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Psycho-Pedagogical Conditions for Preparing Future Teachers for Their Interaction with Students' Parents in Inclusive Practice in Primary Schools

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Abstract: *The concept of the New Ukrainian School is aimed at organizing effective inclusive education for students, in particular younger students with special educational needs, and their cooperation with healthy peers. The paper aims to theoretically justify and experimentally verify psycho-pedagogical conditions for teaching future primary school teachers how to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice. The experimental group (EG) involved 203 respondents and the control group (CG) 215 respondents, as well as 12 university teachers, 36 primary school teachers and 115 students' parents of students with/without special educational needs. The psycho-pedagogical conditions are determined as follows: developing future primary school teachers' motivational, values-based and responsible attitude to acquiring knowledge, abilities and skills needed for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice; using the opportunities of an educational environment in higher education institutions to develop future primary school teachers' certain competencies by improving and integrating the content of professional and specialized academic courses, applying innovative and traditional technologies of teaching and learning; focusing academic training and teaching placement towards improving the experience of future primary school teachers in interacting with students' parents in inclusive practice). The paper employs some author's methodologies (adapted to Raven's (1991) socio-pedagogical methodologies): surveys, interviews, student questionnaires, tests, assignments. The ratio between the levels of future primary school teachers' readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive learning is the following: the experimental group – a high level 45.32%, an average level 41.87%, a low level 12.81%; the control group a high level 16.74%, an average level 36.75%, a low level 41.51%. The obtained results indicate some dynamic positive changes in the levels of EG respondents' readiness under the influence of the proposed psycho-pedagogical conditions.*

Keywords: *future teacher; primary school students; responsible attitude; educational environment; innovative technologies.*

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Introduction

The global criterion for a highly developed society today is the level of accessibility and quality of multidisciplinary services to individuals with special needs. Ukraine's integration in the European area and adherence to global living standards implies a fundamental revision to the national system of education for individuals with special needs.

However, it is essential to comprehend the specifics of the all-round development of individuals with special needs, follow democracy and social justice and take into account moral principles and traditional values of Ukrainian society, aimed at strengthening family as a centre of the state, to improve the system of national education by introducing inclusive education.

The concept of the New Ukrainian School (2017) is aimed at organizing effective inclusive education for students, in particular younger students with special educational needs, and their cooperation with healthy peers. The core of the concept is the activities of educational institutions based on partnerships relationships and constructive interaction between school administration, teachers, students and their students' parents.

These aspects highlight the problem of professional training of highly qualified specialists, in particular primary school teachers, aimed at realizing the goals, content, objectives and technologies of inclusive education in the context of partnership interaction between its participants in general secondary schools.

Today's trends in professional training of future primary school teachers have been analyzed by N. Bibik (2010), O. Bida, V. Honcharuk, & V. Honcharuk (2016), I. Demchenko (2016), L. Koval (2009), O. Komar (2010), L. Krasiuk (2008). They all point to the need to update theoretical and practical training of future primary school teachers under the innovative requirements of education reforms. Such scholars as O. Alieko (2016), N. Andrushchenko (2017), N. Dudnyk (2016), O. Hnoievska (2016), A. Kolyshkina (2014) and L. Zinchenko (2013) emphasize the exceptional role of interaction with students' parents in creating effective learning conditions in primary school.

Teacher training in the context of inclusive education is one of the most pressing problems today (Chopik, 2014; Fedorenko, 2015; Fert, 2014; Kuzava, 2010; Malik, 2015; Perkhun, 2017; Sophii, 2017; Volkova, 2017). However, the problem of preparing future primary school teachers for their interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice has not been properly studied yet.

The paper aims to theoretically justify and experimentally verify psycho-pedagogical conditions for teaching future primary school teachers how to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice.

Material and methods

A theoretical analysis of some studies on the preparation of future primary school teachers to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice has made it possible to determine the following components of their readiness for this interaction: motivation and values, cognition and activities. It is also vital to reformulate and distribute specific (professional) competencies future primary school teachers need to interact with students' parents in the context of inclusive practice according to the components of their readiness for such an activity and identify the relevant criteria.

The motivation and values component consists of certain criteria (stimulation, tolerance, initiative) and their indicators (awareness, attitude, needs, aspirations, orientation, recognition, interests). The criteria of the cognition component are determined by both basic and special knowledge, whose indicators cover respective levels of these two types of knowledge. The activities component includes communicative-and-organizational, prognostic-and-corrective, instructional-and-educational, health-promotive and evaluative criteria with such indicators as skills, quality, speed and number.

The readiness of future primary school teachers for their interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice can be at high, average and low levels.

The experiment was conducted at Volodymyr Vynnychenko Central Ukrainian State Pedagogical University, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, Khmelnytskyi National University, Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi Vinnytsia State Pedagogical University and Lesia Ukrainka Eastern European National University. The experimental group (EG) involved 203 respondents and the control group (CG) – 215 respondents, as well as 12 university teachers, 36 primary school teachers and 115 students' parents of students with/without special educational needs.

Some author's methodologies (adapted to Raven's (1991) socio-pedagogical methodologies) were employed to determine the levels of future primary school teachers' readiness for their interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice: surveys, interviews, student questionnaires – according to the motivation and values component; tests – according to the

cognition component; assignments (for classroom activities and industrial practice) – according to the activities component.

The author's programme of the formative experiment includes the following objectives: to correct the syllabus of the course on fundamentals of inclusive education / pedagogy; to use active forms and methods of teaching and learning (traditional and interactive lectures, practical classes, conversations, discussions, debates, motivational workshops, educational work, club activities, volunteering); to improve teaching aids in accordance with the structure of the course on fundamentals of inclusive education / pedagogy (extracts and full texts of lectures; materials for didactic case studies; plans for seminars, practical classes and laboratory work; formative and summative assessment, exam questions and assessment criteria; tasks for independent work, individual research tasks, tasks for teaching placement); to elaborate guidelines for university teachers on the methods of formulating educational tasks, working on case studies, planning and conducting organizational forms of cooperation with students, as well as the methods of reflection while implementing the model of preparing future primary school teachers for their interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice.

The psycho-pedagogical conditions for preparing future primary school teachers for their interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice were justified. They were realized during the formative experiment.

Pedagogical condition 1 (developing future primary school teachers' motivational, values-based and responsible attitude to acquiring knowledge, abilities and skills needed for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice) was implemented during the preparatory stage and aimed to prepare future primary school teachers for their interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice based on the motivation and values component. The implementation of this condition implies cultivating empathy and a humane attitude in them, as well teaching them to understand and accept students with/without special educational needs and their parents and identify the need to interact with students' parents. The following forms, methods, techniques and means of such preparation were applied: motivational workshops ("The Role of Interaction with Students' Parents in Inclusive Practice"); charity actions; educational projects (recording a video on the topic of interacting with students' parents in inclusive practice"); volunteering (assisting teachers in interacting with parents of students' with/without special educational needs in inclusive practice).

Pedagogical condition 2 (using the opportunities of an educational environment in higher education institutions to develop future primary school teachers' certain competencies by improving and integrating the

content of professional and specialized academic courses, applying innovative and traditional technologies of teaching and learning in the context of training future primary school teachers for their interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice) implied influencing the development of future primary school teachers' readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice through the cognitive component during the theoretical stage of the formative experiment.

This pedagogical condition is realized through improving the content of professional courses (Pedagogy; Methods of Educational Work; Pedagogical Technologies in Primary School; Fundamentals of Pedagogical Skills) and optional courses (Fundamentals of Inclusive Education / Pedagogy; Inclusive Education in Primary School). Besides, it involved using the technologies of interactive, contextual and peer learning, as well as the following forms and methods of teaching and learning: traditional and interactive lectures, seminars; cognitive training, webinars and coaches (by teaching, we learn); educational projects (recording a video on the topic of effective forms, methods, techniques and means of interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice); theoretical competitions, quizzes and olympiads (according to the content of academic courses); creative and interactive teaching and learning methods (case studies; "public hearings"; "take a stand"; "judge for yourself"; "1 – 2 – 4 – all together"; "carousel"; "clusters"; "semantic maps").

Pedagogical condition 3 (focusing academic training and teaching placement towards improving the experience of future primary school teachers in interacting with students' parents in inclusive practice) was implemented during the practical stage and aimed to develop future primary school teachers' readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice based on the activities component. Its realization covers the following areas: theoretical area – improving the content of teaching placement in the context of strengthening the interaction with students' parents in inclusive parents; practical area – ensuring the completion of teaching placements by future primary school teachers in general secondary schools that is focused on the interaction with students' parents in inclusive parents; methodical area – summarizing the results of teaching placements using portfolios and case studies; preparing presentations (photo presentations), video reports; organizing webinars; creating specific educational websites and online resources (Viber); elaborating guidelines for interacting with students' parents in inclusive practice. After completing teaching placement, future primary school teachers needed to prepare methodical recommendations, namely a report and presentation materials

(Interacting with Students' Parents in Inclusive Practice through Pedagogy of Partnership: Based on Practical Experience).

Results

The analysis of the ascertaining experiment shows that future primary school teachers are at a low level of readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice. It points out to certain inefficiency of their training for developing the components under study in higher education institutions.

At the same time, the monitoring of future primary school teachers' readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice (the ascertaining experiment) shows that they do not realize the need and importance to strengthen their interaction with parents of students with/without special educational needs in inclusive practice. Besides, they do not show any interest in interacting with students' parents in inclusive learning and cannot choose effective forms, methods, techniques and means of such interaction.

It must be noted that future primary school teachers are aware that their readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice depends on professional competency of university teachers who prepare future specialists for such professional activities, innovative technologies of teaching and learning, goals of teaching placement, as well as appropriate academic methodological support.

The results of the ascertaining experiment indicate the need to update their professional training.

The results of the formative experiment prove that future primary school teachers in CG are at an average level of readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice, whereas future primary school teachers in EG – at a high level.

The ratio between the levels of future primary school teachers' readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive learning is the following: the experimental group – a high level – 45.32%, an average level – 41.87%, a low level – 12.81%; the control group – a high level – 16.74%, an average level – 36.75%, a low level – 41.51%.

Due to experimental work in CG, the number of future primary school teachers with a high level of readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice has increased by 3.25% compared to that at the ascertaining stage; the number of future primary school teachers with an average level – by 1.87%. It must be noted that the number of future

primary school teachers with a low level of readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice has decreased by 5.12%. In EG, the number of future primary school teachers with a high level of readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice has increased by 32.02%; the number of future primary school teachers with an average level – by 7.39%. The number of future primary school teachers with a low level of readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice has decreased by 39.41%. Based on the results of experimental work, the difference in high levels of CG and EG respondents' readiness is equal to 28.58%; the difference in average levels – to 5.12%; the difference in average levels – 33.70%.

The dynamics of levels of future primary school teachers' readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The dynamics of levels of future primary school teachers' readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice (based on the results obtained from ascertaining and formative experiments)

Levels	Ascertaining experiment	Formative experiment	Growth	Ascertaining experiment	Formative experiment	Growth
	CG (215 respondents)			EG (203 respondents)		
High	29 (13.49 %)	36 (16.74 %)	3.25	27 (13.30 %)	92 (45.32 %)	32.02
Average	75 (34.88 %)	79 (36.75 %)	1.87	70 (34.48 %)	85 (41.87 %)	7.39
Low	111 (51.63 %)	100 (46.51 %)	-5.12	106 (52.22 %)	26 (12.81 %)	-39.41

The following methods of mathematical statistics were used to process empirical data: Pearson's chi-squared test, Student's t-test and Fisher's F-test.

The obtained results indicate that CG and EG respondents were approximately at the same level of readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice before the experiment; however, EG respondents showed higher results after the experiment. It proves that the level of future primary school teachers' readiness to interact with students' parents can increase significantly due to a purposeful process of developing such quality.

Discussion

Today's approaches to professional training of future primary school teachers prove the need to improve their theoretical and practical training under the areas of national and global reforms in education. It has made it possible to identify certain research trends in the elaboration of this particular scientific problem which can be divided in the following groups: *the interaction between subjects* (professional training for pedagogical interaction with students' parents provided by higher education institutions (Buzduhan, 2013), student behaviour during group interaction (Liakisheva, 2015), pedagogical interaction in primary school (Matviienko, 2010), some ways of developing pedagogical culture in younger students' parents in the context of the interaction between family and school (Tsurkan, 2018), some ways of developing culture of interpersonal interaction in future primary school teachers (Yastrub, 2016), the interaction between social and family education (Alieko, 2016), the interaction between preschool and family (Andrushchenko, 2017; Dudnyk, 2016), the interaction between family, school and public (Zinchenko, 2013), the interaction between school and family (Kolyshkina, 2014)); *working with students' parents* (socially oriented training of future primary school teachers for working with students' parents (Flegontova, 2008), specific training of future primary school teachers for working with students' parents in higher education institutions (Shanskova, 2000)); *inclusion* (pedagogical principles of activities of public organizations in the field of inclusive education policy in Ukraine and Canada (Firth, 2014), some ways of developing a child's personality in the system of inclusive education in France (Perkhun, 2017), training future education managers for professional activities in inclusive practice (Malik, 2015), organizational and psycho-pedagogical conditions of integrated support for students with special educational needs in inclusive practice (Sophii, 2017), theoretical and methodological principles of inclusive ducation of pre-schoolers in need of psychophysical development correction (Kuzava, 2010)); *inclusive learning* (cultivating relationships between children with musculoskeletal disorders and healthy peers in inclusive practice (Chopik, 2014), pedagogical support of younger students with hearing problems (Fedorenko, 2015); *training future primary school teachers for working in inclusive practice* (developing correction competency in future primary school teachers who work in educational institutions with integrated inclusive learning (Hnoievska, 2016), developing future primary school teachers' readiness to evaluate educational attainment in inclusive practice (Volkova, 2017), theoretical and methodological principles of training future primary school teachers for professional

activities in inclusive practice (Demchenko, 2016). Besides, the researchers point to specific training of future teachers in organizing and delivering inclusive teaching. However, they do not purposely address this very problem.

Foreign studies are mostly focused on the problem of organizing inclusive learning or psycho-pedagogical conditions for the interaction between students with special educational needs and their teachers (Efthymiou & Kington, 2017; Masud, Sharma & Deppeler, 2012; Mukhopadhyay, Nenty & Okechukwu, 2012; Rouse, 2008). Still, this particular problem can be considered differently due to various ethnic and mental factors, legal support and socio-economic status of countries all over the world. Given the peculiar nature of inclusive education in every country, the problem of training future primary school teachers for inclusive education and interaction with students' parents has not been properly studied yet.

Ukrainian and foreign researchers view teacher training as the main condition for organizing inclusive learning in primary school, although they do not consider this problem in detail. It must be noted that such an aspect as the interaction between primary school teachers with students' parents in inclusive practice has been covered in some studies. Nevertheless, the problem of training future primary school teachers for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive learning (parents of students with /without special educational needs) has not been holistically and systemically studied yet.

This research interprets the interaction with students' parents as targeted and constructive cooperation between primary school teachers and students' parents which is aimed at coordinating their actions to achieve successful educational outcomes.

The term "inclusive learning" is regarded as a system of educational services guaranteed by the state and implemented by primary school teachers based on the principles of humanity and tolerance, taking into account their psychophysical characteristics with a view to their unlimited, productive involvement and inclusion in the educational process.

Professional training of future primary school teachers for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice is understood as the process of obtaining generic and specific (professional) competencies necessary for ensuring constructive communication with parents of students with/without special educational needs based on the principles of pedagogy of partnership with the aim of achieving successful educational outcomes following the principles of humanity and tolerance and taking into their

psychophysical characteristics with a view to their unlimited, productive involvement and inclusion in the educational process.

The scientific value of the obtained results lies in the following:

– *for the first time,* relevant psycho-pedagogical conditions for training future primary school teachers for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice (developing future primary school teachers' motivational, values-based and responsible attitude to acquiring knowledge, abilities and skills needed for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice; using the opportunities of an educational environment in higher education institutions to develop future primary school teachers' certain competencies by improving and integrating the content of professional and specialized academic courses, applying innovative and traditional technologies of teaching and learning; focusing academic training and teaching placement towards improving the experience of future primary school teachers in interacting with students' parents in inclusive practice) have been justified; the model of professional training for future primary school teachers for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice has been developed; the components, criteria, indicators and levels of readiness for such professional activities have been determined;

– such concepts as "the interaction with students' parents", "inclusive learning" and "professional training of future primary school teachers for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice" have been *specified*;

– the forms and methods of training future primary school teachers for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice have been *improved*;

– the content of theoretical and practical training of future primary school teachers for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice has *been generalized and further developed*.

The practical value of the obtained results consists of developing and implementing the methods for identifying levels of future primary school teachers' readiness for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice in the educational process of higher education institutions, improving the content of the course on fundamentals of inclusive education/pedagogy and teaching aids under the structure of the course (extracts and full texts of lectures; materials for didactic case studies; plans for seminars, practical classes and laboratory work; formative and summative assessment, exam questions and assessment criteria; tasks for independent work, individual research tasks; tasks for teaching placement, as well as methodological guidelines for university teachers on the methods of

formulating educational tasks.

The obtained results can be used by university teachers in professional training of future primary school teachers, in the elaboration of typical training programmes, manuals, textbooks, as well as in the system of postgraduate teacher training courses. The main findings and results can serve as the basis for further research on the pedagogy of higher education.

Conclusions

The paper analyzes the coverage of the problem under study in scientific literature and educational practice. It shows that Ukrainian and foreign researchers have laid the methodological basis and determined general theoretical principles of training primary school teachers for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice. The analysis of today's approaches to training future primary school teachers proves that they are mainly focused on revealing the characteristics of the interaction between primary school teachers and students' parents in inclusive practice; the role of the teacher who works with students with special educational needs and the requirements for him or her; the behaviour of parents of students with special educational needs. Most researchers agree on the fact that future primary school teachers should be specifically trained in various aspects of inclusive practice. However, the problem of training future primary school teachers for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice has not been properly studied yet.

Besides, the paper monitors the readiness of future primary school teachers for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice based on the analysis of current curricula, syllabi, textbooks and teaching aids used to train future primary school teachers for such interaction. It finds that the content of psycho-pedagogical and professional courses refers to the interaction with parents of students with special educational needs. Still, there is no comprehensive coverage of fundamental training for such interaction, and academic methodological support is generally targeted at teachers and parents of pupils with special educational needs. At the same time, professional training of future primary school teachers for the interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice can be complicated by the fact that they cannot always interact with parents of students with/without special educational needs during teaching placement (students' parents do not always attend educational institutions where their children study). Thus, the urgent and complex problems of developing future primary school teachers' readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive

practice have been solved slowly, without the necessary organizational and methodological support, which affects the quality of professional training for future primary school teachers.

The ascertaining experiment has confirmed the results of the monitoring. It shows that future primary school teachers are mostly at a low level of readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice. It points out to certain inefficiency of their training for developing the components under study in higher education institutions.

The results of the formative experiment prove the effectiveness of the identified psycho-pedagogical conditions: EG respondents are at higher levels of such readiness compared to CG: the number of future primary school teachers with a high level of readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice has increased by 32.02%; the number of future primary school teachers with an average level – by 7.39%; the number of future primary school teachers with a low level of readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice has decreased by 39.41%. In CG, the number of future primary school teachers with a high level of readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice has increased by 3.25% compared to that at the ascertaining stage; the number of future primary school teachers with an average level – by 1.87%; the number of future primary school teachers with a low level of readiness to interact with students' parents in inclusive practice has decreased by 5.12%. The obtained results indicate some dynamic positive changes in the levels of EG respondents' readiness under the influence of the proposed psycho-pedagogical conditions.

Acknowledgement

Such a large number of authors is due to the large number of the research sample (the experimental group (EG) involved 203 respondents and the control group (CG) - 215 respondents, as well as 12 university teachers, 36 primary school teachers and 115 students' parents of students with/without special educational needs) and the broad geography of the research. The experiment was conducted at Volodymyr Vynnychenko Central Ukrainian State Pedagogical University, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, Khmelnytskyi National University, Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi Vinnytsia State Pedagogical University and Lesia Ukrainka Eastern European National University). The research involved the cooperation of 12 authors with 6 universities and 36 primary school teachers and 115 parents of pupils with / without special educational needs.

The authors conducted significant methodological work. In this regard, each of the authors worked on their technical task. In particular, the author's programme of the formative experiment includes the following objectives: to correct the syllabus of the course on fundamentals of inclusive education / pedagogy; to use active forms and methods of teaching and learning (traditional and interactive lectures, practical classes, conversations, discussions, debates, motivational workshops, educational work, club activities, volunteering); to improve teaching aids in accordance with the structure of the course on fundamentals of inclusive education / pedagogy (extracts and full texts of lectures; materials for didactic case studies; plans for seminars, practical classes and laboratory work; formative and summative assessment, exam questions and assessment criteria; tasks for independent work, individual research tasks, tasks for teaching placement); to elaborate guidelines for university teachers on the methods of formulating educational tasks, working on case studies, planning and conducting organizational forms of cooperation with students, as well as the methods of reflection while implementing the model of preparing future primary school teachers for their interaction with students' parents in inclusive practice.

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