

**MOTIVATIONAL READINESS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN  
PEDAGOGICAL SPHERE TO WORK WITH CHILDREN  
WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

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**Abstract**

The article is devoted to the theoretical and practical analysis of the future preschool teachers' readiness to work with children with special educational problems. The effectiveness of inclusive education depends largely on the desire and willingness of the undergraduate students, and in the future teachers to strong performance with all participants in the educational process i.e. in particular with parents, educators, developmental paediatrician, speech and language pathologist, doctors and others. This readiness is determined by the specific conditions of the future teacher professional activity and is based on the number of competencies formation such as: academic, social and personal, professional, cultural. The most important component of such readiness is motivational readiness, as the knowledge, skills, and abilities can be acquired during the activity process, and only when there is motivation to work with special children. The paper also analyses the scientists' works who dealt with the problems of motivation and teachers motivational readiness in general. The motivational readiness basic components of the pedagogical area undergraduate students to work in the conditions of inclusion according to the required state standard are identified and described. The leading role of motivational factors to disclose the creative potential and self-development of future preschool teachers is revealed. The article has analysed that the meaningful content of the "inclusion", "children with special educational problems",

"motivational readiness", "inclusive educational environment" concepts has advantages and disadvantages that change according to different stages of society formation and development.

**Key words:** *inclusion; children with special educational problems; motivational readiness; inclusive educational environment; special educational needs; external positive readiness; external negative readiness.*

### **Articulation of the problem**

Nowadays, the state is taking a number of significant steps to improve the quality of education to all citizens of Ukraine. In recent years, all regulations emphasize the need to include all children in the educational process, regardless of their special educational needs. Children with disabilities can use the services of special education in different organizational forms: to study in the family, in a special (correctional) educational institution, secondary school, preschool institutions of various types, child development centers and others that are flexibly adapted to educational needs of the children.

The implementation of the basic educational programs adapted for children with special educational needs is impossible without creating a developing educational environment and personal involvement of all subjects of the educational process i.e. including educators, speech therapists, speech pathologists, teachers, parents and other participants. And it is the readiness to work with special educational needs children that begins in the higher education institution, during the process of teaching students. Scientist O.V. Martynchuk emphasizes the importance of readiness to work with such children of the future preschool teachers [5, p.138].

The processes of modernization in the national education, including the importance of inclusive education for children with disabilities, today meet the increasing demands to the teacher's personality.

### **Analysis of the recent research and publications**

After analyzing numerous studies, it can be argued that Ukraine is actively introducing foreign experience in training teachers for inclusive education (B. Cagran, J. Corbet, E. Nowicki, D. Oblinger, B. Barrett, Florian, T. Loreman, S. Alyokhina, I. Voznyak, I. Oralkanova, I. Khafizulina, S. Cherkasova, Y. Shumilovska and others) and develop and test their own scientific approaches aimed at solving various aspects of this problem (Yu. Bystrova,

V. Bondar, I. Demchenko, I. Dmytriyeva, V. Zasenko, V. Kovalenko, A. Kolupayeva, I. Kuzava, M. Sheremet, D. Shulzhenko, etc.) [3, 8, 10].

It should also be noted that scientists have started to develop and experimentally test comprehensive programs for children with special educational needs, which will help future teachers to introduce the educational space to the child more painless (E.L. Goncharova, I.A. Korobeynykov, O.I. Kukushkina, T.N. Knyazeva, I.Yu. Levchenko, M.M. Malofyeyev, K.M. Duray-Novakova, N.M. Nazarova, O.S. Nikolska, G.N. Penin, L.I. Plaksina, Yu.A. Razyenkova, S.N. Sorokoumova, V.V. Tkachova, N.D. Shmatko, L.I. Solntseva, S.L. Khoroshyi, etc.) [2, p.40].

Researchers and scientists (S. Alyokhina, A. Kolupayeva, N. Kuzmina, M. Matvyeyeva, S. Myronova, V. Synyov, O. Taranchenko, D. Shulzhenko) found negative social attitudes, prejudice against children with SEN, insufficient motivation to change their own views on the education of these children by many future teachers [7, p.104]. In addition, an increased level of anxiety due to the insufficient professional competence plays an important role, because in the conditions of inclusive education teachers have to work not only with children with normal development, but also with SEN children, whose working requires new professional knowledge, skills and abilities.

The article purpose is to analyze and determine the motivational readiness features of pedagogical profile students, future educators of preschool institutions to work with children needed special educational.

### **Presenting main material**

According to the modern researches, the role of the teacher in the implementation of a modern system of inclusive education is significant; it is the educator who is called to provide a holistic system of support for children with special educational needs, to organize educational space for those children emphasizing the opportunities.

The term "inclusion" comes from the French "inclusive", which means "includes". This term has become widely used to describe the process of joint learning of children with special educational needs in secondary and preschool education. And the direction of didactics that develops this problem, became known as inclusive, i.e. one that involves SEN children in the society. The inclusion ideas development is based on the foundation of special, correctional psychology and pedagogy and a personality-oriented approach in the education.

Inclusive education is, in reality, personality-oriented. According to T.A. Voronov inclusive education should be organized in such a way as to "meet the special needs of each child" [1, p.203]. Among the needs that inclusive education is aimed to meet is not only the development of intellectual abilities of children with special educational needs, but also their social, spiritual, creative and emotional development. That is why in this case the educator should be not so much as a source of information, but as an assistant in the development of the personality to be learned and educated.

Referring to the legal framework, inclusive education is compulsory at the legislative level. However, in each case, inclusive education is organized at the request of parents and based on the interests and capabilities of the child, as well as using an individually adapted educational program.

The main purpose of inclusive education is to create comfortable conditions for socialization of children with special educational needs. One of the conditions for the successful implementation of inclusive education is the professional readiness and teachers' readiness to work with special educational needs children.

The professional readiness of an educator for inclusion is determined by the level of his/her knowledge and competencies, which allows for effective pedagogical activity. The readiness of teachers to work in the field of educational inclusion is the purpose and result of teachers' training and retraining who meet modern demands of society.

Ye.G. Samartseva considers the teacher's professional readiness for inclusive education as a fundamental condition for his/her success, it largely depends on the teacher's consciousness attitudes and direction. Though L.Yu. Minyeva proposes the concept of "inclusive readiness" as a complex concept based on a set of competencies and determines the effectiveness of pedagogical activities [6, 235].

It is also advisable to refer to the researches of the scientist I.M. Khazifulina, who operates with not "inclusive readiness", but with the concept "inclusive competence" as an important part of the professional competence of a teacher. According to the author, in their pedagogical activity specialists face different individual educational needs of children every day.

Significant attention to this issue was paid by S.V. Alekhina, who considers the readiness for inclusion as a two-component structure, which includes professional and psychological readiness, the main component of which is motivational readiness. To professional readiness the author attributes informational, technological, corrective and

variable readiness. The basis of psychological readiness is emotional acceptance, satisfaction with their activities and the desire to work with disabled children.

Most researchers point out that inclusive readiness (readiness for professional activity in the conditions of inclusion) is a dynamic structure that requires the teacher to constantly improve and find new ways to solve pedagogical problems.

Willingness to work in this area is determined not only and not so much by theoretical training, but primarily by motivational and psychological readiness to work with "special children".

The analysis of pedagogical literature and dissertation research allowed us to build a readiness structure of the future teacher to work with children with special educational needs. This structure includes motivational, cognitive, operational, informational, reflexive and evaluative components (Fig. 1).

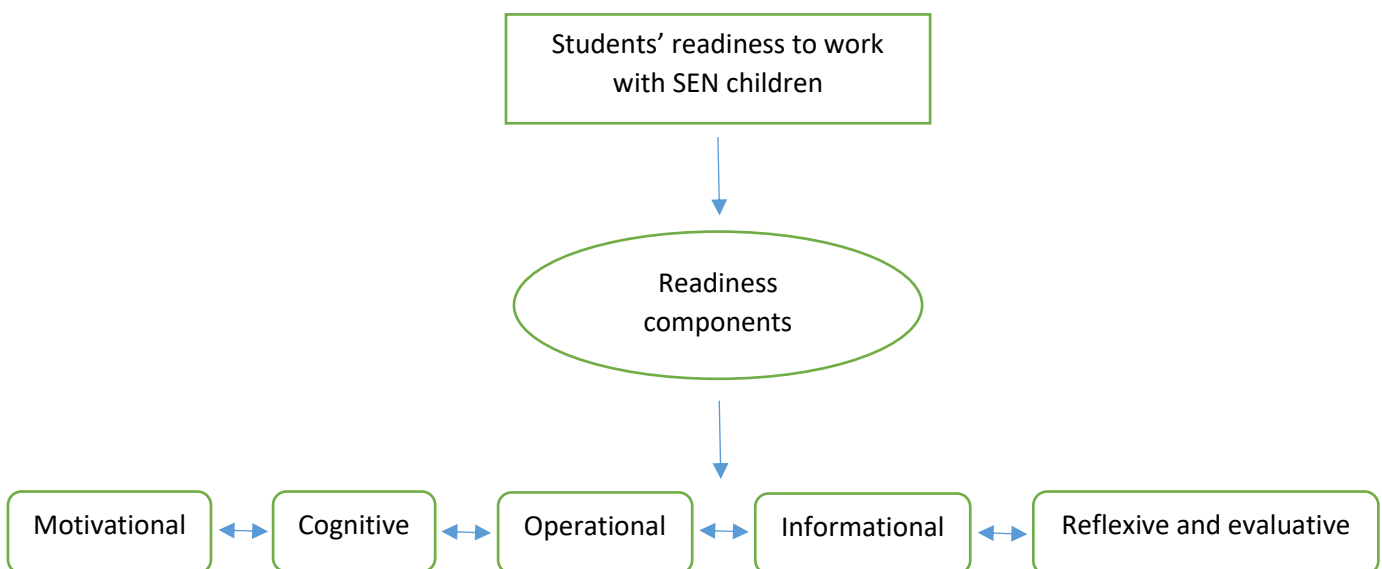


Fig. 1. Structure of readiness of the future teacher to work with children with special educational needs

The motivational component is characterized by the level of motives expression aimed at quality acquisition of knowledge, skills, and provides a conscious need to introduce modern educational technologies in the educational process, understanding the importance of continuous self-education and self-improvement for successful teaching activity, initiative, interest, educator's desire to participate in scientific conferences, seminars, publish the results

of research work while studying at a higher education institution on the problems of inclusive education.

As for the cognitive component, it implies the presence of theoretical and practical knowledge on the following issues, including the content of the concepts of "educational technology", " disabled children", "children with special educational needs", the principles of work in organizing educational environment for special children, features of the organization of classes in preschool institutions during the internship, in particular, the style of educational and cognitive activities and the learning specifics, etc.

The next component is the operational component, which includes the ability to find information on the organization of the educational process for children with special educational needs and its effectiveness.

The information component is determined by the ability to use different means of involving children in different activities, mastering the organizational techniques by all participants involved in the educational process, including parents, teachers, speech pathologists, speech therapists, etc.

And the last not less important component of students' readiness is the reflexive and evaluative component, which provides self-assessment, self-analysis of the results of fulfilled work during various types of practices, during classes, when communicating with parents of "special children", considering all disadvantages and mistakes during further professional activity.

Undoubtedly, all components of the pedagogical students' readiness to work with children with special educational needs are interconnected. However, if we determine their priority in such work, depending on the level of their importance and the contribution proportionality to the willingness to work with children with special educational needs, scientists, in particular V.A. Leshchynskyi mainstream the motivational component of readiness, as the successful and predictable result depends on the desire of teachers and their motivation [4, p.137].

Motivational and valuable component of teachers' personal readiness determined the presence of interest in inclusive activities and education needs, as well as the desire for self-development and self-improvement of tolerant behavior, finding new methods and interacting with children with special educational needs.

Motivational readiness shows the understanding the philosophy of the inclusion education, its main development tendencies and values for children with special educational

needs; intention to study the psychophysical peculiarities of such children's development; motivation to fulfill some task and reaching the success in the joint training organization and educating normal and disabled pupils; прагнення до створення сприятливого клімату в дитячому колективі; ambition to improve their own experience, open interaction with the staff.

That's why, we consider the motivational component on student's readiness of the pedagogical profile to work with children with special educational needs is the most important, because the knowledge, skills and abilities can be obtained as during the study in the educational institution, so during undergoing the practical training and when the future educators are self-educating [9]. And only in case when there is an enormous motivation and desire to cooperate with the educational process participants and special children that are fully members of our society. We differentiated different levels of motivational readiness of the student to work with SEN children. We will study in details each of them.

High component of the motivational readiness is characterized by the children's attitude as to the highest value and the childhood essence understanding as socio-cultural phenomenon. The new pattern of inclusive practice improvement, ability to plan the individual course of each child development in the inclusive conditions is available. Also, the high level of ability development to analyze his/her opportunities in the professional sphere is typical for it; the facility to create the development concept both for group of children in general and for separate child. The middle level of students' readiness is described by the future professional activity motives, known as the obliged motives; rely on the middle aged features, leveling the individual differentiation. The situational activity during the prediction of an individual course of children's development, attempts to apply the traditional education and breeding to the conditions of inclusive training. Concerning the evaluation of the professional patterns, they are identified as formal subject knowledge. The last stage of motivational readiness is low. It is characterized by the situational motivation, gap of the understanding the special professional activity in the inclusive education, inefficiency to manage the educational process, unwillingness to cooperate with the educational process participants.

An equally important component of the students' readiness to work with children with special educational needs is the experience gained during the period of study at a higher education institution. As a result of mastering the disciplines according to the curriculum, future teachers should:

- be able to: determine the pedagogical conditions for the organization of children's communication, using various tools to support them; to help them communicate freely, if necessary to adjust their interaction;

- know: theoretical foundations and methods of planning children's communication; originality, content and ways of children's communication; methods of flexible communication between them, ways to resolve conflicts; theoretical foundations of managing the children's communication.

It should also be noted that in the process of teaching students used both traditional (lectures, discussions, explanations, situational tasks) and productive technologies (portfolio, project methods, health technologies, technologies for the development of critical thinking, effective in solving professional problems of future professionals in the preschool education.

On the basis of Chernivtsi National University, we conducted a study to identify the level of motivational readiness for inclusive activities among students, future teachers of preschool education. The study involved students of the second master's level of education: experimental group (EG) was 62 persons and control group (CG) was 68 persons.

The obtained data allowed making a conclusion about the structure of professional activity motivation of future teachers in the preschool education institutions. Thus, the optimal motivational complex where general motivation was found among 13.58% of EG students and 10.71% of CG. These students expect self-realization in this very activity. The majority of students are dominated by external positive motivation (EG - 48.77%; CG - 58.33%). This is the motivation of external incentive i.e. mainly career, social significance and respect, stable earnings. The most negative motivational complex was found among: EG - 37.65%; CG - 30.95%. These are students whose motivational complex is based on the basis of avoiding possible negative consequences. That is, these are students who have chosen pedagogical activity under the pressure of external circumstances (social environment, parents, relatives), and the chosen activity does not constitute for them a need and internal interest and desire to follow it. Such students quite often after graduating from higher institution will choose another specialty or work outside the profession.

Also, if we talk about the peculiarities of these students readiness to work with preschool children in the inclusion context, it should be noted that very few students are familiar with the experience of organizing inclusive education. That is, they have theoretical knowledge; however, they do not know how to implement it in practice. Most students believe that the implementation of inclusive education requires narrow specialists such as correctional



teachers, psychologists, speech pathologists, health workers, and in their opinion the teachers' salaries are too low, and that the greatest difficulty in organizing the educational process will be children who have intellectual disability. Half of the students do not consider themselves ready to work with inclusion children, either motivationally or psychologically. Another reason for unwillingness to work with such children in 20% of respondents is the lack of sufficient knowledge. About 30% are strongly not ready for this activity. Also important is the fact that most students have a negative attitude towards the education of special educational needs children with ordinary children who have no disabilities.

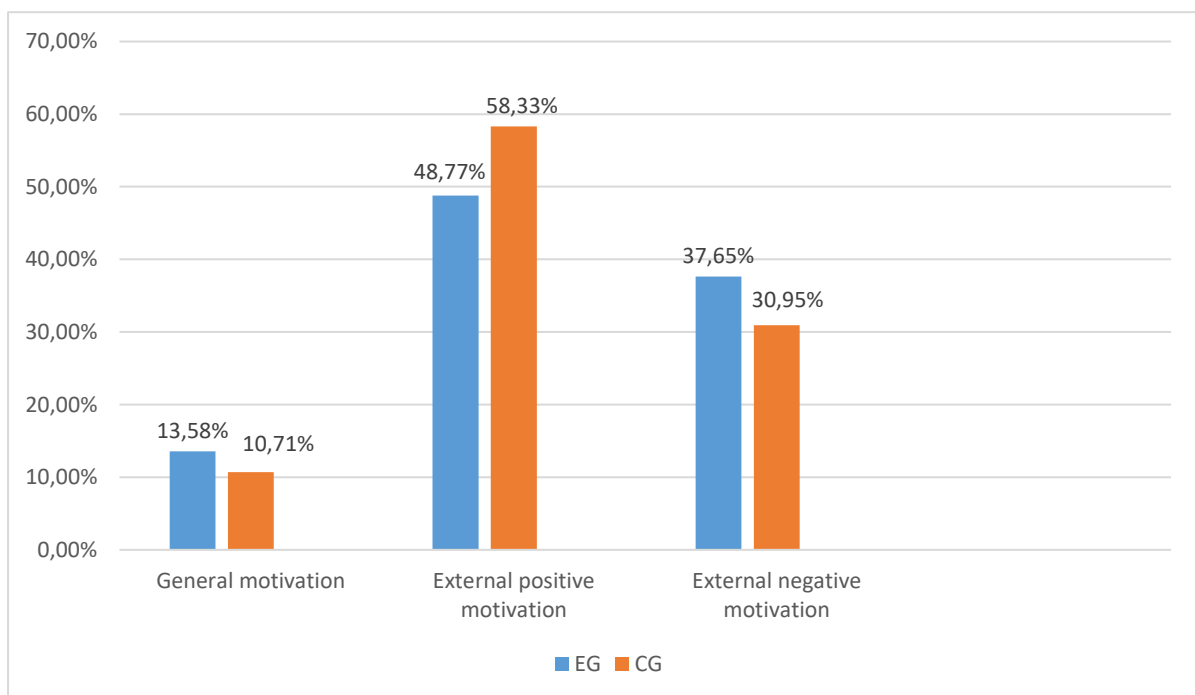


Fig.2. Motivational readiness of the pedagogical profile students to work with special educational needs children

However, the good fact is that the majority of respondents still respond positively to the inclusion role in preschool education. At the same time, fully or partially admit that inclusive education should be a form of education for SEN children, though in practice they claim that not all teachers are motivated to implement the ideas of inclusion in their pedagogical practice.

It should be noted that the readiness of pedagogical students to work with children with special educational needs achieves the greatest effectiveness if to stimulate students' cognitive interest, to develop their creative, personal and professional qualities, to form professional

competencies of future teachers, thus ensuring the formation of students' knowledge and ideas necessary to work with children with special educational needs, ingrain in students an awareness of the importance, understanding the problem and complexity of working with such children, but most importantly to form in them a strong motivation and an irresistible desire to work with special children.

### **Conclusions**

Thus, the readiness of the pedagogical profile students to work in the system of inclusive education is determined not only and not so much by theoretical training, but primarily by motivational and psychological readiness to work with "special children". That is why it is important in the process of studying in higher education institutions to form an important criterion of professional maturity, which should be considered in the motivational readiness and significance of inclusion work and conditions. It is necessary in the learning process to form a motivational and valuable component that involves the formation of a new value i.e. the transition from a neutral attitude to the child to indirect and valuable attitude to it, the ability to analyze their professional activities, create new examples of inclusive practice, search the most comfortable and painless ways to adapt children with special educational needs for the society, academic mobility of students within the network interaction between universities both within the country and abroad, to obtain experience and implement and adapt the world leading ideas of inclusion in the national practice.

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