

CHALLENGES FACING IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN UKRAINE

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Abstract. The relevance of the research is determined by the fact that implementation of inclusive education in Ukraine has been gaining paramount importance with the aim of ensuring equal opportunities for all children for quality education and development of an inclusive society. Considerable progress has been made in implementing inclusive education in Ukraine as evidenced by the introduced amendments to the law of Ukraine on peculiarities of education accessibility for people with special educational needs (SEN) and issuing other legal and regulatory instruments. Nevertheless, it is obvious that putting all these into action is quite a highly complicated task. The purpose of this research is to reveal challenges which stand in the way of successful implementation of inclusion in Ukraine. To reach the set goal, along with theoretical methods, empirical (questionnaires designed by the authors and individual interviews) and statistical ones (for quantitative and qualitative processing and graphical representation of the received data) were used. Based on the carried out investigation, it was revealed that there are the following obstacles on the way of inclusive education implementation in Ukraine: skills of teachers; attitudes towards inclusion and disability among teachers, trainee teachers, parents, and peers; self-perception of children with SEN; school environment including difficulties in physical access; and expenses involved.

Keywords: inclusive education; special educational needs (SEN); inclusion; disability; skills of teachers; physical access

Introduction

Travelling abroad, Ukrainians often notice that the amount of people with special needs in public places and on the streets is usually bigger than in Ukraine. They study, work, travel and relax without barriers. It is necessary to build inclusive society in Ukraine, where people with special needs live life to the full. The first step in this process is inclusive education. It allows promoting cognitive, motor, language, social and emotional development of a child with special needs, who as an adult can actively participate in public life and hit the job market. Moreover,

inclusive education gives us the opportunity to accept diversity and successfully cooperate with one another.

Inclusive education has received much attention in the last three years in Ukraine. Finally, on July 8, 2017 the amendments introduced to the law on peculiarities of education accessibility for people with SEN were put in force (Zakon Ukrainy, 2017). According to this document, psychological and pedagogical, correctional and developmental, and other extra support is provided for people with SEN taking into consideration an individual program of personality development. SEN training for teachers should be held to turn these statements into reality.

Thereafter, in accord with the above mentioned Law, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine issued the Resolution of July 9, 2017 No. 588 on Introducing the Changes to The Procedure of Implementation of Inclusive Education in General Educational Institutions (Postanova Kabinetu ministriv Ukrainy, 2017). Hence, the template of individual program of personality development, mentioned in the Law, is provided herein. However, in order to implement all requirements and recommendations, close cooperation of teachers, students, parents, special educators and practical psychologists should be encouraged. Obviously, some additional training in the domain of inclusive education should also be provided for all stakeholders.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine has been sending the letters to the departments of education and science of regional and Kyiv city state administrations, institutes of postgraduate education and general educational institutions about various aspects of inclusive education and its implementation since 2009 (ODZOOP). After the amendments to the mentioned above Law were put in force, two more letters were sent: (1) The letter of the Ministry of Education and Science of July 12, 2017 No. 1/9-385 on curriculum and organization of teaching and rehabilitation processes for the students with special educational needs of general educational institutions in 2017/2018 academic year (Lyst MON Ukrainy vid 12.07.2017 № 1/9-385); (2) The letter of the Ministry of Education and Science of September 19, 2017 No. 1/11-9320 on organization of correctional and developmental activities with the hearing-impaired pupils who study in general educational institutions (Lyst MON Ukrainy vid 19.09.2017 № 1/11-9320). These letters provide teachers with their main tasks, recommendations for successful teaching of children with SEN and templates of needed documentation to outline the goals and assess the progress of each individual.

Moreover, following the suits of such developed countries as Canada, the USA, Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Italy, Ukraine has been studying, developing and implementing inclusive education with the help of non-governmental organizations (NGO) and not-for-profit organizations. For example, Ukrainian Step by Step Foundation (USSF) whose goal is “develop an efficient model of inclusive education, which would ensure successful learning for children with disabilities at the educational institution with a proper support of other professional and parents”,

has singled out a number of strategies and designed projects which are being implemented in Ukraine (VFKZK).

It's also worth mentioning that there are two approaches to viewing the students with SEN: broader and narrower. According to the first one, students with SEN include children with mental and physical developmental disorders, individuals with disabilities, refugee children, working children, emigrant children, children who are representatives of national minorities, children who are representatives of religious minorities, children from the families with low minimum wage, homeless children, orphan children, children who get infected with HIV and AIDS, gifted students etc.; in accordance with the narrower one (which is used in Ukrainian legislation), only children with mental and physical developmental disorders as well as individuals with disabilities are regarded as students with SEN (Zayerkova & Treytyak, 2017: 11, 12). Thus, in our work the term SEN is used to define "a restriction in the capacity of the person to participate in and benefit from education on account of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition" (ISSENPPG, 2007: 17).

Hence, a psychological-pedagogical diagnostics should be run before a child starts attending school. It consists of such stages as *screening* to check for problems in psychophysical development of students, *definition of the type of developmental abnormalities in children*, *revelation of child's individual peculiarities* (Turishcheva, 2012: 7). After the procedure, specialists and parents of a special-needs child are to decide, whether s/he is ready for mainstreaming or needs a specialized education setting. Enrolment of such students in educational institutions takes place under the established procedure according to the conclusion (recommendations) of psychological, medical and pedagogical consultations in accordance with the legislation in power (Zayerkova, Treytyak, 2017:14).

Regardless of the fact that inclusive education is highly valued and promoted all over the world, researchers mention the following drawbacks of this approach to teaching and learning. There are the following disadvantages of inclusion for participants of educational process: 1) for regular education students: distraction caused by addition of one or more lead teachers, special education aides, students with disabilities coming in and out of the classroom for various reasons or making involuntary vocalizations as a result of their disability (Berg, 2004: 35); less attention and encouragement than they need (Wang, 2009: 155); 2) for students with SEN: low self-esteem due to the fact that they see what their peers can do (Berg, 2004: 33-34); failure in enhancing academic achievement (Wang, 2009: 156); physical, psychological, emotional harassment or bullying (ISSENPPG, 2007: 45). Scholars emphasize that in some cases including of students with SEN may not be in their best interest (Dixon, 2005: 20). Hence, integration should be based on individual needs of a child (Wang, 2009: 156). 3) for regular education teachers: constant

dilemmas about pace, learning styles, seating arrangements, individual attention (Wang, 2009: 156), and designing of a common curriculum that will meet all students' needs (Wang, 2009: 158); 4) for educational institutions: reconstruction in order to remove the architectural barriers for save moving of students with SEN; providing technical means and equipment; hiring a larger number of specialists; providing additional training for teachers (Petrovska et al, 2015: 1149).

At the same time, there are decisive advantages of inclusive education, which encourage Ukraine to choose this path of development: 1) pros for non-disabled students: academic benefits (Dr. Thomas Hehir et al, 2016: 7-11); social and emotional development can be supported (i.e., reduced fear of human differences, increased tolerance of others, improvements in self-concept, development of personal moral and ethical principles, friendly relationship) (Dr. Thomas Hehir et al, 2016: 12 – 13); 2) benefits for students with SEN: receiving a quality education that suits their needs and abilities (CRSVET, 2007: 22); greater activeness in household activities (CRSVET, 2007: 22); increased academic attainment (Dr. Thomas Hehir et al, 2016: 1); forming and maintaining positive relationships with peers (Dr. Thomas Hehir et al, 2016: 13 – 18); developing social skills (Dr. Thomas Hehir et al, 2016: 18); 3) general social benefits: promotion of diversity and respect for everyone equally (TROCWDTE, 2011: 6); viewing differences between children and between adults as a resource for learning (TROCWDTE, 2011: 6). Recently a famous motivational speaker N. Vujicic visited our country. He became one of the first disabled students integrated into a mainstream school in Australia. In the seventh grade Nick was elected captain of his school and worked with the student council on fund-raising events for local charities and disability campaigns. At the age of twenty one, Nick graduated from Griffith University with a double major in Accounting and Financial Planning. Moreover, he started a non-profit organization "Life Without Limbs" that helps disabled people. Now Nick is a family man. Having no limbs, his hobbies include fishing, painting, swimming, and even surfing. Hence, this personality is a good role model to follow.

However, given that the process of inclusive education implementation is viewed as challenging and long term, putting everything mentioned above into practice is not an easy task.

Thus, the **aim** of our research is to reveal challenges which stand in the way of successful implementation of inclusion in Ukraine and prospects of inclusive education in Ukraine.

Research methods

In order to get detailed and qualitative data about the studied phenomenon teachers, students and parents were given a possibility to explain how they feel about inclusive education. The sample included 76 parents, 80 students, 42 undergraduate students of Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (who haven't yet completed their teaching practice at elementary and secondary schools

as a part of their curriculum), 52 graduate students of the same university (who have already completed their teaching practice at elementary and secondary schools as a part of their curriculum), 44 teachers working in secondary schools in Ternopil, Ukraine and 36 lecturers from Foreign Languages Department of Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University, Ukraine (who have been training future teachers). Data collection took place through questionnaires that were prepared by the authors (which according to the quantity of the participants may be considered as full, in concordance with the way of communication – personal, as follows from the way of fulfillment – individual, in accordance with the ways of questionnaires distribution – distributing. The offered questions were closed and semi-opened.) and semi-structured individual interviews with the participants of educational process (for better understanding and clarification of the provided information in questionnaires). After that, they were qualitatively and quantitatively analysed. In such a way mixed-methods approach was used in order to reduce to a minimum points of weakness of both methods. Responses were kept in confidence. The results have been graphically represented with further analysis. A comprehensive literature review was conducted prior to collecting and analyzing the data.

Discussion

Having analyzed the results of questionnaires, individual interviews and a number of references, among the barriers for proper practice of inclusive education in Ukraine one can admit:

– *skills of teachers.*

First of all, it's worth mentioning that according to the "Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education" "the way teachers teach is of critical importance in any reform designed to improve inclusion" (2009: 20). The same opinion had the participants of our experimental research.

Thus, our questionnaire revealed that 20% of regular school teachers had received training in special education whereas the rest 80% had not. As for the lecturers, the situation is even worse due to none of them had received training in special education (see Fig. 1):

At the same time, 93% of teachers had experience of teaching students with SEN: 18% taught children with the peculiarities of psychic development, 45% – with the peculiarities of physical development, 59% – with disabilities, 18% of teachers delivered educational services for children belonging to socially vulnerable groups, and 43% of the surveyed admitted educating gifted students.

Having analyzed the given answers of the lecturers, it was revealed that 44% of them had experience of teaching students with SEN: 33% of them taught students with the peculiarities of psychic development, 22% – with the peculiarities of physical development, no one delivered educational services for the students with disabilities, 11% taught the students belonging to socially vulnerable groups, 11%

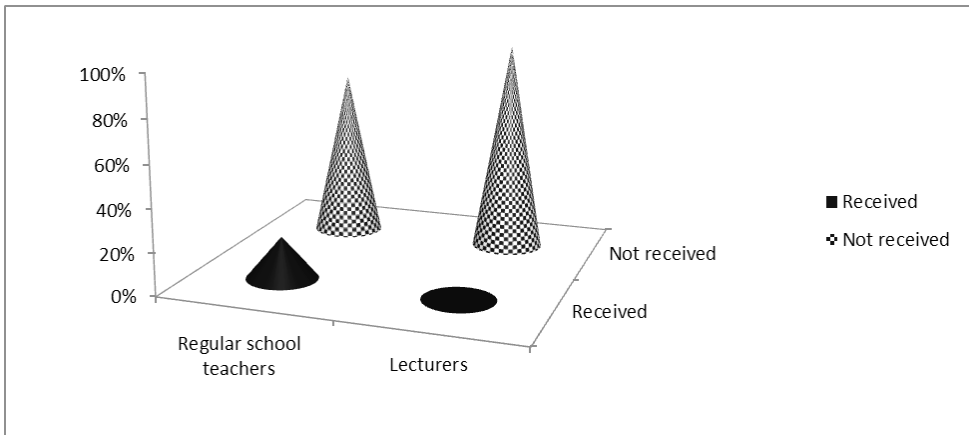


Fig.1. Results of the survey on receiving training in special education

of the lecturers provided training to gifted students. However, 56% admitted that they have never had such experience (see Fig. 2).

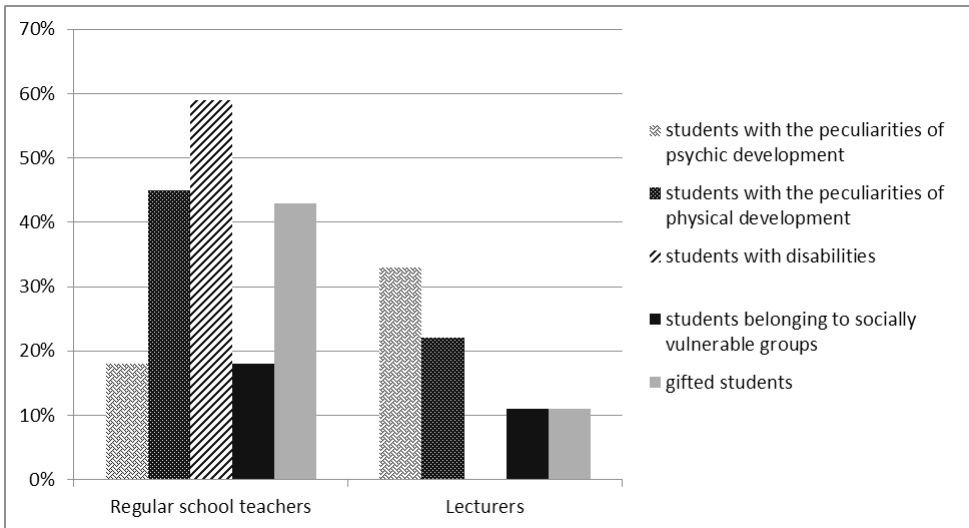


Fig. 2. Results of the survey on teaching students with SEN

Thorough analysis of the obtained data proves the necessity of additional training to improve teachers' knowledge base about inclusive education. Insufficient skills of teachers create obstacles for involvement of children with SEN in the life of

society: without proper education they are not competitive at a labour market. To change the situation, the curriculum for these students must be adapted which is impossible without highly qualified teaching personnel.

According to the above-mentioned Ukrainian law, an individual program of personality development is a document that ensures individualization of education for students with SEN and determines a list of psychological and pedagogical, correctional and developmental, other extra services and means for child development. This program is prepared by a panel of experts in cooperation with parents or carers of a child. Individualised education planning is a useful mechanism for formulating, recording and monitoring outcomes for students with SEN across a range of domains (SSSENS, 2013: 34). Though there are resource books on creation of an individual program of personality development (e.g. Sofii, 2015) and the templates that are provided in the above mentioned Resolution of July 9, 2017 No. 588 (Postanova Kabinetu ministriv Ukrainy, 2017), it's a pity to state that Ukrainian teachers and lecturers, in general, feel that they are not well prepared to make adaptations for children with SEN. Only 55% of the teachers-respondents and 56% of lecturers-respondents claimed that they are ready to conduct individual personality development programmes (see Fig. 3):

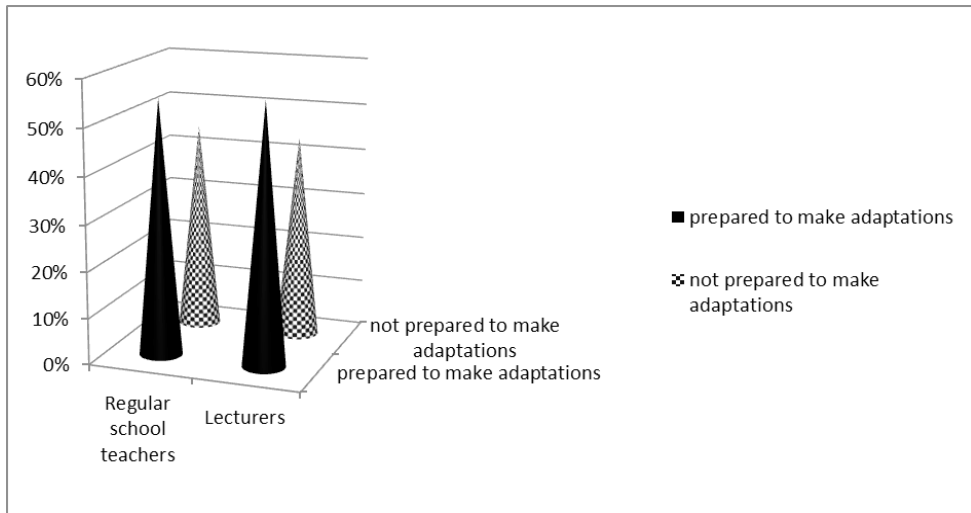


Fig. 3. Readiness of regular school teachers and lecturers to make adaptations in order to teach students with SEN

Interestingly, as it may be seen from the data provided above and Figure 3, that almost the same amount of regular school teachers and lecturers claimed to be prepared to make adaptations to provide training for the students with SEN,

despite the fact that the questioned lecturers are less experienced in delivering of educational services for the students with SEN. This shows that there is need in developing special programmes and opening inclusive centers.

A recent review of the literature found that schools should consider methodologies best suited to promoting meaningful inclusion such as heterogeneous grouping (allowing children with SEN to cooperate with others equally to ensure mutually beneficial learning), team-teaching, small group and individual teaching, differentiation (GPPSSSENMS, 2017: 22). Greater emphasis should be put on hands-on, experience-based, active and cooperative learning (PGOIE, 2009: 20). It has been suggested that teacher's instruction can be differentiated in relation to the level of difficulty of the subject matter, the style of presentation or pace of a lesson, the lesson structure, the style of questioning, the sequence of learning activities to be undertaken by the student, student's level of understanding, the degree of access to additional resources for an individual student, and the degree of access to additional teaching support (ISSENPPG, 2007: 72-73; PGOIE, 2009: 20 – 21). The use of assistive technology (including physical resources, computers and use of ICTs) is also welcomed as it contributes to successful learning of the students with SEN (TROCWDTE, 2011: 20).

Thus, successful inclusion is possible in case of providing special training to teachers on effective strategies, techniques, and approaches. This will let them cope with the organization of teaching process for different categories of students with SEN: students having social problems, students with disabilities and minor impairments, and gifted students. Nowadays, teaching employees have an opportunity to do a special course to take a position as a teaching assistant in an inclusive school, to participate in seminars on inclusion, to study how government, non-profit, academia, and business of other countries provide services to those with disabilities through an inclusive approach and reflect on the practice of others so that they may be fully equipped with the necessary skills and have right attitude to this phenomenon. Consequently, these activities promote adoption of the best practices in Ukraine.

– attitudes towards inclusion and disability among teachers, trainee teachers, parents, and peers. Self-perception of children with SEN.

Positive attitudes ensure successful implementation of the law on peculiarities of education accessibility for people with SEN. However, the results of our research are not very encouraging. 41% of questioned teachers indicated their preference of special classes in mainstream schools and 23% of the surveyed admitted preference of special schools over inclusive ones. Consequently, the idea of inclusive education was supported only by 36% of educators.

44% of the lecturers stated that learning of the students with SEN may be the most effective in special classes in mainstream schools and later in special groups in mainstream universities. None of the respondents indicated studying at special

schools or later in special higher educational institutions as the best solution. And finally, 56% of them were for inclusive education. The graphical representation of the results is in Fig. 4:

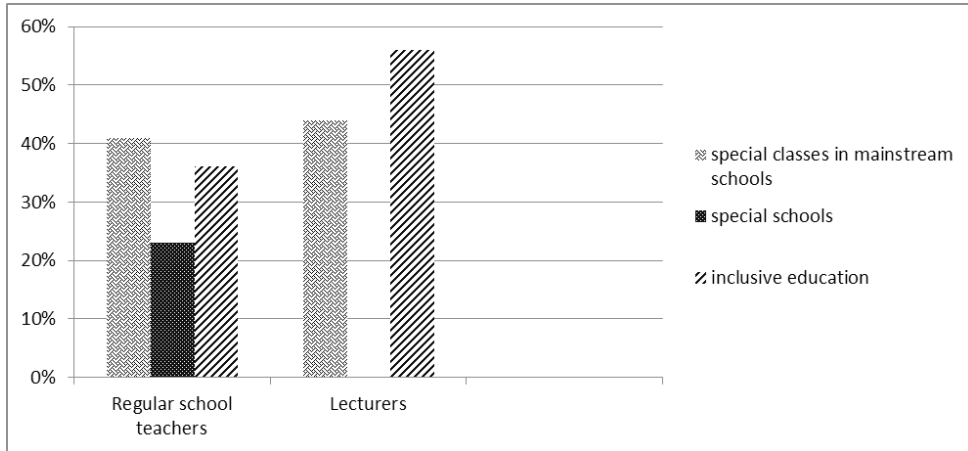


Fig. 4. Teachers' and lecturers' attitude towards inclusion

This reveals lack of community awareness about children with SEN and inclusive education, which is evidently a drawback on the way of its implementation. It is stated that the realization of inclusive education is possible “if governments are aware of the nature of the problem and are committed to solving it” (PGOIIE, 2009: 21). In Ukraine, as recent amendments to the above mentioned Law, the Resolution and the letters of the Ministry of Education and Science attest, the government recognizes the problem. Hence, policy makers should put people in the picture about changes in the Ukrainian educational system and inform about benefits of inclusion. Thus, according to the results of numerous scientific research papers, students at mainstream schools progressed in social skill development and were more likely to have higher academic achievements than those at special schools or other kinds of segregated settings, even when developmental level was similar (Wang, 2009: 155; PGOIIE, 2009: 7; Dr. Thomas Hehir et al, 2016: 11, 13). In addition to that, in the inclusive classes the students with SEN can follow a good example of appropriate behavior of regular students (Petrovska et al, 2015: 1149). At the same time, the evidence indicates that teachers' negative or neutral attitudes at the beginning of an innovation such as inclusive education may change in the process of implementation due to experience and competency development (Wang, 2009: 157) which, as a result, will lead to social cohesion (TROCWDTE, 2011: 6).

Interestingly, 54% of interviewed undergraduate students of Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (who haven't yet completed their teaching

practice at elementary and secondary schools as a part of their curriculum) stand out for promoting positive attitudes to children with special needs through education (others mentioned that their attitude to students with SEN is neutral), but 49% of respondents admitted unwillingness to work in inclusive classes.

As for the graduate students of Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (who have already completed their teaching practice at elementary and secondary schools as a part of their curriculum), 65% of the respondents have positive attitude to the children with SEN, 35% of the interviewed ones have developed neutral attitude to the children with SEN and it's positive that no one has negative attitude to them. However, only 31% of the respondents have expressed willingness to work in inclusive classes (see Fig. 5).

And both groups of respondents (undergraduate and graduate students) feel that teacher education programmes need improvements which are relevant to innovations.

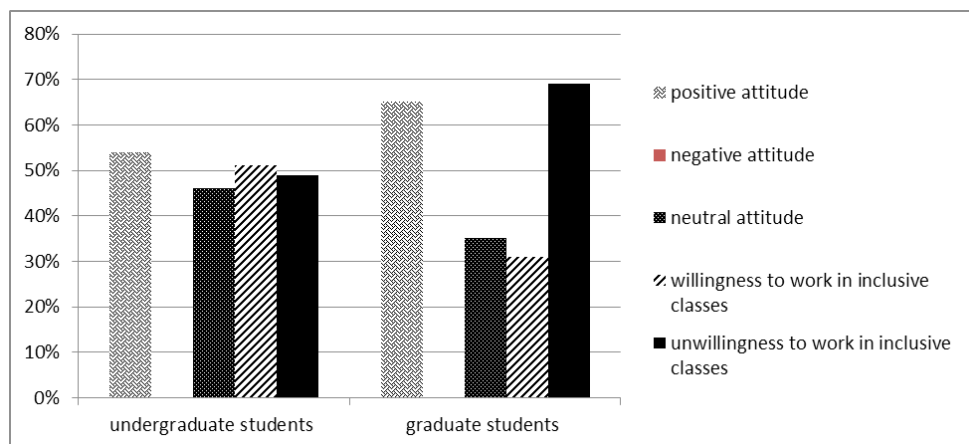


Fig. 5. Undergraduate students' and graduate students' attitude towards inclusion

As it may be seen from the data provided above and its graphical representation (Fig. 5), 9% more of graduate students than undergraduate students have positive attitude to the children with SEN. Nevertheless, 20% more of undergraduate students than graduate ones pointed out their willingness to work in inclusive classes. This may be explained by the fact that after completing their teaching practice at elementary and secondary schools the graduate students have deeper understanding of the teacher's responsibility and duties. Everything mentioned above proves the necessity of promoting the implementation of inclusive education among would-be teachers, highlighting its advantages.

Surprisingly, only 3% of questioned parents reported that they do not want their children to study with disabled students, 3% – with students with the peculiarities

of physical development, and 5% – with students belonging to socially vulnerable groups. At the same time, 49% of respondents argue against inclusion of learners with the peculiarities of psychic development (see Fig. 6).

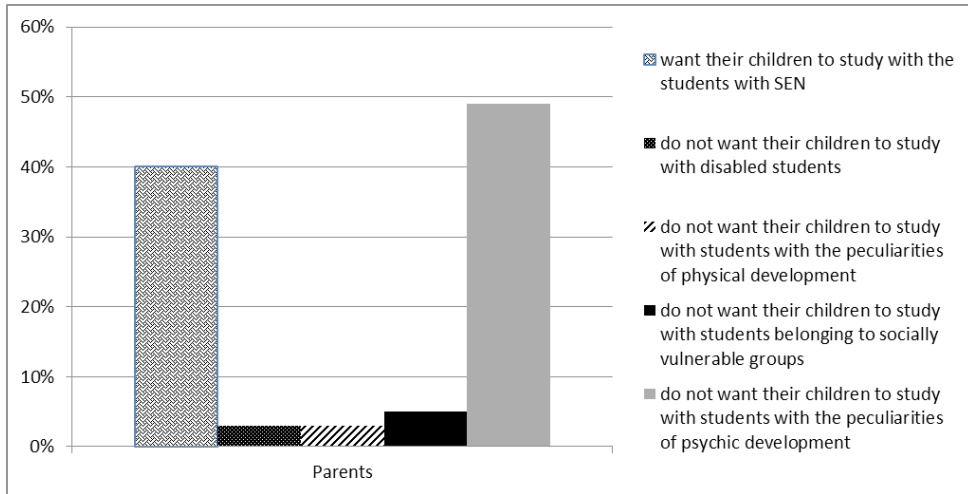


Fig. 6. Parents' attitude to their children's studying with the students with SEN

From the obtained data it may be stated that in general, parents are ready to accept students with SEN into the community of their children. Though, they express concern regarding safety and effectiveness of the studying process.

Successful inclusive education is impossible without a balanced teacher-student-parent triangle. Thus, the role of family collaboration cannot be overestimated. It has been proved that parental engagement is enhanced when parents are consulted in relation to their children's needs and strengths, on the supports and strategies being developed to support their children, and when they are involved in regular reviews of progress (GPPSSSENMS, 2017: 29). In addition, parents and carers should be involved in the process of preparation of individual programs for their children with SEN. On the other hand, given that it's not easy for parents to take care about children with SEN, they also need support while seeking inclusive education for their children (Thomas Hehir et al, 2016: 25). Thus, appropriate training of parents will contribute to effective collaboration between them, their children and teachers in the process of inclusive education.

Importantly, of all the students of secondary schools who completed the questionnaire, 88% replied that they feel comfortable among children with SEN. However, only 44% of respondents agreed that their peers with SEN should go to mainstream schools (see Fig. 7).

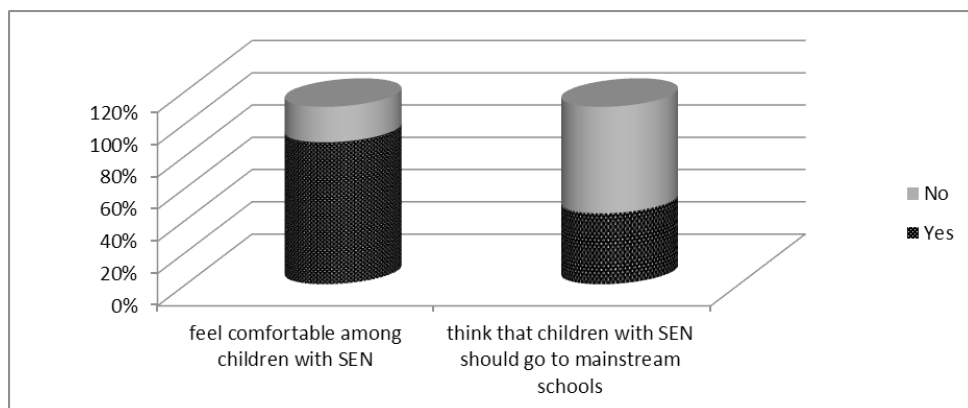


Fig. 7. Secondary schools students' attitude to the students with SEN

Having analyzed the results of the questionnaire and their graphical representation, it may be inferred that even though children's attitude to the children with SEN is rather positive, in essence most of them are not ready to accept inclusive education practically. This fact clearly emphasizes the need in providing the students with more information about the benefits of inclusive education for them personally, for children with SEN and for the society in general. Hence, if the students of secondary schools don't receive rational and reasonable explanation about the matter, it may lead to negative consequences. This may be exemplified in the statement that "perhaps, because of their experiences of unsatisfying and unstable peer relationships, students with learning disabilities appear to be at some risk for developing emotional problems" (Bernice & Wong, 2004: 152).

Yet, recent evidence suggests that an effective way to help students overcome the misconceptions they may have about people with SEN is to bring them all together in an inclusive school setting (ISSENPPG, 2007: 39). This can be explained by the fact that children are prone to accept familiar situations, i.e., if they are familiar with inclusion, they're likely to accept it as something normal and will support their peers with SEN (Thomas Hehir et al, 2016:12). Peer-tutoring is reported to be a variant of co-operative learning. It is the process whereby a student, with guidance from a teacher, helps one or more other students to learn a skill or concept (ISSENPPG, 2007: 108).

Moreover, considerable attention must be paid to negative self-perceptions of children with disabilities. Previous studies revealed that children with less negative perceptions of their learning disability had higher math achievement scores, perceived more positive global self-concept, more intellectual and behavioral competence, and more social acceptance. They also felt more support from their parents and classmates (Rothman & Cosden, 1995: 203). Hence, to implement

the law on inclusive education successfully, we should remove social prejudice, support and encourage people with SEN.

– ***school environment including difficulties in physical access.***

Considerations for students with SEN include such usual for mainstream schools aspects as heating (for those who are more sensitive to fluctuations in temperature), lighting (there should be appropriate level of contrast for visually impaired students to be able to navigate around a school and for hearing impaired students to easily see the faces of speakers against the background), ventilation (poor ventilation results in absenteeism and inattention), and acoustics (for students with hearing impairments). At the same time, it is obvious that support of different teaching and learning facilities is impossible without a sufficiently sized learning space, rearranging furniture, a kitchenette, and break-out/support spaces, where teachers or other specialists can work with individual students or small groups (TLESSSEND). Furthermore, in order to help students with SEN to be as independent as possible either at school or at home, assistive devices (“tool, technology or other mechanism that enables a person to do everyday tasks such as moving through the community, lifting an object or reading a book”) are needed (ATSATLE, 2014: 8). School environment must be adapted for children with SEN, bearing in mind that effective inclusive teaching is enhanced when visual, auditory, tactile and kinaesthetic channels of learning are used (ISSENPPG, 2007: 105). Addressing the needs of students with SEN, universal design of school buildings should have such goals as: body fit, comfort, awareness, understanding, wellness, social integration, personalization and cultural appropriateness (ATSATLE, 2014: 13 – 16). Thus, improvement of physical accessibility of schools is an inevitable part of inclusive education implementation.

In a recent paper by Wang it was reported that there are six minimal requirements for successful inclusion of students with severe disabilities: classroom and learning environments should be age appropriate; close enough to the students’ home in order to minimize excessive time spent on traveling to school; provide program interaction within the school building; procedures shall be implemented to encourage interaction between students with disabilities and non-disabled students; and no more than ten percent of students in any school should have severe disabilities (2009: 156). It’s also worth mentioning that despite the severity of impairment, there is one requirement that should be applicable to all students with SEN, i.e. they should sit in front of the class at a desk (or in a row) but together with other children (CRSVET, 2007: 16).

Unfortunately, facilities such as ramps, lifts, hoists, and wheelchair accessible bathrooms are absent in majority of Ukrainian schools. This influences mobility of students with SEN and, consequently, interferes with their right to education.

– ***expenses involved***

Implementation of inclusive education is impossible without adequate financial backing. In order to promote this type of education, funding for the development of

facilities and equipment should be increased; teachers and educational institutions should be economically motivated. Schools should be supplied with rearranging furniture, special equipment and textbooks, video materials, audiotapes, materials in large print. New technological opportunities such as voice recognition programmes should be available for students who have difficulties in writing.

Moreover, the Ukrainian government must be able to pay for the work of other services. For example, *teaching assistants* are supposed to support learning and participation of all. *Special needs assistants*, who are recruited to assist schools in providing the necessary non-teaching services, are not mentioned in a schedule of positions and salaries. These specialists should work closely with the teachers in providing assistance to students with SEN, for example in the areas of personal care, supporting mobility, or supervising work or recreation activities (ISSENPPG, 2007: 83).

It was found that only 66% of interviewed regular school teachers have used support services in their teaching practice. In Ukraine this support has been provided by school nurses and psychologists, who help children to succeed academically and socially. But two above-mentioned specialists are not enough to provide services for a school of about 1000 students, among whom there are children with disabilities, behavior problems and special talents. At the same time, respondents stressed that they need strong support of such professionals as teaching assistants (59%), developmental pediatricians (41%), social care teachers (23%), exercise physiologists (2%), physical therapists (7%), neurologists (7%), rehabilitation physicians (18%), and occupational therapists (5%).

None of the interviewed lecturers have ever used support services in their teaching practice. However, 45% of them indicated that in order to make training of students with SEN more effective, they would like to cooperate with defectologists (speech therapists, visual impairment specialists, etc.), 100% – with psychologists, 56% – with social care teachers, 33% – with teaching assistants and 11% – with rehabilitation physicians (see Fig. 8).

However, one study suggests that the children with SEN should be viewed “as contributors to society, not burdens”. Investment in implementation of inclusive education will reduce social expenditure and dependence; it will free family members from caring responsibilities and help children with SEN become members of labour market so that they can support themselves (TROCWDTE, 2011: 7).

Thus, in financial terms, implementation of inclusive education in Ukraine is easier said than done.

Conclusions

The results of the carried out research show that the issues of the implementation of inclusive education in Ukraine have become of fundamental importance for every Ukrainian family having a child with SEN in particularly and for the

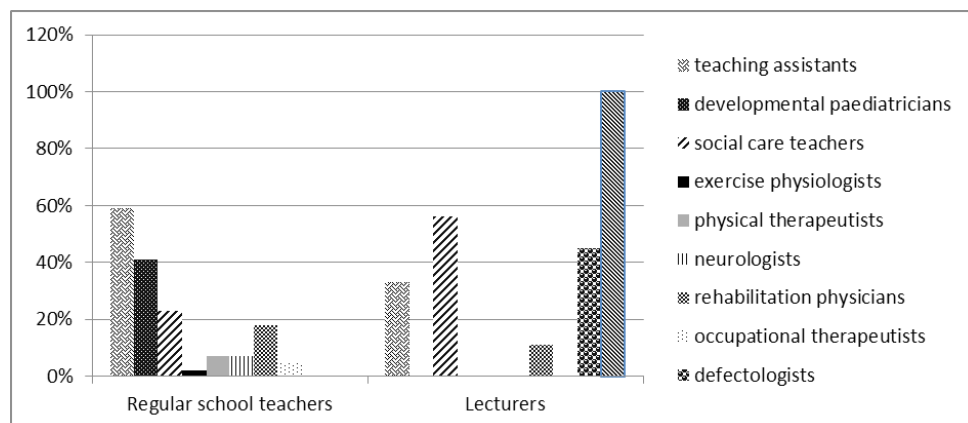


Fig. 8 Results of the survey on the necessity of teachers' and lecturers' cooperation with other professionals to ensure effective education of students with SEN

country in general. In order to meet these needs of the society, the Ukrainian government has put in force the amendments introduced to the law on peculiarities of education accessibility for people with special educational needs (SEN), the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine issued the Resolution on Introducing the Changes to The Procedure of Implementation of Inclusive Education in General Educational Institutions and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine has sent letters to the departments of education and science of regional and Kyiv city state administrations, institutes of postgraduate education and general educational institutions about various aspects of inclusive education and its implementation.

Even though inclusive education is highly valued and promoted all over the world, it has its positive and negative sides for regular education students, students with SEN, regular education teachers and educational institutions. But decisive advantages of inclusive education and positive outcomes as the result of its implementation prove the necessity of promotion of inclusive education in Ukraine.

Following on from the results of the carried out investigation (during which theoretical, empirical and statistical methods were used) such challenges on the way of inclusive education implementation in Ukraine may be singled out as: (1) skills of teachers (despite the fact that most of the respondents had experience of teaching students with SEN, they hadn't received training in special education. However, successful inclusion won't be possible without providing special training to teachers on effective strategies, techniques, and approaches, especially given that they have to be actively involved in development and implementation of the individual program of personality); (2) attitudes towards inclusion and disability among teachers, trainee teachers, parents, and peers. Self-perception of children

with SEN (judging from the results of the questionnaires and interviews, it may be inferred that in general representatives of our society are not ready to accept inclusion in practice in spite of having positive attitude towards inclusion and disability. In addition, self-perception of children with SEN will be positive when they are warmly welcomed and, consequently, these children can have better academic achievements); (3) school environment including difficulties in physical access (to ensure quality and accessible education for all school environment must be adapted for children with SEN. However, in majority of Ukrainian schools such facilities as ramps, lifts, hoists, wheelchair accessible bathrooms and others are absent which influences mobility of students with SEN and interferes with their right to education); (4) expenses involved (the survey found that special needs assistants and special equipment are needed to provide quality education to children with SEN which involves additional funding. Taking into account current financial situation in Ukraine, it is not easy to provide additional financing).

The perspectives of further investigation on this issue is seen in studying and analyzing the ways of cooperation between secondary schools and higher educational establishments with the aim of opening the centers of inclusive education to ensure appropriate training of teachers in the interest of promotion of inclusive education implementation in Ukraine.

Acknowledgements. The authors gratefully acknowledge schools № 6 and №26 (Ternopil, Ukraine), their communities, lecturers and students of Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (Ukraine) for taking part in this research. Thanks are also extended to Olena Abukhazhar – a practicing school psychologist.

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