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# Teachers' psychological readiness to work in conditions of inclusive training and education

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## Abstract

The aim of the research is to study the main theoretical and methodological aspects of the inclusive education domestic model introduction problem via comparative qualitative research methods. The results of an empirical study showing the presence of a problem in psychological readiness for educational activities in an inclusive class among the students of a pedagogical university are presented. In conclusion, the theoretical analysis of scientific research and advanced pedagogical experience allows to determine the psychological readiness for professional activity as the most important category for the successful implementation of inclusion principles in a modern school.

**Keywords:** Inclusive education, Disabilities, Readiness, Professional.

# Preparación psicológica de los docentes para trabajar en condiciones de formación y educación inclusivas

## Resumen

El objetivo de la investigación es estudiar los principales aspectos teóricos y metodológicos del problema de introducción del modelo doméstico de educación inclusiva a través de métodos comparativos de investigación cualitativa. Se presentan los resultados de un estudio empírico que muestra la presencia de un problema en la preparación psicológica para actividades educativas en una clase inclusiva entre los estudiantes de una universidad pedagógica. En conclusión, el análisis teórico de la investigación científica y la experiencia pedagógica avanzada permite determinar la preparación psicológica para la actividad profesional como la categoría más importante para la implementación exitosa de los principios de inclusión en una escuela moderna.

**Palabras clave:** Educación inclusiva, Discapacidad, Preparación, Profesional.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The relevance of introducing of inclusive education in a modern school is emphasized in the article. The psychological readiness for work in inclusive classes of the future teachers is highlighted as the main aspect of the successful implementation of the inclusive teaching and upbringing principles in schools. The emphasis is made on the necessity for changes in the training system of future teachers at the stage of university studies. The goal of the research is to study the main theoretical and methodological aspects of the inclusive education domestic model introduction problem. Materials and methods. The analysis of theoretical ideas about the significance of the teachers'

psychological readiness for professional activity and its place in the formation of positive attitudes towards an inclusive educational environment is carried out.

The results of an empirical study showing the presence of a problem in psychological readiness for educational activities in an inclusive class among the students of a pedagogical university are presented. That is among the future teachers. Research results, discussions. The results of the practical and theoretical analysis allow us to point out the main aspects of the problem of a teacher's psychological readiness for professional activity in an inclusive environment. Conclusion. The theoretical analysis of scientific research and advanced pedagogical experience allows determining the psychological readiness for professional activity as the most important category for the successful implementation of inclusion principles in a modern school.

The system of inclusive education is getting widespread in the modern world. It is based on an ideology that excludes any discrimination against children, ensures the relation to all people as equals, but at the same time creates the necessary conditions for children who have special educational needs. Translated from French, *inclusif* - inclusive; from the Latin word *include* - I conclude, I include. That means this is the general education development process, which implies the availability of education for everyone, including children with special needs (MIKHALCHENKO, 2012).

Inclusive education is a step towards the ultimate goal, the creation of an inclusive society that will allow all children and adults, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, ability, presence or absence of developmental disabilities and HIV infection, to participate in public life and make one's contribution in it. In such a society, differences are respected and appreciated, and an active struggle is waged against discrimination and prejudice in politics and the daily life of institutions (NIKITINA, 2014).

It should be noted that inclusive schools are very flexible. The experience of many countries shows that in such a school's children with special needs are best integrated into society and can achieve the highest performance in the way of education. But this requires joint efforts both from teachers and school staff, as well as peers, parents, family members and people around them. And the fact that children in inclusive schools gain communication skills with peers with disabilities and learn to be tolerant, friendly, and better understand other people plays an important role (MITCHELL, 2009).

Since our country supported the idea of the Salamanca Declaration, the state has been tasked with the accomplishment of the intended goals of introducing inclusive education into the modern education and upbringing system. Since that time, the Republic of Kazakhstan needs to provide the children with special needs with access to sound academic background, allowing them to become full members of society in the future. And also to acquire a profession, reveal their creativity and live an independent active life. It should be

noted that the idea of inclusive education for Kazakhstan is a completely new direction in the development of training and education processes. Undoubtedly, there is positive foreign and domestic experience in this matter (ISKAKOVA, MOVKEBAEVA, ZAKAEVA, AITBAEVA & BAITURSYNOVA, 2013). However, the practice also shows several difficulties to face in the process of accomplishment of the tasks of introducing inclusive education in our republic. Some of them should be highlighted:

1. The lack of professional teaching staff with special knowledge of the organization of the educational process in an inclusive learning environment. Teachers in a mainstream school, in the context of modern education and the constant reforms in school teaching, already experience additional loads to improve their pedagogical activity. Most often, they lack the qualifications both to correct existing health problems in a child and the skills of a methodically competent approach to involve a child with special needs in the educational process. Any additional load causes them anxiety and stress.

2. Unavailability of society to accept children with disabilities in everyday activities is observed. There are negative social attitudes and biased attitudes towards children with developmental problems in society. In particular, most parents of healthy children do not welcome coeducation with children with disabilities. They fear that inclusion will reduce class performance and, as a rule, the quality of education. All of this

testifies to the low inclusive culture of our population and the necessity in teacher education and special education for parents, teachers, and children.

3. The poor equipment of material and technical equipment of inclusive educational institutions should be attributed to the special problem.

4. The lack of a methodically well-constructed system of medical, psychological and pedagogical support for the children with disabilities at school. World practice shows that inclusive education is more effective if there are specialists who support this process regularly. Teachers should have speech and language pathologist, psychologists, social educators and defectologists as assistants. These specialists will have to carry out the work on the inclusive culture development with the educational institution administration, the teaching staff, parents and students.

All of these problems indicate the lack of availability of the modern education system to accept inclusive education and upbringing positively. It is possible to conditionally distinguish some categories of members of the public who directly face the children with disabilities. These are the teachers-educators, classmates, parents of healthy children. The relationship analysis of these three categories indicates that children themselves show the most loyal attitude to their classmates with special needs. While adults (teachers and parents)

show more negative feelings about the appearance of a child with special needs in the classroom (TOPOLNIK, 2015).

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

In our article, we would like to dwell in more detail on the first problem mentioned above. This is the attitude of the teacher himself to the idea of working in an inclusive class. The subject of our attention is the future teachers. We believe that the training of qualified teachers for an inclusive environment should begin at the university. They are future teachers who had gained knowledge of inclusive education, having improved their professional level and social competence will make the necessary changes to the work of educational institutions. Using the best practices of other countries, they will be able to develop new models of teaching and ideas of practical assistance to children with special needs, which in the future will be used massively as the examples of innovative approaches and creating a favorable situation for the integration of children into society. As Kotova points out an inclusive school teacher should have high rates of professional social adaptation, reflexivity, as well as significant communicative and organizing skills. He can be successful with the following basic personality characteristics (ASMOLOV, 1996):

- If he is flexible and tolerant enough;
- Respects individual differences;



- Knows how to listen and apply the recommendations of team members;
- Agrees to work in one team with other teachers;
- He is interested in difficulties, and he is ready to try different approaches.

It should be noted that the formation of these personality qualities should occur precisely in the period of professional skills development and of course, this is the education in a higher educational institution. It is during this period that the birth of the future teacher, a qualified educator takes place. However, practice shows a low level of understanding of the importance of introducing inclusive education in regular schools among future teachers. Our studies indicate this problem. We surveyed at the pedagogical university, among students of 3 courses in the specialties of the physics teacher, the chemistry teacher, the mathematics teacher, and the foreign language teacher. Having chosen 3-year students, we were guided primarily by the fact that these students have experience in active teaching practice. These students were asked to answer 7 questions, moreover, anonymously. The questions were as follows:

1. What is inclusive education?
2. How do you feel about children with special needs?
3. Do you think it is right that the state decides to educate children with special needs in regular schools?

4. Do you feel pride in the humanity of our state in the accomplishment of the tasks of inclusive education in our country?
5. Do you know famous people with special needs?
6. If you were parents and you had children would you like your child to study in an inclusive class?
7. When you graduate and start working as a teacher, so what will you choose? to work in an inclusive class or an ordinary class?

In this survey, the questions from 1 to 5 were aimed at identifying a humane attitude towards people with disabilities and the presence of civic-mindedness of students to an inclusive educational process. And also these questions reflect the level of knowledge of students within the program of the course Inclusive Education at the university. Since questions 6 and 7 reflect a personal attitude to the problem of introducing coeducation of children with good health conditions with children with special learning needs.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results of our survey surprised us. 95% of students clearly understand what inclusive education is. They give the correct description of this term. The same 95% indicate that they are very friendly to people and children with disabilities and, of course, have

sympathy for such children. They also indicate that at the sight of such people it is difficult for them to hide a feeling of pity. But they are ready to help such children. And 100% of students emphasize that they agree with the state policy on the introduction of inclusive education in our country and are proud of the humane direction in the education system in our country. About 80% of students name the famous people with special needs. Among them are Steven William Hawking, Beethoven, Nick Woodich, many paraolympians, etc.

Never the less, the results of question No. 6 showed that 52% of students still would not want their future children to study in an inclusive class. And 46% of students indicated that they did not want to work in an inclusive school. These results indicate the existing problem of the personal attitude of future teachers in teaching children with special needs. They also indicate to some contradictions between the existing knowledge and beliefs of future teachers and the real personal attitude to the issue of inclusive education. An analysis of the data confirms the need for future teachers to form a psychological readiness for pedagogical activity in inclusive classes. In modern conditions of reforming the educational system, the psychological readiness of teachers for professional activity is of great importance, since, according to the opinions of many researchers, it is psychological readiness that is the condition for successful mastery of professional knowledge and their application in practice.

So in the works of ASMOLOV (1966), it is indicated that the effectiveness of professional activity is determined by psychological

and practical readiness for it. Psychological readiness is traditionally understood as psychological attitudes, with the help of which the resistance to human activity in a polymotivated space is explained. The problem of psychological readiness for activity has been developed in psychology since the 60s of the XX century from the standpoint of various approaches. TOPOLNIK (2015) calls psychological readiness a key condition for quick adaptation to working conditions and further professional improvement of the future specialist's qualifications. According to ALEKHINA, ALEKSEEVA & AGAFONA (2011), the teacher's psychological readiness is a condition for the effectiveness of his professional activity. Kucheryavenko describes psychological readiness in an inextricable relationship with activity, as a result of which it includes all the constituent elements of the action that are necessary for the successful completion of the task: The quality, stability, the success of the professional activity is determined by the characteristics of the specialist's psychological readiness.

ALEKHINA, ALEKSEEVA & AGAFONA (2011) interpret the concept of psychological readiness of a teacher to implement an inclusive approach in education as an integral, personal education, representing a combination of social, moral, psychological and professional qualities and abilities that allow providing for the possibility of productive activities at the high level of motivation to include a child with special educational needs in educational interaction with other participants in the educational process. In the structure of psychological readiness for pedagogical activity in an inclusive environment, the author points out the emotionally - positive

acceptance of children with various types of developmental disorders, their readiness to include them in activities in the lesson, and thereby ensure satisfaction with their pedagogical activity.

So KETRISH (2018) emphasizes that psychological readiness for professional activity is defined as a combination of mental formations: ideas and concepts, ways of thinking and abilities, motivations, personality qualities that provide motivational-semantic readiness and the ability of the subject to carry out the professional activities. The results of our study showed that the teacher's psychological readiness for activities in an inclusive environment requires special attention in the training of future teachers.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Inclusive education is impossible to develop alone; it is closely connected with changes in the value, moral level of a person. One of the important steps in preparing the education system for the accomplishment of the inclusion process is the stage of psychological and value changes the formation of its specialists and their level of professional competence. Already at the first stages of the of inclusive education development, the problem of the unavailability of mainstream school teachers to work with children with disabilities is thrown into sharp relief, a lack of professional competencies of teachers to work in an inclusive environment, the presence of psychological barriers and professional stereotypes of teachers

becomes apparent. The main psychological barrier is the fear of the unknown, the fear of the inclusion harm for the rest of the participants of the educational process, the teacher's professional uncertainty, negative attitudes and prejudices, unwillingness to change, and psychological unavailability to work with special children.

An inclusive educational community is changing the role of the teachers in many ways. Lipsky Gartner believes that teachers help students activate the opportunities collaborating with other teachers in a multidisciplinary environment without an artificial distinction between specialist and mainstream educators. They are involved in various types of communication with students, so they recognize each individually. Besides, teachers participate in wide

social contacts outside the school, including social support resources and parents. Such a position of the teacher allows him to overcome his fears and anxieties, to reach a whole new level of professional skill, understanding his students and his vocation. It should be recognized that in our country, with the targeted training of teachers of this type, the level of psychological readiness of students to work with children with special needs has not yet been taken into account. As the results of our study show, the formation of internal, psychological readiness for pedagogical activity in the inclusive environment of the future teacher should occupy not the last place on this issue.

Training of the specialists for inclusive education and upbringing is one of the conditions for the accomplishment of inclusion itself as a whole. At the moment, the solution to this issue

causes difficulties in both organizational and methodological nature. Since the specialists providing the educational process often do not understand the specificity of working with people with disabilities. They cannot assess adequately the possible difficulties in the accomplishment of inclusive education, the level of their readiness to overcome them, which can bring not only harm to the further socialization of such children but also create a significant threat to their life in the school. Since the teacher is focused in practice on traditional methods of work and on the knowledge that he received in the higher education. This problem determines the necessity for significant changes in modern teachers' training, especially at the stage of university studies. Inclusive education can be accomplished in our country and reach the level of the European standards if the training of new type teachers is conducted in an accelerated and mainstream manner, using the best teaching technologies, positive advanced pedagogical experience and meeting the demand of the time.

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