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Effect of the Development of Didactic and Practical Skills in Future Special Education Teachers on Their Professional Readiness for Work in an Inclusive Educational Environment

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Abstract

A major part of solving difficult problems in inclusive education is played by the teacher. They shape the educational and upbringing process and systematize and specify the content of educational material for the successful acquisition of the necessary knowledge and skills by students. Thus, they create opportunities for the personal development of each child. The purpose of the study is to determine the effect of the didactic and practical skills of future special education teacher diagnosticians on their professional readiness for work in an inclusive educational environment. The study involves 143 students training in special education. For research work, the authors develop tasks to test the level of professional readiness of future special teachers. The research allows determining requirements for the training of special education teachers for work in an inclusive educational environment. Analysis of the obtained results suggests the need for further development of the didactic knowledge and practical abilities and skills of special education teachers for work in an inclusive educational environment.

Keywords: inclusion, inclusive education, inclusive educational environment, competence, special education teacher.

1. Introduction

The primary goal of social development of today's society is respect for human diversity and establishing the principles of solidarity and safety, which provides protection and complete integration of all population groups into society, including persons with special needs (Kryshtanovych et al., 2023).

The world community has come to affirm the right of such persons to fully participate in public life and has realized the need to create conditions for the realization of this right. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with

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Disabilities adopted by the UN General Assembly (2006), as well as legislative acts of many individual countries, define among the priorities the right of the child with special educational needs (SEN) to education. Thus, the educational integration of children with SEN is a worldwide trend characteristic of developed countries. This is a logical step in the development of the system of special education for children with SEN that is associated with society and state recognition of the attitude to persons with disabilities and to the affirmation of their right to engage on a par with others in various spheres of life, including education. Ensuring access to quality education for children with SEN is among the priorities of Kazakhstan at the current stage.

On June 26, 2021, the Law "On Amendments and Additions to Some Legislative Acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Education" was adopted (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2007). Under this Law, the state undertakes to create conditions for children with SEN to receive education within the educational system, considering their characteristics of development, by developing special educational programs.

There is a need for the development of new approaches to teaching SEN children in the context of Kazakhstan's general education to better meet their development needs, improve the process of correction and rehabilitation, develop an adaptive personality, and contribute to integration in society (Gordon, 2013; Omarkhanova et al., 2022).

However, educational institutions come to face several problems in creating inclusive groups or classes (Chernaya et al., 2023). A topical issue is the readiness of teachers to work with different categories of children in an inclusive educational environment (IEE). Only 17 out of 130 universities operating in Kazakhstan have special education educational programs, which is less than 14 % of all universities in the country (Diusenbaeva, Sarzhanova, 2019).

Importantly, the effective performance of all functions in the educational and upbringing process of an inclusive educational institution largely depends on the quality of the future special teacher's training for work in an IEE (Butenko et al., 2021). Therefore, a key to the successful introduction of inclusive education is the development of the professionalism of the future teacher in the context of inclusion.

Recently, various aspects of the issue of teachers' readiness for professional practice and the development of professional competencies in the framework of inclusive education have been gaining relevance. Among such issues are trends in the development of inclusive education (Florian et al., 2010; O'Rourke, 2015), identification of the elements of the inclusive competence in the teacher (Koreneva et al., 2022; Kuzmina et al., 2014), factors in teachers' readiness for inclusive education (Milkevich et al., 2023), readiness to work in the framework of inclusive education in higher education institutions (Morozova et al. 2023), and the creation of a satisfactory psychological climate for children with SEN (Falkmer et al., 2015; Togaibayeva et al., 2020).

Contemporary approaches to teaching children with SEN give reason to consider the special training of pedagogy students as an indispensable part of the educational space. An important condition in teacher training is the complex of special psychological, pedagogical, and anatomical knowledge, skills, and abilities, as well as personal qualities and behavioral strategies and tactics that allow to implement and apply effective pedagogical technologies for the education and upbringing of various categories of special needs children (O'Rourke, 2015).

The key factors on the way to the progressive implementation of the inclusive model of education, according to (Koreneva et al., 2022), are the appropriate vocational training of teachers to work with SEN children, the availability of special methodologically substantiated educational software that would support students with SEN in the general education space.

Of particular significance in the teacher's readiness for inclusive education are not only their abilities and desire to adapt to the new requirements of the educational process but also their professionally important personal qualities (Milkevich et al., 2023). Preparedness for the inclusive educational process consists not just of new methodical material but of the mental and psychological readiness of the teacher to work with special needs children.

The research proposes the following components of psychological readiness:
a) emotional acceptance of children with SEN;
b) engagement of children with SEN in the classroom;
c) satisfaction with one's pedagogical practice (Morozova et al. 2023).

Considerable importance is also gained by the personal readiness of the future teacher to work in an inclusive educational institution. For this reason, educators must have an adequate attitude to the stereotypes of pedagogical support for SEN children (Falkmer et al., 2015).

A significant aspect of the training of teachers to work in the context of inclusion is the development of their professional qualities (Feizuldayeva et al., 2018). Among such qualities, researchers indicate the professional-value orientation of the teacher working with SEN children; recognition of the value of the child's personality regardless of the disorder (Malika et al., 2022); awareness of their responsibility as a carrier of culture and its translator for children with special developmental needs (Shalbayeva et al., 2021).

For efficient correctional and upbringing work with SEN children, the teacher needs to have a certain body of diverse professional knowledge, as well as knowledge of special pedagogy and psychology (Aleshkov et al., 2022). For this reason, pedagogy students must have a comprehensive knowledge of the specific development of children with SEN and be able to carry out corrective measures in the context of general education schools (Belenkova et al., 2022a). However, it is not enough for the future teacher to acquire the knowledge, they also have to be able to apply it in practice, that is, have professional skills in the context of inclusive education (Sergeeva, 2017; Zakaria, 2023).

Apart from the general, there are also special professional abilities associated with pedagogical work with SEN children. The professional skills of specialists in inclusive schools include a proper assessment of the special needs and abilities of children; adaptation and modification of curricula and educational programs in accordance with the child's developmental characteristics; application of supplementary educational technologies, including diversified teaching methods; carrying out correctional and upbringing work with children; planning and realization of the joint activity of various specialists and parents; application of the newest technologies in the educational process, etc. (Medova, 2016).

In teaching practice, to provide the best conditions for the learning and upbringing process in an inclusive school, pedagogy students have to maintain a strong cooperation with parents and take note of their suggestions and recommendations (Mattson, Hansen, 2009). The next step is active participation in an outreach program aimed at raising parents' awareness about inclusion and the various options of education for SEN children (Mattson, Hansen, 2009). In this context, it is important to emphasize in the training of special teachers that the assistance and support in the learning process should not be more than necessary, otherwise, the child may become too dependent on this support and their compensatory abilities may decline (Mattson, Hansen, 2009).

Scholars note the lack of data on the extent to which the specialists training pedagogy students to work with SEN children are ready to do such work themselves (Jreisat, 2023). S.F. Jreisat (2023) asserts that one of the reasons may be the lack of knowledge and practical experience, as well as awareness of the importance and primacy of the problem of inclusion among university professors. Accordingly, a major precondition is also the training of university staff for their important role in the training of special education teachers.

The work of the teacher and the student with SEN is built on sympathetic, friendly relationships. The quality of teachers' professional training has a greater impact on students' results than, for instance, the number of students in a class. This determines the importance of developing all the competencies required for such work (Tebenova et al., 2015). The competencies necessary to work with SEN children, as proposed by K.S. Tebenova et al. (2015), are: knowledge of child development; faith in the possibility of the student's success; continuous improvement and acquisition of experience from other persons and perception of the school as an environment of professional development; ability to work with different paces of students' learning; application of diagnostic skills; the use of information and communication technologies (Ramazanova et al., 2022) and other technical tools (Korotaeva, Kapustina, 2022).

A. Margaritoiu (2015) argues that future teachers need to be ready to perform four professional functions, which are characterized by varying degrees of cooperation between the subject teacher and the special education teacher:

1) cooperation/consultation – the subject teacher helps the special education teacher solve various issues in the team;

2) mutual support and assistance of teachers in solving problems;

3) team support – special teachers provide information support to the subject teacher;

4) joint teaching – special teachers and subject teachers cooperate in the search for efficient solutions to various problems.

I.M. Iakovleva and S.V. Iakovlev (2021) define the following standards that should be realized in teaching practice: formation of ethical consciousness; awareness that there are students with

SEN and ability to use their potential in individual work; acquisition and improvement of competencies in work with a group of students, in particular, distribution of tasks within a team; distribution of tasks among different groups of students to achieve a common goal; development of skills for simultaneous work with different groups of students. Apart from this, teaching practice helps the student assess their theoretical knowledge in a specific educational environment. For this reason, students need to be assigned to those schools and classes that implement inclusion in practice (Iakovleva, Iakovlev, 2021).

J.-R. Kim (2011) emphasizes several aspects in the training of teachers for inclusive education: participation in introductory (general pedagogical) practices during training; conducting classes with the head of pedagogical practice; carrying out pedagogical duties under the guidance of the head of practice.

A.R. Rymkhanova et al. (2015) point out that professional training should develop both the technical (methodical and practical and moral (communication, interpretation) competencies of students equally. However, we should note that communication competencies are leading in working with special needs children. That being said, the problem of the readiness of pedagogical staff for work with SEN children arises already during their vocational training. In this context, we need to stress that not all training courses in inclusive pedagogy are integrated into university programs of pedagogical education. This, in turn, leads to students' unawareness of the entire system of inclusive education, lack of knowledge on the problem and specifics of implementing school reforms in the context of an inclusive school, and the reinforcement of stereotypes about persons with SEN and their ability or inability to learn educational material.

The goal of the present study is to determine the effect of the didactic and practical skills of a future special education teacher diagnostician on their professional readiness to work in the context of an IEE.

To achieve the goal of the study, the following research objectives are established:

1. To identify the criteria of the future specialist's readiness to work in an IEE;

2. To describe the levels of development of didactic knowledge and practical skills in students and assess their impact on readiness to work in an IEE.

2. Methods

To achieve the established research goal, the study employs several general and specialized research methods, among which we note, first of all, analysis of psychological and pedagogical and scientific and methodical literature (Sakenov et al., 2023) and a pedagogical (diagnostic) longitudinal study.

The study was conducted on the basis of the Aktobe Regional University named after K. Zhubanov, Faculty of Pedagogy. To determine the level of future special teachers' readiness for work in the context of an IEE, a diagnostic research program was developed. The study involved 143 students training under the educational program 6B01902-Special Pedagogy. The longitudinal study did not require the division of students into the control and experimental groups. By its principle, longitudinal studies are valuable for investigating changes and development over time within the same group of individuals.

The purpose of the study was to establish the levels of development of components in the readiness of future special teachers for work in the context of an IEE.

The procedure of the pedagogical longitudinal study demanded a clear sequence of actions. For this purpose, schedules in different academic groups of students were created, indicating the time of the experiment and auditoriums. The duration of research work was determined based on the number of tasks, their difficulty, form of presentation, way of completion, etc.

The teachers involved in the pedagogical longitudinal study were provided with instructions with a clear algorithm of the research procedure. After completing the tasks, students were informed of the rules of behavior when completing the tasks, the general algorithm for completing them, and particular stages. The tasks were read to students in the course of the pedagogical longitudinal study. Each task had clear instructions for its completion.

For the study, special tasks (for the examples of tasks, see Appendix 1 "Tasks on the criterion of didactic and technological readiness") were developed for each identified criterion indicator (Table 1). Among these tasks were tests (for readiness to innovation, for purposefulness), analysis of problem situations, storytelling, discussions, Exchange of Work Experience round table,

pedagogical games, analysis of problem pedagogical situations, etc. A specific rating scale was developed for each task.

Table 1. Criteria and indicators of the readiness of future special education teachers for work in inclusive educational institutions

Criterion characteristic	Criterion indicators
Criterion of motivational-emotional readiness	
considers the student's motives and attempts to work purposefully and with determination in an inclusive educational institution, stable emotional state during work with SEN children	perseverance and commitment to practice-oriented knowledge on work in the context of an IEE characterizes the purposeful nature of work in an inclusive educational institution; emotional stability is defined by the balance and lability of emotional state; motivation to succeed in the practical realization of didactic objectives involves motives concerning promising practice-oriented professional work in an IEE
Criterion of didactic and technological readiness	
reflects the student's theoretical and didactic education and methodical training	meaningfulness of didactic and technological knowledge on the specifics of the organization and work in inclusive education is characterized by the ability to use the acquired didactic and technological knowledge to solve the set tasks; the creativity of practice-oriented knowledge describes the ability to diversify and modify tasks for children based on the characteristics of their physical, mental, and language development in the context of inclusive education; practical modeling of a developing environment in the context of inclusion characterizes the ability to create an educational and upbringing environment for SEN children in the context of an inclusive educational institution
Criterion of deontological-speech readiness	
reflects ethical culture, behavior, tolerance, and verbal communication competence	the tolerance of a special education teacher is characterized by developed normative culture, the culture of communication, good manners, and tolerance in interaction with children, parents, and colleagues; the development of deontological competence is defined by observation of deontological principles and norms; the culture of speech is characterized by knowledge of the features of communication with various categories of people; knowledge of the system of language, its phonetic, lexical, and grammatical parameters; the ability to communicate using language, to correctly use the system of speech norms, to maintain communicative behavior that is appropriate in the specific communicative situation
Criterion of reflexive-practical readiness	
reflects the ability to reflection, self-assessment, and reciprocal assessment of the work of other teachers	reflection of one's behavior reflects the ability to control one's actions in critical situations and carry out self-assessment; practical readiness for correctional and developmental work in the context of an inclusive educational institution characterizes the ability to practically apply the acquired knowledge of didactics while working in inclusion; reciprocal evaluation and analysis characterizes the ability to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the activities of other psychological and pedagogical workers in the IEE, to highlight the innovative technologies and methods of educational work that gave a positive result in practice

After the completion of the diagnostic research program, the data were processed via Spearman's rank correlation coefficient to determine the interrelation of components in future special teachers' readiness for work in the framework of an IEE.

The aim of the research was also to identify differences in the distribution of a specific characteristic (task performance level) when comparing four empirical distributions (constituting the readiness of future special educators to work in the conditions of IEE). To achieve this, the χ2 Pearson criterion was used.

The measurement scale consists of 3 categories ("high level," "medium level," "low level"). The critical theoretical value of χ2 for a significance level of 0.05 in a three-level scale of gradation was $\chi2(0.05) = 5.99$, and for a significance level 0,01 - $\chi^2_{0,01} = 9,21$

3. Results

Proceeding from the conducted diagnostics based on the developed tasks, we identified three levels of development of components in the readiness of future special education teachers for work in the context of an IEE: high, average, and low (Table 2).

Table 2. Levels of development of components in the readiness of future special education teachers for work in the context of an IEE

Level	Level characteristic
Motivational-emotional readiness	
high	developed motivation and determination to work in an IEE, readiness to solve problems in the context of inclusive education; high emotional stability, ability to manage students' emotional stimulation and improve their stress-resistance
average	situational motivation and determination to work in an IEE, insufficient readiness to solve problems in the context of inclusive education; high emotional stability, insufficiently developed ability to manage students' emotional stimulation and improve their stress resistance. The greatest difficulties are faced in completing practical tasks (lack of readiness to solve problem situations in an IEE) and developing and holding discussions
low	lack of understanding of the specifics of work in an IEE, undeveloped ability to solve problems in the context of inclusive education; emotional instability and inability to manage students' emotional stimulation and improve their stress resistance. The greatest difficulties are faced in completing tasks at the practical and creative levels (development of a positive situation model, discussion, creative approach to solving problem situations)
Didactic and technological readiness	
high	quality application of the acquired knowledge to solve correctional-diagnostic, correctional-developmental, correctional-educational, and correctional-upbringing objectives in the context of inclusion; ability to modify tasks for children based on the characteristics of their physical, mental, and language development; ability to create a developing and upbringing environment for the development of special needs children in the context of an inclusive educational institution
average	application of the acquired knowledge to solve tasks in the context of inclusion and parallel acquisition of new knowledge; insufficient development of the ability to modify tasks for children based on the characteristics of their physical, mental, and language development; undeveloped understanding of the specifics of creating an educational and upbringing environment for special needs children in the context of an inclusive educational institution
low	insufficient development of the ability to use the acquired knowledge to solve tasks in the context of inclusion; undeveloped ability to modify tasks for children based on the characteristics of their physical, mental, and language development; undeveloped ability to create an educational and upbringing environment for special needs children in the context of an inclusive educational institution
Deontological-speech readiness	
high	observation of deontological principles and norms, established ability to find solutions to problem situations with tolerance, openness to communication with all participants in the education and upbringing and correctional-developmental process in the context of an IEE, ability to predict the course of events and encourage students through one's speech, acceptance of the values of inclusive education

average	observation of deontological principles and norms, underdeveloped ability to find solutions to problem situations with tolerance, stiffness in communication with all participants in the education and upbringing and correctional-developmental process in the context of an IEE, ability to predict the course of events and encourage students through one's speech, acceptance of the values of inclusive education
low	partial observation of deontological principles and norms, inability to find solutions to problem situations with tolerance, stiffness in communication with all participants in the education and upbringing and correctional-developmental process in the context of an IEE, undeveloped ability to predict the course of events and encourage students through one's speech, partial acceptance of the values of inclusive education
Reflexive-practical readiness	
high	adequate assessment of the level of one's pedagogical practice, developed ability to use innovative technology to improve the level of pedagogical practice, ability to correctly organize the educational-correctional process in an inclusive educational institution, to control one's actions during work, and to analyze the experience of other teachers in the context of an IEE
average	insufficient level of self-assessment, lack of understanding of the expediency of pedagogical innovations in professional practice, ability to quite properly organize the educational-correctional process in an inclusive educational institution, to control one's actions during work, and to analyze the experience of other teachers in the context of an IEE
low	undeveloped ability to adequately assess the level of one's pedagogical practice and use innovative technology to improve the level of pedagogical practice, inability to correctly organize the educational-correctional process in an inclusive educational institution, insufficient control over one's actions during work, inability to analyze the experience of other teachers in the context of an IEE

Quantitative indicators of the components of future special education teachers' readiness for work in the context of IEE are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Quantitative indicators of the components of future special teachers' readiness for work in the context of IEE, number of students who completed the tasks, %

Motivational-emotional readiness								
perseverance and determination			emotional stability			motivation for the successful practical implementation of didactic tasks		
H	A	L	H	A	L	H	A	L
8.2	38.3	53.5	12.6	36.3	51.1	14.3	35.2	50.5
Didactic and technological readiness								
meaningfulness of didactic and technological knowledge			creativity of practical knowledge			practical modeling of the developing environment		
H	A	L	H	A	L	H	A	L
12.2	44.4	43.4	12.2	40.9	46.9	7.7	41.3	51.0
Deontological-speech readiness								
tolerance			development of deontological competence			culture of speech		
H	A	L	H	A	L	H	A	L
9.2	43.9	46.9	8.7	45.4	45.9	15.3	33.2	51.5
Reflexive-practical readiness								
reflection on one's behavior			practical readiness for correctional and developmental work			reciprocal evaluation and analysis of the work of other teachers		
H	A	L	H	A	L	H	A	L
7.1	39.3	53.6	7.7	39.8	52.5	6.1	40.8	53.1

Notes: H – high level, A – average level, L – low level.

As can be seen from Table 3, by the indicator of "perseverance and commitment to practice-oriented knowledge on work in the context of an IEE" in the criterion of motivational-emotional readiness, high readiness is demonstrated by 8.2 % of future special education teachers, an average level – by 38.3 % (EG), and the low level – by 53.5 %. By the indicator of "emotional stability", the high level is displayed by 12.6 %, the average level – by 36.3 % (EG), and the low level – by 51.1 %. By "motivation for the successful practical implementation of didactic tasks", the high level is found in 14.3 % of students, the average – in 35.2 %, and the low level – in 50.5 %.

By the indicator of "meaningfulness of didactic and technological knowledge" in the didactic and technological component of readiness, at the high level are 12.2 %, at the average level – 44.4 %, and at the low level – 43.4 %. By the "creativity of practical knowledge", high readiness is demonstrated by 12.2 %, average – by 40.9 %, and low – by 46.9 %. By the indicator of "practical modeling of a developing environment in the context of an inclusive educational institution", at the high level of readiness are 7.7 %, the average level – 41.3 %, and the low level – 51.0 %.

By the "tolerance of the special teacher" in the deontological-speech component, high readiness is found in 9.2 %, average in 43.9 %, and low readiness in 46.9 %. On the indicator of "development of deontological competence", the high level is recorded in 8.7 %, the average – in 45.4 %, and the low – in 45.9 %. By "the culture of speech of a special teacher", at the high level of readiness are 15.3 %, the average – 33.2 %, and the low – 51.5 %.

Within the reflexive-practical component of readiness, by the indicator of "reflection on one's behavior", the high level is demonstrated by 7.1 %, the average – by 39.3 %, and the low – by 53.6 %. By the indicator of "practical readiness for correctional and developmental work in the context of an inclusive educational institution", at the high level are 7.7 %, at the average level – 39.8 %, and at the low level – 52.5 %. Finally, in terms of "reciprocal evaluation and analysis of the work of other special teachers", the high level is demonstrated by 6.1 %, the average – by 40.8 %, and the low – by 53.1 %.

Statistical data processing shows the following correlations between components in the readiness of future special education teachers to work in the context of an IEE (Table 4).

Table 4. Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient values

	ME	DT	DS	RP
ME	1.0	0.712	0.683	0.567
DT	0.712	1.0	0.589	0.673
DS	0.683	0.589	1.0	0.724
RP	0.567	0.673	0.724	1.0

Notes: ME – motivational-emotional readiness, DT – didactic and technological readiness, DS – deontological-speech readiness, RP – reflexive-practical readiness

Data analysis demonstrates moderate (0.5-0.7) and high (0.7-0.9) (on the Chaddok scale) correlations between all components in the readiness of pedagogy students for work in an IEE.

Two statistical hypotheses were formulated to analyze the differences in the distribution of a specific characteristic (task performance level) when comparing four empirical distributions (constituting the readiness of future special educators to work in the conditions of IEE):

1) The hypothesis of no differences in the indicators of the components of readiness of future special educators for work in IEE conditions (null hypothesis).

2) The hypothesis of the significance of differences in the indicators of the components of readiness of future special educators for work in IEE conditions (alternative hypothesis).

The results of pairwise calculation of χ^2_{emp} for various components of the readiness of future special educators for work in IEE conditions are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of pairwise calculation of χ^2_{emp}

	Motivational-Emotional Readiness	Didactic-Technological Readiness	Deontological-Speech Readiness	Reflective-Practical Readiness

Motivational-Emotional Readiness			
Didactic-Technological Readiness	14,33		
Deontological-Speech Readiness	13,02	1,17	
Reflective-Practical Readiness	4,24	19,88	18,21

The calculations of the χ2 criterion for the indicators of the components of readiness of future special educators for work in IEE conditions (see Table 5) demonstrated that χ2 > χ2$_{crit}$ when comparing didactic-technological readiness on one hand, and motivational-emotional and reflective-practical readiness on the other hand (specifically 14.33 > 9.21, 19.88 > 9.21), as well as when comparing deontological-speech readiness on one hand, and motivational-emotional and reflective-practical readiness on the other hand (specifically 13.02 > 9.21, 18.21 > 9.21). Therefore, for these indicators, the hypothesis of the significance of differences in these components of readiness of future special educators for work in ICS conditions is confirmed. In this context, students demonstrated the best performance in didactic-technological readiness for working in IEE conditions and the lowest performance in reflective-practical readiness.

Based on the results of the study, we were able to identify three levels (high, average, and low) of development of the didactic and practical knowledge and skills of future special education teachers to work in an IEE (Table 6).

Table 6. Levels of development of the didactic and practical knowledge and skills of future special education teachers to work in an IEE

Level	Level characteristic
high	developed motivation and determination to work in the framework of an IEE, high emotional stability, developed ability to use the acquired knowledge to solve the tasks at hand, substantial methodical training for work in an IEE, tolerance of a future special teacher, high speech-communication competence, ability to reflection, self-assessment, and reciprocal assessment of the work of other specialists
average	situational motivation and determination to work in the framework of an IEE, predominantly high emotional stability, insufficient practical skills to use the acquired knowledge to solve tasks in the context of inclusion, sufficient methodical training for work in an IEE, tolerance, insufficiently developed speech-communication competence, ability to reflection, self-assessment, and reciprocal assessment of the work of other specialists
low	undeveloped motivation and determination to work in the framework of an inclusive educational institution, lack of emotional stability, lack of ability to use the acquired knowledge to solve the tasks at hand, lack of methodical training for work in an IEE, intolerance, insufficiently developed speech-communication competence, ability to reflection, self-assessment, and reciprocal assessment of the work of other specialists

The distribution of future special education teachers by the levels of development of didactic and practical knowledge, abilities, and skills for work in the context of an IEE shows that the high level is demonstrated by only 7.2 %, average by 42.4 %, and low by 50.4 %.

4. Discussion

The research findings give reason to conclude the need for further development of the didactic knowledge and practical skills and abilities of special education teachers for work in an IEE, as over half of the students involved in the study demonstrate a low level of development of didactic and practical knowledge, abilities, and skills, while the high level is found in less than 10 %.

The results of the study demonstrate that the formation of a certain level of knowledge, abilities, and skills in future special teachers assumes the presence of the following qualities:

- motivation, which forms a stable interest in inclusive education and a striving to involve the child in the educational process while accounting for their special developmental needs.

Our findings are consistent with the results of (Belenkova et al., 2022a), indicating that the teacher's motivation for inclusion and conviction in its expediency as a means and a goal of teaching SEN children, as well as the teacher's reflection on their experience will promote the improvement of their competence. This conclusion testifies to the need for special training of teachers to foster their high professional readiness. Our study has determined the following components in the professional and personal readiness of a future teacher for work in inclusive education:

- emotional, assuming the establishment of emotional contact with the child and constant maintenance of a stable positive emotional state of the teacher;

- gnostic, implying the mastery of a certain body of knowledge, skills, and abilities to work in inclusive educational institutions, deliberate use of the acquired knowledge in the inclusive process. Our results align with a study by (Butenko et al., 2021), which indicates that in training future teachers for work in an IEE, it is important to give students diverse theoretical knowledge and develop their practical skills in working with special needs children. The students need to navigate well in the activities taking place in the practical work of a teacher (Aleshkov et al., 2022). In this, an important role is also played by clearly planned and competently organized teaching practice (Belenkova et al., 2022b). In this aspect, according to S. Lindsay et al. (2015), the essential characteristics of tolerant interaction are the recognition and acceptance of the equal existence of varied thoughts and beliefs, the ability to self-control, particularly in the sphere of emotions, and the need for freedom of choice and respect for the freedom of choice of others (Shalbayeva et al., 2021). Targeted work with parents (Sadvakassova et al., 2022) and children on the formation of tolerance can yield positive results only when the teacher sets an example of a benevolent attitude toward others, demonstrating a model of humane interaction with families.

Further on, A. Margaritoiu (2015) argues that future special education teachers should be geared to the fact that the work of professionals in inclusive schools is meant to be continually creative and subject to the principle of flexible curricula that meet the needs of children with different abilities and capacities. Children with SEN receive the necessary additional support in studying the general curriculum rather than some specially designed programs or programs for special institutions. Support is provided continuously, starting with minimal assistance provided by a special teacher who is also involved in the educational process.

The conducted study has identified the specific features of training special education teachers for work in the context of an IEE. Among these specifics are:

1) insufficient motivation for work in inclusive institutions, which aligns with the results obtained by (Butenko et al., 2021);

2) emotional instability, which has also been noted by E.A. Martynova and N.A. Romanovich (2014);

3) a lack of systemic didactic and practical training of future special education teachers for work in inclusive classes, as has been stated by A.I. Sergeeva (2017);

4) the limited content of academic disciplines that do not offer the basics of didactic and practical preparation of future special teachers to work in the context of an IEE.

As a further example, we can cite the findings of I.M. Iakovleva and S.V. Iakovlev (2021) on the reasons behind teachers' unpreparedness to work with students with educational challenges, which are consistent with the results of this study. The study indicates that 60 % of teachers lack basic psychological and pedagogical knowledge and professional training. Of the remaining, 13 % claimed to have acquired this knowledge while studying at pedagogical universities, 12 % mentioned independent learning through courses or special literature, and 15 % completed postgraduate courses on the fundamentals of supporting the development and education of children with SEN.

We concur with the opinion of N.A. Medova (2016), that the development of professional competence in pedagogy students calls for the introduction of new disciplines with the use of innovative monitoring and educational technologies into the curricula of higher educational institutions (Bolina et al., 2022). This measure will promote the interest of special education teachers in work in the context of an IEE and foster the skills of independent accumulation of knowledge and its further application in professional practice in the sphere of development, education, and upbringing of special needs children. The purpose of studying these disciplines is the familiarization of students with the regulatory and legal acts on the introduction and regulation of special education teachers, as well as with foreign practice, the tasks and responsibilities of a special teacher in the process of organizing inclusive education in general educational institutions, and the specifics of organizing correctional and developmental work (Aristizábal Gómez et al., 2020; Mattson, Hansen, 2009). Such disciplines will help establish the role of teachers and special education teachers in practical work with children with SEN and consolidate the theoretical knowledge and methods of work in an inclusive school (Sahoo, Divi, 2023; Sergeeva, 2017).

A limitation of this study pertains is that only students from one university were studied, which limits the generalizability of the study results.

5. Conclusion

The readiness of a special education teacher to work in an inclusive school is based on an adequate positive attitude to inclusion in general, the development of professional inclusive competence, readiness to overcome difficulties in the education and upbringing process, as well as on mastery of professional and methodical knowledge. Special teachers' readiness to work in the framework of inclusion is defined by their openness and desire to obtain new knowledge and practical experience, exchange it with colleagues, and closely cooperate with local authorities, public and charitable organizations, and specialized institutions.

The paper characterizes the competencies required for special education teachers to work in an inclusive educational institution. These include professional (special professional) competencies and general (key, basic) competencies, which in the upcoming years will orient the work of higher education institutions toward the content of training specialists for work in the IEE.

The study also defines criteria for the future specialist's readiness to work in the framework of an IEE and indicators for each criterion. Based on the tasks developed for each indicator, the levels of development of the didactic knowledge and practical skills of students are characterized.

Prospective further research could focus on the development of a comprehensive method for training special education teachers for work in the context of an IEE and the identification of effective conditions for its implementation.

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Appendix 1

Tasks on the criterion of didactic and technological readiness

The level of meaningfulness of theoretical and technological knowledge of the features of organization and work in inclusive education is proposed to be assessed with the following tasks:

Task 1. Making a report for a scientific and practical seminar	Task 2. "Pedagogical game"
Purpose: to test the level of students' theoretical knowledge about the features of work in an inclusive educational institution. Procedure: the experimenter offers students to independently write a report for a scientific and practical seminar, choosing the topic and content of the report with consideration of topical problems in inclusive education and the means of its presentation.	Purpose: to test the level of mastery of the methods of educational and upbringing work in an inclusive educational institution. Procedure: the experimenter offers students to independently invent a game for children with special developmental needs and children within the norm in the context of inclusive education to establish friendly relations between them.
Assessment scale: High level (2 points) – exhaustive knowledge of organizational work as part of inclusive education, independent preparation for the seminar, and explanations during the report. Average level (1 point) – needs additional help in completing the task, partial knowledge of the organization of a correctional teacher's work in inclusive education;	Assessment scale: High level (2 points) – freely navigates the theoretical and practical plane of the issue, proposing independently created games and making assumptions on certain difficulties in the organization of play activities in the context of inclusive education, assesses colleagues' work, voices recommendations and suggestions. Average level (1 point) – has an unclear understanding of the objectives and technology of organizing play activity in inclusive education, has

Low level (0 points) – lack (complete or partial) of knowledge, abilities, and skills in training for work in inclusive education.	certain difficulties in assessing the materials presented by others. Low level (0 points) – is unable to or refuses to complete the task.

The level of creativity of technological knowledge is proposed to be tested with the following tasks.

Task 1. "Consultations for teachers"	Task 2. "Case analysis".
Purpose: to determine the level of knowledge, abilities, and skills in meaningfully presenting the essence of the problem and explaining it in accordance with the audience's interests. Procedure: The experimenter presents materials of prepared consultations for teachers (correctional teachers, elementary school teachers, educators, etc.) and asks the students to determine their orientation toward a category of listeners and analyze it when justifying the answer.	Purpose: to test the ability to creatively approach situational problem tasks and to argue the accuracy of one's pedagogical position. Procedure: The experimenter hands out cards describing pedagogical cases in inclusive education. Students are asked to determine the accuracy or inaccuracy of the teacher's actions using emojis (smiley face – correct, frowning face – incorrect) and justify their opinion. Situation 1. In the classroom, a fight broke out between two students, one with special features of psychophysical development and one with the norm. A. The teacher first hugged one and then the other student and whispered something nice and comforting to each one. B. The teacher called on students to stop fighting immediately, threatening to give them a bad mark for their behavior on the report card. Situation 2. During the lesson, one student with special developmental needs used obscene language. How should the special education teacher respond to that? A. Hold a conversation with students about the history of obscene language and emphasize the inadvisability of its use. B. Kick the student out of class and tell them not to come back the next day with their parents. Situation 3. During an educational game, students in an inclusive class fought with getting the desired role. How should this conflict be resolved? A. Organize a mini-casting for the best performance of the roles. B. Selectively convince each student that they cannot play the desired role well.
Assessment scale: High level (2 points) – completes the task correctly, emphasizing the specifics of the process of inclusive education both for students and teachers; Average level (1 point) – has difficulties completing the task, shows uncertainty when substantiating the specifics of work in inclusive education, incorrectly identifies the advantages and disadvantages.	Assessment scale: High level (2 points) – the correctional teacher solves the situation fast, can find mistakes; has a clear stance in justifying their viewpoint, can offer their solution. Average level (1 point) – has difficulties solving the pedagogical case, arguing the opinion, and offering their solutions to the problem. Low level (0 points) – is unable to complete the task.

Low level (0 points) – is unable to or refuses to complete the task.	

For testing students' ability to create a development-promoting environment in the context of an inclusive educational institution, the following tasks are proposed.

Task 1. "Presentation"	Task 2. "Pedagogical football"
Purpose: to test the ability of students to creatively present an educational project on the problems of inclusive education. Procedure: The experimenter offers to present an educational project and illustrative material with case illustrations in arbitrary form (business game, crossword, puzzle, problem solution).	Purpose: to test students' ability to create a development-promoting environment in the context of an inclusive educational institution. Procedure: the experimenter randomly divides the students into two groups, each of which proposes a variant of a creative task or game to be used in an inclusive educational institution. Students exchange opinions, thus scoring goals. The team that "misses" a goal loses.
Assessment scale: High level (2 points) – the correctional teacher has prepared the presentation quickly, can generate interesting ideas. Average level (1 point) – has difficulties in creating their presentation and in completing the task independently. Low level (0 points) – is unable to complete the task.	Assessment scale: High level (2 points) – students propose many options and can generate interesting ideas. Average level (1 point) – there are difficulties in creating tasks and completing the assignment independently. Low level (0 points) – unable to complete the task.