70 visually impaired university students enrolled in Binzhou Medical College (See

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Table 1). This scale is based on the medical outcomes study-short from (MOS SF) developed by Stewartse in 1988 and developed by the Boston Health Study in the USA. The reliability and validity of the scale have been verified in several overseas studies and it can be used to assess the basic quality of life of different groups of people (Killewo, 2002).

Table 1: *Comparison of Scores on Quality of Life for Visually Impaired University Students by Year.*

Fields	First Year Students （n=16）	Sophomore Students （n=31）	Junior Students （n=23）	F	P
Physiological Functions	96.25±44.10	90.16±16.81	90.43±10.76	0.37	0.694
Role physical	59.38±34.00	67.74±34.27	83.70±29.78	2.88	0.063
Physical Pain	76.25±13.60	77.10±23.97	83.91±11.18	1.16	0.320
General Health	55.00±19.66	62.97±20.71	72.61±17.51	3.99	0.023
Energy	60.63±13.52	70.97±15.89	69.78±11.13	3.117	0.051
Social Functions	83.33±19.46	80.29±24.46	92.27±18.48	2.10	0.131
Emotional Functioning	43.75±39.85	66.67±39.44	84.06±34.63	5.31	0.007
Mental Health	62.00±15.59	64.65±18.16	70.96±13.82	1.66	0.199
Health Change	50.00±22.36	58.065±19.78	40.22±24.70	4.32	0.017

The current study showed significant differences in the four dimensions of physical functioning, general health, emotional functioning, and mental health, with junior visually impaired college students scoring significantly higher than freshman visually impaired college students, suggesting that as the grade level increases, the better the physical functioning, general health, emotional functioning, and mental health of visually impaired college students. During the three years of college, with the improvement of educational specialization and the care and help from classmates and teachers, these four dimensions have been improved substantially, which makes these students more and more adaptable to school life, and their health and emotional aspects are developing in a good direction.

However, it can be found from the data that there is no significant difference in the six aspects of quality of life, namely, physical functioning, physical pain, energy, social functioning, and health changes among visually impaired college students of different grades, which means,

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firstly, that the physical health (visual impairment) status of visually impaired students during their school years has not been improved particularly significantly, and secondly, it means that these six aspects are not something that can be changed significantly in a short period of time. Therefore, it can be learned that the school pays more attention to psychological treatment but neglects physical rehabilitation in the education process of visually impaired students.

Social Support Research

In this study, the Social Support Scale was administered to 70 visually impaired students at Binzhou Medical College (See Table 2). The Social Support Scale was designed by Xiao in 1986 and was revised on a small scale in 1990 based on its use. The scale uses the dichotomous social support theory of objective support and subjective support, combined with support utilisation to construct the scale framework (Guo, 2012).

Table 2: *Comparison of Scores on the Social Support Scale among University Students with Visual Impairment in Different Grades.*

Fields	First Year Students (n=16)	Sophomore Students (n=31)	Junior Students (n=23)	F	P
Total Ssocial	34.81±5.97	35.94±7.01	38.91±6.32	2.18	0.121
Objective Support	7.88±2.16	7.97±2.93	8.00±2.22	0.01	0.988
Subjective Support	19.75±4.02	20.97±4.41	23.30±4.22	3.65	0.031
Support For Using	7.19±1.47	7.00±1.84	7.61±1.59	0.87	0.422

This study shows that there are significant differences in the subjective support scores of visually impaired college students in different years, and the subjective support scores of juniors are significantly higher than those of freshmen, which indicates that as the visually impaired college students' grades increase, their education deepens, and the care and assistance of their classmates and teachers increases, they have changed their mentality and become more positive, and have a more positive outlook on themselves and their achievements in academic

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life. They have a more positive outlook on themselves and their academic achievements, and are more confident in their future academic life, indicating that they are adapting more and more to the current university life.

However, there was no significant difference in the three aspects of total social support score, objective support and support utilisation of social support among the visually impaired university students in different years. This is because the school provided them with the same support assistance as well as education and care since they enrolled, and did not treat them differently as their grade level increased. This indicates that the national policy on higher education for visually impaired students has not been adjusted to the actual situation of visually impaired students, and the support service system needs to be improved.

Mental Health Leves Research

In this study, the SCL-90 was used to survey the visually impaired students, and the lower the score, the higher the level of mental health (See Table 3). The Symptom Self-Rating Scale was developed by De Jogatis in 1975. The scale has 90 items to understand the level of mental health from 10 factors such as feelings, emotions, thinking, consciousness, behaviour, habits, interpersonal relationships and eating and sleeping (https://baike.baidu.com/item/Symptom Self-Assessment Scale SCL90).

According to the data, it can be seen that the mean scores of the nine factors tend to decrease as the grade increases, with the exception of obsessive-compulsive symptoms and anxiety, the mean scores of the other factors varying significantly between different grades. When freshmen visually impaired students first enter university, they often feel a certain degree of unfamiliarity and anxiety in the face of their new school, classmates and surroundings due to their lack of experience in living independently and their inability to adapt to living alone away from their parents. However, with the development of school life, the school has prepared various accessibility tools for them, created a humanistic educational environment and provided various policies and support, therefore, the scores on each factor of the symptom self-assessment scale will gradually decrease as the year progresses, indicating that the visually

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impaired students are gradually adapting to the educational mode and environment of school life.

Table 3: *Comparison of SCL-90 Factor Scores Differences among Visually Impaired College Students of Different Grades (M±SD)*

Factor	First Year Students（n=11）	Sophomore Students（n=19）	Junior Students（n=16）	F	P
Somatization	1.93±0.67	1.57±0.39	1.32±0.43	5.294	0.009
Obsessive Compulsive Symptoms	2.05±0.52	1.92±0.49	1.76±0.57	1.040	0.362
Interpersonal Sensitivity	2.19±0.54	1.76±0.67	1.47±0.50	4.888	0.012
Depression	2.17±0.43	1.73±0.59	1.43±0.53	6.142	0.005
Anxiety	1.72±0.30	1.67±1.40	1.40±0.60	2.072	0.138
Hostility	1.91±0.74	1.70±0.38	1.44±0.38	3.107	0.055
Fear	1.82±0.57	1.59±0.33	1.32±0.47	4.175	0.022
Paranoid	1.80±0.64	1.61±0.51	1.56±0.51	3.405	0.042
Psychotic	1.85±0.26	1.54±0.53	1.29±0.22	6.805	0.003

Self-esteem and Self-efficacy Research

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's presumptions and judgments about his or her ability to perform a behaviour. In this study, self-esteem and self-efficacy were investigated in visually impaired university students with 70 valid data. Using the Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES) developed by Ralf Schwarzer, a noted clinical and health psychology cigar from the Free University of Berlin, Germany, and his colleagues in 1981, the higher the score the higher the perception of effectiveness. The Self-Esteem Scale (SES) has ten items and was developed by M. Rosenberg in 1965 to measure the general self-esteem of adolescents through self-report (See Table 4).

Table 4: *Differences in the scores of visually impaired college students in different grades on the self-esteem and self-efficacy scales（M±SD）*

	First Year	Sophomore	Junior	F	P

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	Students (n=15)	Students (n=33)	Students (n=22)		
Self-efficacy	24.75±6.47	27.15±6.19	27.77±5.70	1.225	0.301
Self-esteem	22.12±2.16	25.67±3.51	22.55±2.97	9.310	0.000

As shown in the table, it can be seen from the data that the self-efficacy scores of sophomore and junior visually impaired students are higher than those of freshman visually impaired students. Through two to three years of living and studying, the self-efficacy of visually impaired students is gradually increasing, and the self-confidence of visually impaired students is further improved, which indicates that the life of visually impaired students in school is important for their psychological effectiveness and self-confidence.

In terms of the self-esteem dimension, the scores of visually impaired students differed significantly among different grades, with sophomore visually impaired students scoring significantly higher than freshman and junior students. Because freshmen visually impaired students have just entered campus life and are still in a relatively ignorant period, they do not pay much attention to scholarships and personal glory, so their self-esteem levels are more reasonable; in their sophomore year, scholarships and various glories start to be awarded, and as a result, they begin to have a sense of crisis and want to compete for more glory, and there begins to be internal competition within the students as a whole, and their self-esteem rises. As the year progresses and after the junior year, the visually impaired students become more mature, their competitive mindset changes, their perception of self becomes more reasonable and their self-esteem is somewhat lower than in the sophomore year. It can be seen that as schooling deepens, especially in their junior year, visually impaired students have become more adapted to their current academic life, are relatively more mentally sound and stable, and their self-esteem level drops to a reasonable level.

FINDING AND CONCLUSIONS

However, with the development of school life, Binzhou Medical College has tailored a new model of inclusive education, created a more humanistic and caring educational environment and provided a series of policies and facilities to support the visually impaired students.

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However, with the introduction of a new model of inclusive education tailored to the physical and mental characteristics of the visually impaired students, the creation of a more humanistic educational environment and the provision of a series of policies and facilities, the visually impaired students have become more and more comfortable in their future studies and life, their health and emotions are developing in a positive direction, they are more positive, they experience more and more subjective support, their mental health is improving and their minds are maturing further. This shows that the inclusive education model of Binzhou Medical College for visually impaired students has played a vital role in their growth and development, and the visually impaired students have become more and more comfortable with the inclusive education model of Binzhou Medical College for visually impaired students as their grade level rises, and the experience and practice of the inclusive education of Binzhou Medical College for visually impaired students has provided valuable experience for the development of inclusive education for visually impaired students in China.

Although the respondents were generally more comfortable with Binzhou Medical College's inclusive education model, the results of the study show that Binzhou Medical College is still facing many problems in improving the adaptability of inclusive education for visually impaired students. Firstly, in the process of education for visually impaired students, schools tend to attach great importance to professional knowledge and mental health, believing that the task of educating people at university can be successfully accomplished by learning professional knowledge and developing a healthy personality, but neglecting the true meaning of the word "health". A healthy individual is made up of two parts, a healthy body and a healthy mind, and only cultivating and improving one of them alone will not be able to achieve the final goal of nurturing talents. Thirdly, the exploration and practice of a school's education model is a systematic and long-term process. Binzhou Medical College has only been implementing inclusive education for visually impaired students for a short period of time and the number of students is relatively small, although the school has built a new education model suitable for the development of visually impaired students, it still needs to be tested by practice and time. In addition, due to the small number of respondents that could be selected for the analysis of the current situation of inclusive education for visually impaired students, the results

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of the individual research studies are not very statistically significant.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Attaching Importance to The Collaborative Physical and Psychological Rehabilitation of Visually Impaired University Students and Emphasising the Inclusive Education and Rehabilitation

The combination of education and rehabilitation means that the education process of visually impaired students is combined with the rehabilitation process, so as to achieve interaction and integration between education and rehabilitation. Physical health and mental health are important indicators of the quality of life of visually impaired students. Therefore, in the process of education for visually impaired students, it is best to rely on medical schools, so that they can bring the quality and level of education for visually impaired students into full play to the greatest extent, provide reliable support and backing of medical and rehabilitation resources, and help visually impaired students to rehabilitate their physical functions (or some of them) as much as possible through the advanced medical resources and means of the medical schools. Through the advanced medical resources and means of medical schools, they can help visually impaired students to rehabilitate their physical functions (or some of them) as much as possible; at the same time, through education, they can help visually impaired students to regain self-confidence in life and form a sound personality, so as to achieve the goal of physical and mental rehabilitation.

Improving The Growth Service and Employment Support System for Visually Impaired Students

A good learning and living environment are the foundation and guarantee for the healthy growth of visually impaired university students. Colleges and universities should actively explore a service support system conducive to the growth of visually impaired college students to ensure the quality of training of visually impaired college students. In terms of guaranteeing learning conditions, a learning resource centre and a Braille library for visually impaired students should be set up, equipped with full-time teachers and professional equipment, to provide visually impaired university students with various services such as Braille examination

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papers and book printing, Braille textbook conversion and Braille book lending. In terms of management system, the school and the college can introduce various humane rules and regulations on teaching and management of visually impaired students, covering all aspects of life, study, teaching, research, scholarship evaluation and practice, which provide institutional guarantee for the growth of visually impaired students. At the same time, the university can provide professional teachers for visually impaired students to take care of their living conditions.

The career path of visually impaired students after graduation is a real concern of every student. It is important to strengthen career counseling during the school years to enhance the strength and competitiveness of visually impaired students in their career search. Schools should provide training and guidance to students in the areas of innovation and entrepreneurship, CV design, interviewing skills and strategies, and cultivate students' ability to find jobs and adapt to society. It is suggested that courses on employment guidance and psychological counselling be introduced to visually impaired students during their enrolment period, so as to provide guidance to visually impaired students on their employment outlook and values in advance, which will have a positive effect on their better career selection and inclusive into society.

Enhancing Professional Teacher Training for Visually Impaired Students

Compared with the professional development of ordinary teachers, teachers of visually impaired students are more complex and cross-cutting in terms of their service targets and professional knowledge, and schools should attach great importance to the training of every teacher engaged in the education of visually impaired students. Firstly, a special teacher development organisation should be set up to provide organisational support for teachers' professional development, and to participate in the formulation of the construction and development plan for teachers of integrated education for students with visual impairment; secondly, the school should implement the "three-level linkage cultivation of the school-faculty-teaching and research department" to strengthen the basic teaching skills of young teachers; lastly, clinical training programmes can be implemented to enhance the teaching competence of teachers of integrated education. Secondly, schools should implement "school-

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faculty-department-teaching-research-room three-level linkage training" to strengthen young teachers' basic teaching skills. Therefore, colleges and universities should take the characteristics of visually impaired students into account, focus on integrated education, actively reform their training modes, and support cooperation between colleges and universities and medical schools, so as to cultivate a team of teachers specialising in special education and rehabilitation with cross-disciplinary and complex knowledge and skills.

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