

UDC: 378.147

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## PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL READINESS OF FUTURE PSYCHOLOGISTS FOR WORK IN THE SYSTEM OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

*The paper deals with the research of psychological and pedagogical readiness of future psychologists for work in the system of inclusive education. The construction of the system of inclusive education in Ukraine requires appropriate staffing for qualitative psychological support of children with special educational needs. The psychological and pedagogical readiness for the professional activity in the context of inclusive education is presented as an integrative phenomenon which includes motivational, cognitive, emotional and volitional components. The article reveals the results of the empirical investigation of the level of personal and cognitive readiness of future psychologists for work in the system of inclusive education, the degree of maturity of emotional-volitional and motivational components of psychological and pedagogical readiness of future psychologists for the professional activity in the context of inclusive education. The necessity of purposeful preparation of psychologists for the professional activity in the system of inclusive education, special work on the formation of psychological and pedagogical readiness of future psychologists for psychological support and provision of psychological and pedagogical as well as correctional and developmental assistance to children with special educational needs is revealed.*

**Keywords:** *inclusive education, psychological support, readiness for activity, personal readiness, psychological and pedagogical readiness for work.*

### Introduction

In the process of reforming the state one of the main tasks is the improvement of the field of education. The important indicators of the level of developing the state and the consciousness of the nation are the degree of support and tolerant attitude towards people with special needs. The leading countries of the world have realized that the community loses significantly if a part of the population is not involved in active social life. Such states are rapidly developing inclusive education which allows children to receive high-quality education and contributes to self-actualization. Inclusive education is widespread in Italy, Austria, Portugal, Belgium, Finland, Spain, Germany, the UK, Sweden, Holland and other countries. Each state has developed its own system of inclusive education but its basis is the exclusion of any discrimination of pupils and the creation of conditions for their high-quality education.

In modern conditions of the development of Ukraine, special attention should be paid to ensuring equal access to high-quality education and training for all, regardless of the social status, sex, opportunities and individual characteristics. In particular, the system of general secondary education requires changes that would ensure that the school meets time requirements.

The importance of the issue of inclusive education in Ukraine is due to the fact that the number of children with special educational needs is increasing and is currently 12% of the total number of children in our state. According to statistics, almost 87% (56 528) of children with special needs in Ukraine are isolated from full studying in educational institutions. Ukraine has a number of children, being one of the largest in Europe, who are in different institutions – 1.5 % of all children of the state (Inclusive education for disabled children in Ukraine, retrieved from: <http://education-inclusive.com>).

The construction of the effective inclusive system in Ukraine requires appropriate staffing, preparation of parents and children for the perception of a child with special needs and preparation of a child himself/herself for the inclusion. This complex process requires psychological support of children with special educational needs, improvement of the psychological culture of teachers, parents and students, and also taking measures for the prevention of stigmatization and discrimination against children with special educational needs. We believe that one of the problems of inclusive education in Ukraine is the lack of specialists and their insufficient training, in particular, psychologists. The role of psychologists in inclusive education is important, since insuring a coherent system

of support of all subjects of the educational process, which emphasizes the opportunities of children with special educational needs, depends on them.

#### **Aim and Tasks**

The purpose of the article is to highlight the results of the empirical study of readiness of future psychologists who are the 1-4-year students of the specialty “Psychology”, for work in the system of inclusive education.

The tasks of the research are as follows:

- to specify the “readiness for the activity” concept;
- to reveal the level of personal and cognitive readiness of future psychologists for work;
- to assess the maturity of emotional-volitional and motivational components of psychological and pedagogical readiness of future psychologists for work in the conditions of inclusive education.

#### **Research Methods**

In the context of our research the attention is focused on the personal approach to studying psychological readiness for the activity and the conditions of its development. The criterion of the formation of psychological readiness for the professional activity is the integration of its structure which includes the following components:

- motivational (interest in activity, desire for success);
- cognitive (knowledge of tasks, duties, means of achieving goals of work);
- emotional (sense of responsibility, self-confidence, optimism);
- volitional (purposefulness, persistence, orderliness).

225 students of 1-4 years of study majoring in Psychology took part in the research.

The personal readiness was evaluated by using the methodology of “Intolerance – Tolerance” by L.H. Pochebut and Cattell’s 16 Personality Factors Test. The assessment of personal readiness was carried out according to the following indicators: tolerant attitude towards people, children with special needs, and personal characteristics which allow to conduct the effective psychological and pedagogical support of children with special educational needs. According to the results of the investigation of the indicator of tolerance the students – future psychologists, were divided into groups.

Group I – low level of tolerance;

Group II – average level of tolerance;

Group III – high level of tolerance.

The emotional and volitional component of psychological and pedagogical readiness of future psychologists for work in terms of inclusive education was studied with the help Social Empathy Test and Emphatic Abilities Inventory by V. Boyko. All respondents were divided into two groups according to “the level of empathy maturity”.

Group I – students with a high level of empathy.

Group II – students with an average level of empathy.

The motivational component of psychological and pedagogical readiness of future psychologists for work in the context of inclusive education was investigated by means of Psychosocial Attitude Inventory by O. Potyomkina and Motivation of Affiliation Test by A. Mehrabyan. The assessment of motivational readiness was carried out according to the following indicators: pro-social attitudes for altruism and the motive of the desire for acceptance. All respondents were divided into the groups by indicators – pro-social attitudes and altruism:

group I – students with distinctive pro-social attitudes;

group II – students with not distinctive pro-social attitudes;

group III – students with the lack of pro-social attitudes.

The cognitive readiness was assessed by using the Social Intelligence Test (G. Guilford and M. Sullivan’s test). All respondents were divided into groups according to the obtained indicators of social intelligence:

group I – the students with low social intelligence;

group II – the students the level of social intelligence of which is lower than average;

group III – the students with average social intelligence;

group IV – the students the level of social intelligence of which is above average;

group V – the students with high social intelligence.

#### **Theoretical Study Results**

Creating conditions for teaching children with special needs in the system of general secondary education is a manifestation of humanization and democratization of the Ukrainian society, the responsibility of Ukraine, that ratified the UN Convention “On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”, and is also an important step to ensure the full realization of rights of children with special needs to high-quality education. Today in Ukraine the relevant regulatory and legal framework has been developed for the introduction of inclusive education, in particular, the concept of the New Ukrainian School has been supported and the Law “On Amendments to the Law of Ukraine “On Education” regarding the peculiarities of access of persons with special educational needs to educational services”, according to which the persons with special needs have the right to receive education in all educational institutions, has been signed. For children with special educational needs the inclusive classes will be created in general education institutions, the psychological and pedagogical as well as correctional and developmental assistance will be provided, and their psychological support will be carried out.

At present, Ukraine has undergone significant changes at the level of legislation and in practice, in particular, the conditions have been created for teaching children with special educational needs on the basis of many institutions of pre-school, general secondary and higher education. The preparation of teachers for the work

in the conditions of inclusive educational environment is carried out.

The psychological support of children with special educational needs provides for the creation of optimal educational environment for them by designing an individual program for their development, systematic work with parents, teachers and students, as well as other specialists (social educators, speech therapists, medical workers). Under conditions of qualitative psychological support, inclusive education will have a positive impact not only on the development of children with special needs, but also on their peers. Formation of tolerance, empathy, the desire to provide assistance to “special” pupils and the reduction of aggressiveness occur in the interaction of children with special educational needs and their classmates without such needs in a single educational environment.

It should be noted that most school psychologists are not ready to work with children with special needs, and in higher educational institutions the issue of preparing psychologists for the work in the system of inclusive education is not sufficiently developed. The lack of a systematic approach to solving the problem of readiness of psychologists to work in the conditions of inclusive education leads to the shortage of the necessary competences of specialists and the lack of their holistic view of the specificity of working with such children. There is a contradiction between the need of the society and the state for the intensive introduction of inclusive education and the degree of readiness of psychologists to work in this system.

The psychological and pedagogical sciences consider readiness as a result of the development of a personality, and as a separate characteristic of a person with its own meaning and stages of development. K. Platonov describes readiness as a special mental state that provides high capacity to function, creates the basis of the effective professional activity (Platonov, 1986). I. Dubrovina believes that readiness is a person’s setting for certain behavior and active actions determined by the motives and mental characteristics of the individual (Dubrovina, 2012). T. Kondratyeva notes that readiness for the activity involves the formation of such necessary features, qualities and settings of the individual that provide the future specialist with the opportunity to carry out his/her professional functions and duties competently, consciously, conscientiously and creatively (Kondratyeva, 2006). The concept of readiness is considered by scientists as a state of consciousness, mind and functional systems in the situation of responsible actions; the ability to act at a rather high level; a condition for rapid adaptation to working conditions and professional growth.

A psychologist involved in inclusive education, performs both traditional and additional functions. He/she supports changes in school culture, helps teachers to adapt to new conditions and requirements. The introduction of inclusive education concerns directly the issue of readiness of psychologists for work in new conditions. Readiness

for the professional activity of a psychologist is the result of his/her professional training.

### **Empirical Study Results**

It has been found that 20% of the respondents have a high level of tolerance, which is necessary for the work of a psychologist with children with special educational needs and their ordinary peers. Such students are restrained and tactful in communicating with people; they accept and understand their psychological peculiarities. 63% of the respondents have an average level of tolerance which is manifested in a tactful and patient attitude towards a human being but the inability of his/her full acceptance and understanding. There is a danger of emergence of rejection, intolerance towards a child with special educational needs in critical situations. 17% of the students have a low level of tolerance, which is indicative of the lack of readiness for work, especially in the context of inclusive education.

The students of different years of study, who participated in the research, were grouped according to the tolerant-intolerant attitude depending on the year of study. It has been found that the level of tolerant attitude to a person does not depend on the year of study, but rather requires specially organized work and psychological training.

Personal readiness allows to carry out the psychological and pedagogical support of children with special educational needs effectively. The indicator of personal readiness, which was investigated by means of 16PF Questionnaire, determined the division of students into 3 groups:

Group I – students who do not have personal qualities allowing them to work effectively in inclusive education and are characterized by the emotional instability, the lack of self-control, the feeling of guilt and the dependence on the group.

Group II – students who have both positive qualities which are necessary for the successful performance of professional duties (openness, emotional stability, etc.) and negative qualities.

Group III – students who manifest personal qualities that contribute to the productive interaction with children (openness, emotional stability, self-control, independence).

The investigation has shown that only 19.2% of the students are characterized by personal qualities which contribute to the effective performance of the professional activity of a psychologist, in particular, in the inclusive system. These students are open in relations, willing to cooperate, attentive to people, self-assured, emotionally stable, responsible, purposeful, persistent and independent. 65.5% of the respondents are characterized by a combination of positive qualities which are necessary for the successful performance of professional duties and negative ones (lack of self-control, dependence on others, etc.). The students of this group tend to show emotional instability and misbalance in difficult situations that often occur in work in terms of inclusive education. 15.3 % of

the respondents are characterized by personal qualities that do not promote successful interaction with children with special needs: emotional instability, dependence on the group, lack of self-control, isolation, tendency to feel guilty. The students of this group cannot fulfill their professional duties successfully, especially in the context of inclusive education.

By means of Social Empathy Test and Emphatic Abilities Inventory by V. Boyko, it has been found that social empathy is characteristic of 50.4% of the respondents. Such students are able to empathize, understand emotions, feelings and experiences of other people. There are 49.6% of the students with an average level of empathy. They can empathize, but do not fully understand emotions, feelings and experiences of others and the reasons that cause them.

The obtained results have allowed to conclude that most students-future psychologists have a sufficient level of empathic abilities, but they must be developed at specially organized classes.

By means of the methods of diagnostics of Psychosocial Attitude Inventory by O. Potyomkina and Motivation of Affiliation Test by A. Mehrabyan, it has been found out that the settings for freedom, labor and money prevail among the students of the first group (26%), and the settings for power and selfishness are less distinctive. Consequently, they have a mature social position. The students of the second group (49%) have settings for freedom and altruism predominant with less emphasis on the settings for labor, power and money. The students of the third group (25%) manifest freedom orientation and selfish tendencies.

It should be noted that the expression of pro-social settings is insignificant and without substantial statistical differences increasing from the 1st to the 4th year of study. This can be explained by age-related psychological changes as a process of maturation.

According to the indicator of the desire for acceptance, recognition and establishment of close emotional relationships with people, that was investigated by means of A. Mehrabyan's Test, the respondents were divided into the groups as follows:

group I – the students with a low level of the desire for acceptance, recognition and establishment of close emotional relationships with people and a high level of the motive of fear of rejection;

group II – the students with an average level of the desire for acceptance, recognition and establishment of close emotional relationships with people and a high level of the motive of fear of rejection;

group III – the students with a high level of the desire for acceptance, recognition and establishment of close emotional relationships with people and a low level of the motive of fear of rejection.

It has been found that 17% of the students have a low level of the desire for acceptance, recognition and establishment of close emotional relationships with people. The students in this group do not see any values in

human relationships, therefore, they are unsuitable for the professional psychological activity. 49% of the respondents belonging to the second group are characterized by a distinctive internal conflict between the desire to be with people and the desire to avoid them when they need to interact with strangers, and also when there are tense, conflict situations. This category of future psychologists, working in the system of inclusive education, can experience internal conflicts, which will negatively affect the quality of their work. 34% of the respondents who belong to the third group are actively seeking to communicate with people, consider it valuable and experience mostly positive emotions in the process of communication. These students are the most suitable for the professional activity of a psychologist in inclusive education. It has been found that there is no direct correlation between the motive of affiliation and the duration of studying of students and their age.

By using the social intelligence test (G. Guilford and M. Sullivan's test) it has been revealed that most students have not a high level of social intelligence (72%). The part of these students (26%) have a low level of social intelligence and the level lower than average. Such students have difficulties in understanding and predicting human behavior, which complicates the relationships with them. The low social intelligence negatively affects professional activity of a psychologist, in which one needs to perceive a person correctly, to understand his/her behavior, to predict reactions, etc. 26% of the students, mostly of senior years of study, have a high level of social intelligence. They understand the language of non-verbal communication, can evaluate human behavior correctly and predict a person's reaction to certain circumstances, etc. Such students have mature communicative and organizational skills, are open, friendly and tactful. A high level of social intelligence is connected with an interest in social problems and the need to influence other people. All this will contribute to the successful professional activity of a psychologist, in particular, in the context of inclusive education. It has been found that the level of social intelligence is increasing from the 1st to the 4th year of study, which, in our opinion, can be associated with the study of psychological disciplines.

The research has made it possible to understand that the least developed components of students' readiness for the professional activity of a psychologist in the context of inclusive education are the motivational and personal ones (40.1%). They almost do not change in the process of professional training, therefore, their development almost does not depend on the academic disciplines being taught. The most developed is the emotional-volitional component. Cognitive readiness indicates the dependence on the level of motivational and personal development (direct correlation  $r = +0.721$ ); the students with a high level of motivation and professionally important qualities show a high level of cognitive readiness; the students with a low level of motivation and professionally important qualities have a low level of cognitive readiness.

The analysis of the dynamics of developing the components of readiness from the 1st to the 4th year of study indicates the following: psychological and pedagogical readiness is increasing; the development of the components of psychological and pedagogical readiness in different degrees depends on the academic disciplines being taught; there is heterochronism in the development of different components of psychological and pedagogical readiness of future psychologists.

### Conclusions

The main feature of readiness for work is its integrative character, which manifests itself in an orderly structure and consistency of components. The psychological readiness reflects the individual level of readiness for the professional activity and involves psychosocial as well as individual and personal characteristics, which the specific activity requires. There is motivational, personal, cognitive and emotional and volitional readiness in the psychological readiness for work. Proceeding from this, the psychological and pedagogical readiness of students-future psychologists for work in the system of inclusive education can be considered as a combination of motivational, personal, cognitive, emotional and volitional components.

The readiness of students-future psychologists for work in the context of inclusive education has been revealed through the content of indicators. The personal component of readiness is formed by means of tolerant attitude towards the children with special educational needs and personal qualities which contribute to the effective professional activity. The abilities for fast and accurate perception of people, predicting their reactions in certain circumstances and also the knowledge of forms,

methods and means of work with children with special educational needs form the content of the cognitive component. The emotional and volitional component is represented by the level of the maturity of empathy, and the motivational component is represented by the social conditionality of the teaching, pro-social settings for altruism and labor as well as the interest in a human being.

The results of the analysis of the study of psychological and pedagogical readiness of future psychologists to work in the context of inclusive education indicate a low level of its maturity, which is manifested in low motivation for work with children with special educational needs, instability of social settings, the lack of tolerant attitude towards the children with special educational needs, the low level of empathy, the lack of clear ideas about the specificity of the children with special needs and organization of work with them. The interconnection between the components of psychological and pedagogical readiness of future psychologists for the professional activity has been revealed. Thus, the development of the cognitive component of readiness depends on the level of the maturity of motivational and personal components (direct correlation).

The study of psychological and pedagogical readiness of students has shown that future psychologists have not a high level of readiness to work with children with special educational needs in the conditions of inclusive education. This indicates the need for a special work on the formation of psychological and pedagogical readiness of future psychologists to work with children with special educational needs as well as the development of a system of training psychologists who could effectively work in the system of inclusive education.

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### ПСИХОЛОГО-ПЕДАГОГІЧНА ГОТОВНІСТЬ МАЙБУТНІХ ПСИХОЛОГІВ ДО РОБОТИ У СИСТЕМІ ІНКЛЮЗИВНОЇ ОСВІТИ

Стаття присвячена дослідженню психолого-педагогічної готовності студентів-майбутніх психологів до роботи у системі інклюзивної освіти. Побудова системи інклюзивної освіти в Україні потребує відповідного кадрового забезпечення для якісного психологічного супроводу дітей з особливими освітніми потребами. Психолого-педагогічну готовність до професійної діяльності в умовах інклюзивної освіти представлено як інтегративний феномен, що включає у себе мотиваційний, пізнавальний, емоційний і вольовий компоненти. Стаття розкриває результати емпіричного дослідження рівня особистісної і когнітивної готовності майбутніх психологів до роботи у системі інклюзивної освіти, ступеня сформованості емоційно-вольового і мотиваційного компонентів психолого-педагогічної готовності майбутніх психологів до професійної діяльності в умовах інклюзивної освіти. У дослідженні взяли участь 225 студентів 1-4 курсів, які навчаються за спеціальністю «Психологія». Особистісна готовність оцінювалась за допомогою методики «Інтолерантність – толерантність» Л. Г. Почебут і факторного особистісного опитувальника Кеттелла (16 PF). Емоційно-вольовий компонент психолого-педагогічної готовності майбутніх психологів до професійної діяльності в умовах інклюзивної освіти досліджувався за допомогою тесту «Діагностика соціальної емпатії» і методики діагностики рівнів емпатичних здібностей В.В. Бойко. Мотиваційний компонент психолого-педагогічної готовності майбутніх психологів до професійної діяльності в умовах інклюзивної освіти досліджувався за допомогою методики діагностики соціально-психологічної установки особистості О. Ф. Потьомкіної і тесту-опитувальника для вимірювання мотивації афіліації А. Меграбяна. Когнітивна готовність оцінювалась за допомогою тесту соціального інтелекту (тест Дж. Гілфорда і М. Саллівена). Результати аналізу дослідження психолого-педагогічної готовності майбутніх психологів до роботи у системі інклюзивної освіти вказують на невисокий рівень її сформованості, що виявляється у низькій мотивації до роботи з дітьми з особливими освітніми потребами, нестійкості соціальних установок, відсутності толерантного ставлення до дітей з особливими освітніми потребами, низькому рівні емпатії, відсутності чітких уявлень про специфіку дітей з особливими потребами та організацію роботи з ними. Було виявлено взаємозв'язок між компонентами психолого-педагогічної готовності майбутніх психологів до професійної діяльності. Так, розвиток когнітивного компоненту готовності залежить від рівня розвитку мотиваційного та особистісного компонентів (пряма кореляція). Виявлено необхідність цілеспрямованої підготовки психологів до професійної діяльності у системі інклюзивної освіти, спеціальної роботи з формування психолого-педагогічної готовності майбутніх психологів до психологічного супроводу і надання психолого-педагогічної та корекційно-розвиткової допомоги дітям з особливими освітніми потребами.

**Ключові слова:** інклюзивна освіта, психологічний супровід, готовність до діяльності, особистісна готовність, психолого-педагогічна готовність до професійної діяльності.

*Submitted on January, 8, 2018*

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