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## FORMING POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS IN SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS – EDUCATION MODEL AND OPPORTUNITIES

**Abstract:** The article presents research of attitudes towards people from different ethnic backgrounds, formed in social work students in the context of an anti-discrimination education model, designed and used in University of Ruse, Bulgaria. The purpose of the research is to establish the impact of the model for forming positive attitudes in the social work students towards people from different ethnic backgrounds. Inclusion in equal, tolerant and diversity-valued interactions stimulates the process of positivizing attitudes and transformation of stereotypes and prejudices into anti-discrimination, cognitive and behavioral aspects. The results of the statistical analysis of empirical data confirm the accepted purpose. They reveal the role and importance of the model for creating an interactive and intercultural educational environment which forms positive attitudes towards the target group and stimulates students to: integrate values, knowledge, skills with practical experience and information about different ethnic groups; participate consciously and motivated in equal and tolerant interactions in different interpersonal systems with a focus on forming and developing sensitivity to cultural differences and promoting the value of diversity; enhance their cultural competences and their responsibility for achieving social justice and non-discrimination; work actively for their personality and professional formation and development and for the formation and development of a multicultural academic community and society.

**Key words:** people from different ethnic backgrounds; education model; positive attitudes; non-discrimination; diversity; cultural competence.

**Language:** English

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**Classifiers:** Sociological research.

### Introduction

In the contemporary conditions, education in and the profession of social work are called upon to carry out tasks for the formation and implementation of policies and programs, and the design and functioning of educational environment for quality education with certain characteristics. The leading aspects include [22]: creating conditions for the personality, cognitive, professional and social development of the students; continuous learning in partnership with experts, providers and users of social services, encouraging motivation for educational and professional development and realization; having into account the impact of factors (social, political, economic, demographic and cultural context) forming

social work and related policies and practices at national, regional and global level, etc. Among these aspects with the actuality and its significance, the positions of non-discrimination of students and the active inclusion in the social work education of the conception of diversity with its different dimensions are highlighted.

### Social and educational context

The communities of people from different ethnic backgrounds (PDEB) are in a situation of high risk of poverty, unemployment, alienation from the labor market, discrimination and social exclusion. Eurostat surveys present information for the highest relative share of citizens with perceptions and attitudes about

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widespread discrimination against these groups in society. For the period 2012-2015, it is between 56% and 64% at EU Member State level for PDEB and varies from 40% to 47% at national level (Bulgaria) [31; 32].

The presented quantitative information reveals a negative trend in general for the European Community and on national level. The characteristic dynamics of citizens' perceptions and attitudes towards spreading discrimination on the considered signs requires analysis and active action in certain fields. The basis for these are acts and initiatives of world organizations and directives, policies and strategic documents of the EU in the field of human rights and of people from vulnerable and discriminated groups. In them are integrated [7; 9; 16; 18; 30; 33; 34]:

a. the ideas and principles of equality, tolerance, diversity and non-discrimination; promoting the preservation and development of the culture and identity of the various groups and their representatives and guaranteeing certain freedoms;

b. realization of research, developing policies and implementing practices in the areas under consideration with a focus on forming an inclusive society in which PDEB can develop together with everyone;

c. ensuring the environment and conditions in a diversity society for harmonious interaction between people and groups with different and dynamic cultural identities and promoting their striving to live together;

d. interpreting the responsibility and participation of all citizens in life and the initiatives of society of diversity as an important factor for cohesion, cultural pluralism and the expression of tolerance, social justice and democracy.

In the presented context, the importance of the antidiscrimination perspective in the socio-political plan and for the social work in professional and educational aspect is outlined. In accordance with the orientation of modern university social work education to promote cognitive development, research, social activity and continuous learning of students the need to integrate the anti-discrimination perspective in the theoretical and practical training on the curriculum and extracurricular activities of the students is motivated. The position of the author is implemented through a constructed and used anti-discrimination social work education model (ADSWEM). In the conceptual and technological aspect, the model is characterized by creating conditions for:

a. integration of values, knowledge, skills and experience in the process of theoretical and practical training with anti-discrimination orientation in the curricular activities and in the extracurricular activities;

b. formation of positive non-discriminatory attitudes towards PDEB (including other intersecting

signs) and prevention of and overcoming prejudices and discrimination towards them;

c. acceptance and awareness of the importance of diversity in client communities and society, protection of human rights, principles of equality, tolerance and non-discrimination;

d. positive impact on professional formation and identity, realization and development as competent specialists in general and in anti-discrimination aspect; improving the quality and effectiveness of social work training.

In social work education in Bulgaria there is almost no debate and we are not informed of any research results published until 2018 about positive attitudes toward PDEB in social work students in the context of a model of anti-discrimination training in social work [26]. The current situation focused research attention in this important direction. In this context, the author's position is related to the thesis of the ADSWEM's impact and of the interactions realized in its conditions in different interpersonal systems and forms of training. It is supported by the results of a number of researches, which focus on certain directions [1; 3; 4; 5; 6; 10; 13; 19; 20; 21; 23; 25; 35]:

a. presentation in an objective, positive, non-stereotyping and non-discriminatory way of information and absorption of knowledge about the culture, conditions and way of life, experience of integration and opposition to discrimination of communities of PDEB;

b. rethinking critically their own views and beliefs, positivizing attitudes towards PDEB, overcoming stereotypes and prejudices, and transforming them into tolerant, cultural-sensitive and non-discriminatory behavior;

c. formation of multicultural consciousness and the acceptance of diversity and cultural pluralism as the values of any democratic society protecting human rights and freedoms, the principles of equality, tolerance and non-discrimination;

d. realization of continuous formal and informal multicultural learning through interaction with representatives of different cultures (colleagues, professors, social workers, users of social services, community people, etc.), building a based on the diversity value orientation (building a the diversity-based value orientation), forming and implementing behaviors that are sensitive to cultural differences and value their significance;

e. self-improvement by expanding and developing knowledge about one's own and other cultures; acquiring skills and experience responding to dynamic multicultural situations and understanding them in an anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive aspect in the terms of their own activities and impact and its outcomes for others people;

f. raising awareness of legal and professional mechanisms to prevent and counteract discrimination

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towards vulnerable groups, including minority ethnic groups.

The expected contribution of the constructed ADSWEM for the preparation of social work students is highlighted in the certain directions:

a. creation and functioning of an interactive educational environment with anti-discrimination component, which encourages the aware acceptance in a value and cognitive aspect and applying through responsible behavior the principles of equality, tolerance and non-discrimination;

b. implementation of active intercultural dialogue and partnerships, which value the importance of diversity and are oriented towards overcoming negative attitudes, stereotypes and prejudices towards people from different ethnic backgrounds and cultures;

c. linking the anti-discrimination theoretical and practical perspective in social work with the formation of professional identity, responsibility and ethical behavior and integrating it into the vision for the current educational activity and future realization and a career to promote equality, tolerance, diversity and non-discrimination in communities and society.

### **Anti-discrimination social work education model**

The ADSWEM is a construction with a theoretical-applied character, which performs the function of organizing professional thinking and activity in a systemic and effective way and in accordance with the goals, values and the principles of social work in a general and anti-discriminatory aspect and contributes for the formation of positive attitudes towards PDEB in social work students.

The design of the ADSWEM is characterized by holistic and reflexive approach. The implementation of the model includes: representation of theories, theoretical directions, theoretical-applied models, techniques, methods, approaches, technologies, functions, roles, skills, activities and interactions in the theoretical and practical training conditions; inclusion of an anti-discrimination component and theoretical-applied models of anti-discrimination social work, which takes into account the specificity of the disciplines from the general and the specialized cycle, their arrangement in chronological and methodological sequence and their teaching through the theoretical learning content; planning, designing, creating and using simulated situations and participating in real working conditions in practical training (Figure 1, Figure 2).

### **Structural components of the anti-discrimination social work education model**

*Context and professional, educational and societal needs, generating the need to include an anti-discrimination component in social work education.* The significance and necessity of including an anti-discrimination component in the training of social

work students is determined by the factors: social, political, economic, cultural and demographic contexts; the professional and educational needs of the society in accordance with documents of the national, European and international organizations of social workers and of social work education on the place and role of anti-discrimination social work in the activities of social workers, social work education and training and the implementation of policies and measures to tackle the problems of discrimination in society, the protection and assistance of vulnerable and discriminated groups and their members. Unlike countries with traditions and experience in including an anti-discrimination component in social work education and in the activity of social workers, in Bulgaria its integration in the given areas is not clear and is at an early stage of realization. The presented factors determine the need from constructing an ADSWEM to the formation of positive attitudes towards PDEB in the education and training of social work students. The integration of an anti-discrimination component into education and social work practice in Bulgaria is not clear enough and is at an early stage of realization.

*Curriculum and curriculum activities in specialty Social work (theoretical and practical training).* The curriculum and its structure and content is a basic component of the Bachelor's and Master's degree documentation, which is essential both for the qualitative preparation of students corresponding to professional, educational and public needs, as well as for their successful professional realization. The integration of anti-discriminatory theoretical-applied constructs and models into the syllabi of the disciplines in the basic cycle and in the social work cycle is determined by the following factors: complex impact of the elements of the previous component of the ADSWEM; conceptual justification of the curriculum defining the anti-discrimination component as an important and necessary part of its structure and content and its implementation as an educational product that meets the current professional, educational and social needs; syllabi content that includes an anti-discrimination component in line with the curriculum concept and the theoretical and practical on social work training implemented through them. An important element of the structure of this ADSWEM component is the pedagogical and professional resources of the professors and social workers-mentors. In terms of content, functional and methodology, they are responsible for organizing and conducting anti-discrimination theoretical and practical training and enabling students to observe of professional behavior models and to acquire skills and good experience and practices.

*Extracurricular forms of club activity to promote diversity, equality, tolerance and non-discrimination.* Extracurricular club forms activity (ECFCA) take an

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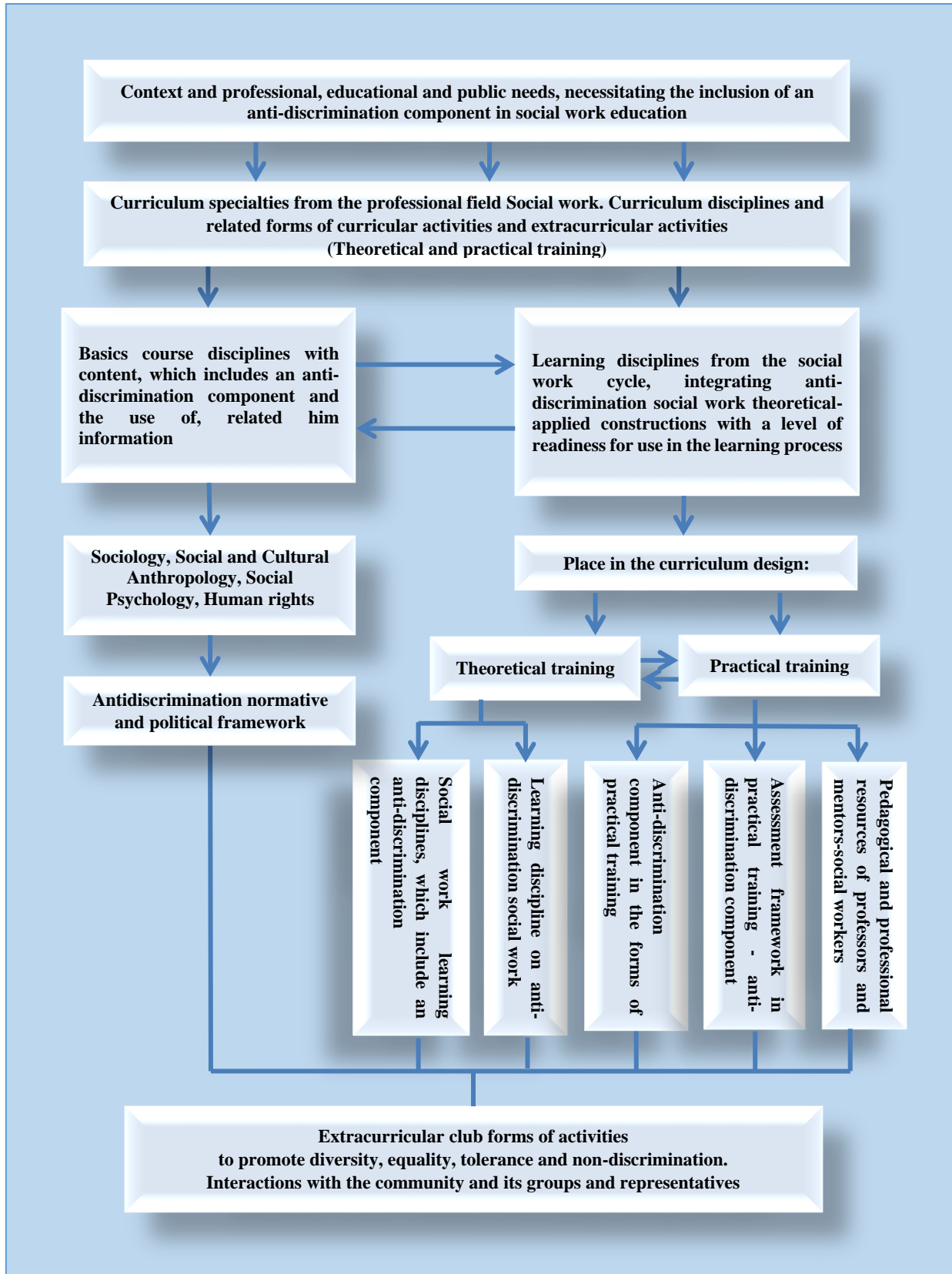
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important role in structuring and functioning the ADSWEM to promote diversity, equality, tolerance and non-discrimination, and to overcome negative attitudes, prejudices and discrimination. In accordance with the purpose orientation and content they correspond to the highest degree of the concepts included in contact hypothesis and the theory of intergroup contact, which are empirically verified and confirmed [2; 11; 12; 27]. The conditions created through it for the realization of positive oriented interpersonal contacts and interactions between representatives of dominant and dominated groups provides the opportunity for: better mutual understanding and evaluation of differences related to cultural views, lifestyles and models of behavior; overcoming negative perceptions in a constructive way, attitudes, stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination on the basis of certain signs (e.g. race, ethnic background, culture, disability, gender, age, etc.).

The ADSWEM formed on such a basis is characterized by a significant facilitating and encouraging function and opportunities for: restricting and transforming negative attitudes, stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination; generating cognitive, affective, behavioral and social changes; formation of respecting diversity, tolerant and non-discriminatory interpersonal and intergroup interactions and social relations. In the presented context, the researchers conclude that focused, well-organized, systematically realized and optimally managed intergroup contacts and interactions are characterized by a progressive reduction of negative attitudes and prejudices, conceptualized into an integrative entity and associated with a wide range of environments and target groups on certain signs (e.g., race, ethnic background, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.) [28].

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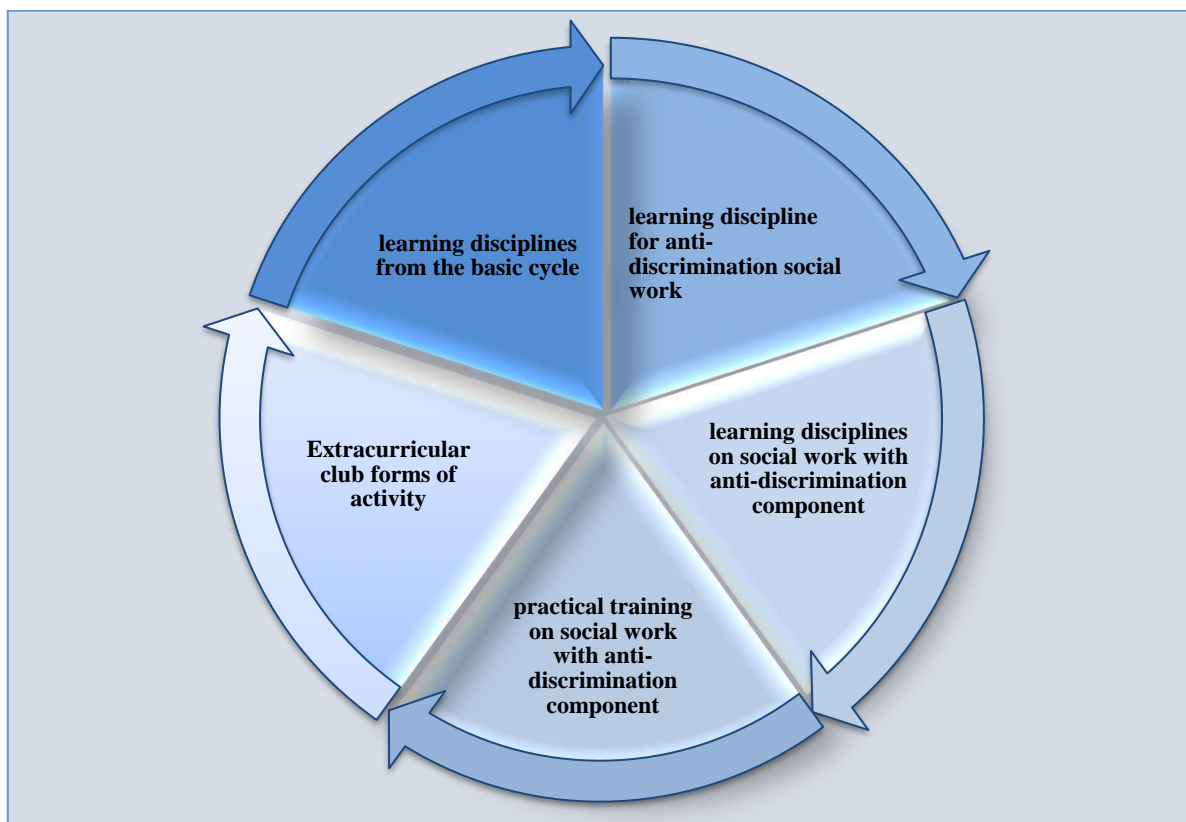


**Figure 1 – Model of integration of an anti-discrimination component and empirically established, tested and improved anti-discrimination theoretical and applied social work constructions in professional field Social Work**



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**Figure 2 – Interactions between the components of the anti-discrimination social work education model (ADSWEM)**

<b>№</b>	<b>Component</b>	<b>Component content</b>
1	Learning disciplines from basic cycle	Sociology; Social and cultural anthropology; Social and anti-discrimination legislation; Social and anti-discrimination policy; Human rights
2	Learning disciplines from the social work cycle (theoretical training – 1)	Learning discipline on anti-discrimination social work
3	Learning disciplines from the social work cycle (theoretical training – 2)	Learning disciplines on social work with anti-discrimination component: Social work with ethnic communities; Social work with people with disabilities; Social work with older people; Social work with children at risk; Social work with refugees and migrants, etc.
4	Learning disciplines from the social work cycle (practical training)	Anti-discrimination component in the forms of practical training Assessment framework in practical training - anti-discrimination component
5	Extracurricular club forms of activities	Activities to promote diversity (discussions, lectures, research, student creativity, etc.), equality, tolerance and non-discrimination; interaction with the community and its groups and representatives; partnerships with local authorities, providers of social services, non-governmental organizations, etc.

The constructed ADSWEM in the part about ECFCFA includes elements of the theory of intergroup contact and applies them in a specific educational and social context and environment that have not been studied in social work education field. This allows the

model as a whole as well as the component ECFCFA to function as:

- a. an important and innovative element of social work education and training in general and in its anti-discriminatory direction;

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b. educational and technological antidiscrimination construction, involving the unity and interaction theoretical and practical training in social work, curricular activities and ECFCA. They are characterized by: absorbing intercultural experience, realizing the students activities as a form of direct and indirect contacts and interactions with other groups and their representatives, revealing their positive messages, the desire and their concrete actions and activities for the establishment of equal, tolerant and non-discriminatory relations;

c. educational and informational anti-discrimination environment, which creates conditions for formal and informal contacts and interactions between members of groups of people from different ethnic backgrounds and between the groups themselves implementing joint initiatives with a contribution to their development and for building a society that values and is based on diversity, equality, tolerance and non-discrimination; interactive technological educational and social environment whose functioning is characterized by a certain educational, professional and social resonance.

The integration of the presented elements into ECFCA allows the achievement of a multiplier effect in the training on social work by combining them with a system of purposeful activities and interactions (intragroup and intergroup) for the absorption of values, knowledge, practical experience and implementation of research in social work and its anti-discriminatory direction. In synthesis, this contributes to the promotion of diversity, equality, tolerance and non-discrimination.

The positive interactions achieved have a cognitive, behavioral and affective effect on the individual, interpersonal, group and intergroup level, and create conditions for the formation of emotional connections, promoting positive and constructive relationships and contributing to the limitation of negative emotions. Part of the recent, achievements of ADSWEM that is applied in educational practice are presented on the website of the European Association of Schools of Social Work [14; 15; 17].

The constructed and functioning ADSWEM with a specific component in the training of social work students is an important prerequisite for their preparation in an anti-discrimination aspect and for their formation as personalities and specialists, who have an active role in building a humane, socially responsible, fair and non-discriminatory society.

### Empirical research

#### Purpose

The purpose is a research on attitudes of social work students towards people from different ethnic backgrounds as a result of the impact of ADSWEM. It is expected that the purposefully and organized inclusion of students in equal, tolerant and valuing diversity interactions in the conditions of the model

will stimulate the process of positivizing attitudes and transforming stereotypes and prejudices into a non-discriminatory valued, cognitive and behavioral aspect.

#### Participants

The research is carried out with 130 students from the social work bachelor and master's degree programs at University of Ruse from 2014 to 2016. The number of participants in the research represents 9.09% of 1,430 students in the Faculty of Public Health and Health Care (Kinesiotherapy, Ergotherapy, Nursing and Midwifery). The students of the specialties in the faculty are 21,87% of the 6,538 students at the university. Participants include: 111 (85.38%) female gender respondents and 19 (14.62%) male gender respondents; 74 (56.92%) participants identifying with the Bulgarian ethnic community and 56 participants identifying with a Turkish ethnic community (43.08%). The members of the Social Workers' Club are 90 (69.23%) students. The choice of non-representative small sample is determined by the factors: cognitive orientation of the research and establishing connections and impacts in educational environment with specific conceptual and content characteristics; the orientation of the interactions and the resulting attitudes towards people on certain signs; specificity of the ADSWEM in that is not applied in other specialties at the university and in the specialties Social work at universities in the country; seeking a solution to an educational problem of significant cognitive, professional and social character; the specificity of the phenomenon studied and related processes; the purpose of the research and the possibility to work effectively with the sample.

#### Methods

Modified and adapted version of the Questionnaire for research of the ethnic climate (QREC) in social work students training developed on the basis of Racial Climate Inventory [29]. Includes two subscales and answers for attitudes towards people of different ethnic backgrounds and functioning education environment are evaluated on five-point Likert scale. Subscale Faculty is structured from four levels with 22 items. Students' attitudes within the faculty are studied: activities and interactions in the interpersonal systems of the students and the lecturers' community; anti-discrimination education policy and practices. Subscale Student includes five levels with 19 items. The attitudes of students in bachelor and master courses towards PDEB in activities and interactions in the ADSWEM are studied. Additional questions are included to identify the impact of expected results, gender and ethnicity factors. Cronbach's Alpha is 0,781 and reveals very good reliability and consistency of the items. The research instrument is based on international acts and European and national

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legislation in the field of human rights and protection of national minorities and cultural diversity.

The research is conducted through informed consent and in accordance with the principles of voluntary and anonymity. Online tools are used. The statistical processing and analysis of empirical data is performed through the IBM SPSS Statistics Version 20.0 software package.

### Statistical analysis

In both research tools statistically significant difference in the Mean of the summarized assessment of structural components is established (Test Value = 3), the average value differs statistically from value 3 ( $p < 0.001$ ) at the level of significance used  $\alpha = 0.05$  confirmed by the level of significance  $p$  (Table 1, Table 2).

**Table 1. Verification for a statistically significant difference of Mean the summarized assessments by levels – subscale Faculty (QREC)**

One-Sample t-test (Student's t-test)						
Level	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Level 1	11,397	153	0,000	0,79518	0,6564	0,9340
Level 2	7,675	153	0,000	0,79360	0,5880	0,9992
Level 3	11,738	153	0,000	0,71599	0,5947	0,8373
Level 4	5,353	153	0,000	0,50284	0,3161	0,6896

**Table 2. Verification for a statistically significant difference of Mean the summarized assessments by levels – subscale Student (QREC)**

One-Sample t-test (Student's t-test)						
Level	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Level 1	4,412	153	0,000	0,51163	0,2811	0,7422
Level 2	8,371	153	0,000	0,77778	0,5931	0,9625
Level 3	4,526	153	0,000	0,58333	0,3272	0,8395
Level 4	15,972	153	0,000	1,25575	1,0995	1,4120
Level 5	9,451	153	0,000	0,89773	0,7089	1,0865

The positive difference between the mean values and the value 3 (Test Value = 3) in the components of the research instrument reveals: positioning the responses over the neutral point and predominantly in the validating left part of the scale; high level of confidence in the opinions expressed and consent with the assertions of positive attitudes (Table 1, Table 2). Statistical analysis of empirical data by subscales of QREC reveals that the values of the central trending statistical variables (Mean, Median, Mode) in the Subscale Faculty present the positioning of a significant share of respondents' answers from the four levels predominantly in the validating left part and express a high level of consent with the statements for positive attitudes in items: creating and functioning an educational environment that is tolerant towards representatives from different ethnic groups; training and evaluating student results, unaffected by their ethnic differences; students

awareness of ethno-cultural diversity issues; addressing issues of stereotyping of students from minority ethnic groups and creating an inclusive educational environment; supporting if necessary students from different ethnic groups and informing them of events about dominant ethnic groups (Table 3). Minimum dynamics is established at first and fourth levels due to the limited number of neutral answers, which has no impact on sustainable positive trend for the subscale.

Presenting the central trend statistical dimension (Mean, Median, Mode) in the QREC Student subscale reveal that a significant part of answers to the questions of the five levels are evaluated with values above the neutral point on the scale, and are positioned predominantly in a validating left part, express a high level of consent with the statements for positive attitudes in the items: non-division by ethnicity sign for learning tasks and events of informal character;



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discuss issues of stereotyping and ethnic discrimination and concern of students from the dominant ethnic group; rejection of ethnic disrespect

and micro-aggression; importance of theoretical and practical training on ethnic diversity issues;

**Table 3. Mean, Median, Mode и Percentiles – subscale Faculty (QREC)**

Values of Mean, Median, Mode, Percentiles							
Level	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Percentiles		
					25	50	75
Level 1	3,7952	3,8333	3,00 <sup>a</sup>	0,63562	3,1667	3,8333	4,3333
Level 2	3,7936	4,0000	5,00	0,95885	3,0000	4,0000	4,5000
Level 3	3,7160	3,8571	4,00	0,55903	3,2857	3,8571	4,1429
Level 4	3,5028	3,5000	3,00	0,88123	3,0000	3,5000	4,2500

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

readiness to engage in discussions with differences of opinion on the issue of creating an ethnically inclusive learning environment; interest in knowing colleagues from different ethnic backgrounds and support in representing different positions. In the first and second level is established minimal dynamics generated by

the limited part of neutral answers. Maximum values of the studied statistical dimensions are in the third, fourth and fifth levels. This confirms the stably positioning of the majority of answers in the scale sector for express positive attitudes (Table 4).

**Table 4. Mean, Median, Mode и Percentiles – subscale Student (QREC)**

Values of Mean, Median, Mode, Percentiles							
Level	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Percentiles		
					25	50	75
Level 1	3,5116	3,7000	3,00	1,07533	2,9500	3,7000	4,4000
Level 2	3,7778	3,6667	3,00	0,86665	3,0000	3,6667	4,3333
Level 3	3,5833	3,6667	5,00	1,20900	2,7500	3,6667	4,9167
Level 4	4,2557	4,2500	5,00	0,73332	4,0000	4,2500	4,7500
Level 5	3,8977	4,0000	5,00	0,89108	3,0625	4,0000	4,6875

Mean, Median, Mode, Standard deviation and Percentiles in the levels in the two QREC subscales are with values revealing positioning of the answers predominantly in the validating left part of the scale reflecting positive attitudes. This allows to present vision of categorically of the expressed consent with the content and value orientation of the statements (Table 3, Table 4).

The statistical analysis of empirical data from additional questions and the extracted statistical information on the range and distribution of statistical dimensions (Mean, Median, Mode, Std. Deviation, Percentiles, Confidence Interval of the Difference) reveal a low share of neutral and negative answers and confirm the overall positive tendency to concentrate the majority of the answers in the validating left side of the scale and its upper border. The data presents statistically significant evidence for the presence of positive attitudes of students in the two subscales to the expected results of activities to know of the history, culture, religion, life, traditions and customs of different ethnic communities; anti-discrimination

training and acquisition of cultural competence in conditions of ADSWEM.

The statistical analysis of empirical data by levels of the subscale Faculty on the indicators “belonging to gender” and “identification with ethnic community” reveals the absence of statistically significant differences between the compared samples related to expressed attitudes towards people from different ethnic backgrounds and to: creating and functioning of tolerant to representatives of different ethnic groups educational environment; training and evaluating results unaffected by ethnic differences; assisting students of different ethnic groups and informing them for events on minority ethnic group issues (Table 5, Table 6). A statistically significant difference in attitudes between the two samples was established at the third level. It reveals a stronger expression of the attitudes of female gender respondents regarding: level of awareness on issues of ethnic and cultural diversity; problems of stereotyping and discrimination of students from minority ethnic groups; creating an inclusive learning environment.

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**Table 5. Mann-Whitney U-test, Wilcoxon signed ranks test, Z-Test, Asymptomatic Significance (2-tailed), subscale Faculty – “belonging to gender” (QREC)**

Test Statistics				
Subscale/level	Subscale Faculty – Level 1	Subscale Faculty – Level 2	Subscale Faculty – Level 3	Subscale Faculty – Level 4
Mann-Whitney U	337,000	389,000	205,500	429,500
Wilcoxon W	428,000	480,000	283,500	520,500
Z	-1,422	-1,041	-2,866	-0,617
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0,155	0,298	0,004	0,537

**Table 6. Mann-Whitney U-test, Wilcoxon signed ranks test, Z-Test, Asymptomatic Significance (2-tailed), subscale Faculty – “identification with ethnic community” (QREC)**

Test Statistics				
Subscale/level	Subscale Faculty – Level 1	Subscale Faculty – Level 2	Subscale Faculty – Level 3	Subscale Faculty – Level 4
Mann-Whitney U	557,500	664,500	642,000	677,000
Wilcoxon W	935,500	1099,500	1020,000	2330,000
Z	-1,614	-1,381	-0,875	-1,138
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0,106	0,167	0,382	0,255

Statistically significant differences between the compared samples of Bulgarian and Turkish ethnic community respondents for attitudes towards PDEB and the functioning of a non-discriminatory educational environment at the four levels are not established (Table 6).

The statistical analysis of empirical data from the subscale Student on the indicators of “belonging to gender” and “identifying with an ethnic community” reveals a lack of statistically significant differences between the compared samples of respondents from the target groups for attitudes towards PDEB and non-discriminatory educational environment at all five levels (Table 7, Table 8).

In female gender respondents in four levels higher and narrower interval average ranks are identified. This makes it possible to express an assumption a stronger consent with the statements for

the attitudes studied and their interpretation as psychologically influenced of gender in female representatives in the specialties of helping professions.

In respondents from the Turkish ethnic community lower and positioned in wider interval middle ranks is identified. This allows presenting the assumption of comparatively low expressed consent on questions about certain attitudes and fluctuations. Trends in the subscale Student to a certain extent confirm that of subscale Faculty.

The statistical analysis of data from the empirical study presents the necessary arguments for achieving purpose presented. The contribution of the ADSWEM for the formation of positive attitudes towards PDEB in social work students is established in the following aspects:

**Table 7. Mann-Whitney U-test, Wilcoxon signed ranks test, Z-Test, Asymptomatic Significance (2-tailed), subscale Student – „belonging to gender“ (QREC)**

Test Statistics					
Subscale/level	Subscale Student Level 1	Subscale Student Level 2	Subscale Student Level 3	Subscale Student Level 4	Subscale Student Level 5
Mann-Whitney U	385,500	332,000	442,000	406,500	394,500
Wilcoxon W	476,500	423,000	533,000	3107,500	485,500
Z	-1,010	-1,738	-0,470	-0,830	-1,041
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0,312	0,082	0,638	0,406	0,298

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a. acquiring values, knowledge, skills and experience, conducting research and positivizing of attitudes towards PDEB through intercultural interactions in ADSWEM; the sustainable integration of these components is an important factor for formation cultural competence, tolerant and non-discriminatory behavior;

b. conceptualization of social work: from the standpoint of different cultures and the promotion of the value of equality, tolerance, diversity and non-discrimination; through learning different social, cultural and professional experience and using a reflexive approach for accepting the values of multiculturalism and building sensitivity to different cultures; with a focus on protecting human rights and against discrimination; in accordance with the principles of promoting equality, tolerance, diversity and non-discrimination;

c. raising awareness of formation and effectively implementing policies and practices at institutional and structural level with regard to minority ethnic groups at risk of discrimination; linking the activity to the current social, political, economic, cultural and demographic context and to the needs and the problems of groups clients from different ethnic backgrounds , society and the professional community;

d. learning approaches for protection, support and assistance to clients from different ethnic backgrounds and their implementation: in the practical training with a high level of ethics, professional and cultural competence, awareness and responsibility for achieving social justice and social change, promoting equality, tolerance, diversity and non-discrimination and striving to build and develop a multicultural society.

**Table 8. Mann-Whitney U-test, Wilcoxon signed ranks test, Z-Test, Asymptomatic Significance (2-tailed), subscale Student – „identification with ethnic community“ (QREC)**

Test Statistics					
Subscale/level	Subscale Student Level 1	Subscale Student Level 2	Subscale Student Level 3	Subscale Student Level 4	Subscale Student Level 5
Mann-Whitney U	632,500	760,000	727,000	776,500	798,000
Wilcoxon W	1010,500	1195,000	1162,000	2372,500	2394,000
Z	-1,204	-0,357	-0,798	-0,072	-0,131
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0,229	0,721	0,425	0,943	0,896

**Discussion**

The results of the research are oriented towards interpreting the positive attitudes formed in the students towards PDEB under the impact of the ADSWEM in the following aspects:

a. educating personalities and professionals with competences and behavior consistent with the principles of equality, tolerance, diversity and non-discrimination, and promotion of human dignity and value;

b. forming beliefs and attitudes to accept and respect differences on a basis of ethnic backgrounds, manifestation of tolerance, non-discrimination, and their realization in behavior, activities and interactions;

c. creation of own production (placards, posters, brochures, presentations, essays, videos, flash mob etc.) with antidiscrimination content and demonstrating awareness and personal and professional positions and attitudes;

d. encouraging participation in socially and professionally important initiatives based on open, positive, constructive and a diversity-centered dialogue contributing to the formation positive attitudes and creation of a tolerant and non-discriminatory environment and society;

e. role and importance of: perceptions, attitudes and self-assessments of students in knowing and researching their own and other cultural contexts; valued the diverse university environment to implement anti-discrimination initiatives by integrating theoretical and practical training on social work in ADSWEM;

f. forming sensitivity to relationships and behavior with colleagues, service users and community members from different ethnic backgrounds contributing to prioritization of the values of equality, tolerance, diversity and non-discrimination activities and interactions in the context of ADSWEM;

g. creation and expansion of networks in the educational, professional and social environment and realization of current and important in social and professional aspect activities, pro-jects and researches which contribute to the formation of positive attitudes, social capital and cultural capital. Part of the achievements is presented on the website of the European Association of Schools of Social Work, in the reports of the European Observatory of the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development, 2016 and the International Federation of Social Workers and others (EOR, 2016, 10, 24). Completely

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they are presented on the website of the specialty:  
<http://socialaffairsru.tk/>.

Specific for ADSWEM is the active inclusion of social work students in interactions with representatives of vulnerable and discriminated communities from different ethnic backgrounds and the conduct of a situation-sensitive and culturally-sensitive dialogue that contributes to:

- acquaintance, acceptance and respect for the cultural heritage of the individual communities, the human dignity and the value of their representatives;
- promoting policies and practices of equality, tolerance, diversity and non-discrimination;
- education in tolerance and non-discrimination, active action to overcoming prejudice and discrimination and to create a sensitive and valuable differences microclimate in the ADSWEM;
- knowledge of views and experiences of representatives of different communities in integration and in opposing discrimination; linking this information with the values, knowledge, skills, experience and attitudes acquired in curricular activities and ECFCA in conditions of ADSWEM with readiness for application in anti-discrimination social work.

## Conclusion

The research reveals through empirical evidence the impact of ADSWEM on the formation of positive attitudes towards PDEB in social work students. A sustainable educational environment has been created in which sensitivity to diversity, and non-discrimination is formed and cultural competence is built. The constructed educational environment is characterized by an important contribution to the formation of a broad integration platform with social, educational and anti-discrimination dimensions. Conditions are created to facilitate formal and informal learning, social engagement, research and creative activity, forming of sensitivity to culture, diversity and positivizing attitudes of students towards PDEB. Functioning of the ADSWEM creates opportunities for inclusion of students in equal, tolerant, understanding and valuing diversity and non-discrimination interactions. In synthesis, the conditions formed in the educational environment and the presented evidence reveals a significant contribution for the formation of positive attitudes towards PDEB in social work students.

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