

# PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF FUTURE SPECIALISTS IN THE INTEGRATED EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE FACTORS OF ITS FORMATION

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## **Abstract**

This paper deals with the factors affecting the psychological well-being of the person; the intensity of indexes of psychological well-being of personalities of both students with disabilities and healthy students in integrated groups has been analyzed: self-relationship, self-realization, and orientations of life-sense, interrelation of the past, present and future in the structure of psychological time of personality life have been discussed.

The students with disabilities have more expressed demand in support and positive attitude to them. The reliable differences of a number of indexes of self-realization have been found, such as spontaneity ( $p < 0,001$ ), competency in time, value orientations, flexibility of behaviour, sensibility to oneself, self-esteem, self-understanding ( $p < 0,05$ ). The differences of life-sense orientations of students with disabilities are more expressed in such categories: orientation to process ( $p < 0,001$ ), locus of control of Self ( $p < 0,001$ ), and persistence in gaining the goal ( $p < 0,05$ ). Indexes of psychological time of personality life are expressed in the estimation of the expected span of life. Only 40 percent of students with disabilities have adequate psychological and chronicle ages but 27 per cent have overestimated and 33 per cent underestimated indexes.

The great significance of social environment is shown in the process of adaptation and integration in educational environment.

**Key words:** *Psychological well-being of the personality, self-attitude, self-actualization, life goals, values, temporary perspective.*

## **Introduction**

The problem of psychological well-being of personality in psychology and in other sciences has deep roots. The urgency of investigation has been caused by practical necessity in determination and development of inner personality factors that promote its adequate social behaviour and self-realization.

The context of the problem obtains the special meaning in the period of professional development of a personality, because psychological well-being of future specialist's personality is a very important component for effective and successful professional activity that requires realization of personal abilities.

However, despite the widespread concept "psychological well-being" in the scientific and popular literature, contemporary national psychology has its own generally accepted definition.

A significant amount of works (Bakhareva, 2004, Fesenko, 2005, Dzhidarian, Antonova, 1995, Golovaha, Kronik, 1984, Panina, 2006 and others) are devoted to studying of the problem. The concept of psychological well-being is associated with a number of relative concepts: "mental health", "normal and abnormal personality", "positive lifestyle", "emotional comfort", "quality of life", "self-actualization personality", etc. (Fesenko, 2005). Often the concept of psychological well-being refers to a category known as "mental health".

Theoretical basis for understanding the phenomenon of psychological well-being research was started by Rieff, Bredbern and others whose works are devoted to the studying of subjective well-being of the personality. It initially included the concept of happiness, life satisfaction, positive emotional, psychological health, fortitude, etc. However, the understanding of happiness, defined as the balance between positive and negative affect, was not widely disseminated. Logically Argayl in his book "The Psychology of Happiness" rarely uses this concept because "happiness" can be regarded as awareness of one's life satisfaction, or as the frequency and intensity of positive emotions" (Argayl, 2003).

Targeting the subjective well-being, the orientation of researchers is associated with the principle position that is evaluated only by the personality in terms of one's values and goals. As the latter are always individual, it cannot be the universal structure for all the well-being. The only thing that is left is to study the factors that influence upon the feeling of happiness and satisfaction.

The term "subjective well-being" can be found in literature as a synonym with term psychological well-being (Bocharova, 2005). One of the researchers of this phenomenon, Shamionov (Shamionov, 2003) defines it as a concept expressing person's own attitude to his/her personality, his/her life and the process is of great significance in terms of assimilation of normative ideas about the external and internal environment, and is characterized by a sense of satisfaction.

Psychological well-being consists of two major components: the prevalence of positive emotions over negative and positive assessment of one's life. This division is relatively holistic in terms of understanding of the interrelation of components (Panina, 2006). There is a distribution of the well-being components into the cognitive and emotional ones from the standpoint of the nucleus and the background (Dzhidarian, Antonova, 1995).

Understanding the structure of psychological well-being has been extended by Filimonenko, who states that it is not absolutely positive emotional experience, but rather serves as an emotional display of a person's confidence that he/she moves through life in the right direction (Filimonenko, 1997).

Such understanding of well-being does not simply underline the importance of future prospects and personal aspirations, but also in some way makes them as components of the well-being.

Referring to the integration of different theories related to well-being, Rieff offers a generalized model of psychological well-being, which includes six components: a positive attitude towards oneself and one's past life (Self-Acceptance); the development and self-actualization (Personal Growth); relationships with others filled with caring and trust (Positive Relations with Others), ability to follow one's own convictions (Autonomy).

The theoretical concept of subjective well-being is basically created in the context of existential-phenomenological approach but there are also original and independent models of subjective well-being, in particular, in the works of Voronina and Fesenko (Voronina, 2002, Fesenko, 2005).

According to A. V. Voronina's model psychological well-being is defined as a systemic quality of the person, obtained in the process of life and on the basis of psycho-physiological safety functions. The subject is revealed in the experience of the content fullness and value of life in general as a means of achieving domestic social-oriented goals and serves as a condition of realization of one's potential capabilities (Voronina, 2002).

Analyzing the variety of approaches to the concept of psychological well-being, Fesenko proposes to understand this construct as a rather complex experience of satisfaction with the life, reflecting both a current and potential aspects of a person's life (Fesenko, 2005). Thus, psychological well-being is an integral index of the degree of person's direction to realization of the fundamental components of positive functioning as well as the degree of the realization of this direction. This direction is expressed in the subjective sense of happiness and satisfaction with one's own life.

As an integral relevant to the personality education, psychological well-being exists in dynamics and includes temporary and motivational aspects of activity. It can also be presumed that the psychological well-being depends on the degree of realism, structure and integrity (consistency of future, past and present) of life perspective of personality that include the aims, objectives, values and aspirations.

**The object of the research** is psychological factors and the peculiarities of psychological well-being of students with disabilities and healthy students in integrated groups.

**The aim of the research** is to identify characteristics and factors of psychological well-being formation of the personality in an integrated educational environment by means of comparative diagnostics between students with disabilities and healthy students, the interrelation of indexes with valuable self-entropy, especially the perception of the relationship of the past, present and future in the structure of psychological time of personality, capabilities and features of self-actualization of students in integrated educational environment.

Tasks of the investigation:

1. To find out the contents and main components of the *psychological well-being of the personality* concept in the literature on Psychology.
2. To determine the specific peculiarities of intensity of *psychological well-being* indexes of students with disabilities and healthy students.
3. To set up the interrelation of *psychological well-being* indexes of students with disabilities and healthy students, and as a result to find out the possibilities of personal development optimization and self-realization of the students in the integrated environment.

#### **Methods and Organization of the Research**

The following methods of diagnostics have been used in research: self-rating (Stolin-Pantelev); SAT (self-actualization test methods, adapted version, Shostroma), SLO (sense life orientation, Leontiev); perception of the relationship of the past, present and future in a psychological structure of personality (Kronik), diagnosis of volitional self-regulation.

The research was conducted in the integrated groups of students of the Open International University for Human Development "Ukraine", where healthy students and students with disabilities study together.

In mathematical and statistical data processing the methods of analysis have been used

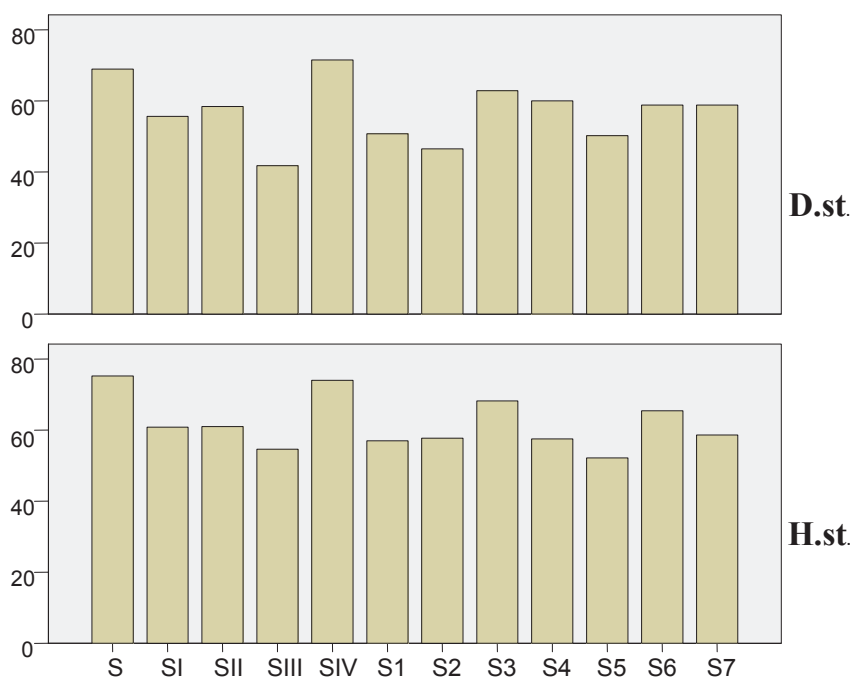
to calculate probability differences between samples, descriptive statistics and correlation analysis.

96 students with special needs and 82 healthy students took part in the experiment. The SPSS 13.0 statistic programme has been used for results processing.

### Results of the Research

It was expected to find significant differences in examined indexes of healthy students and students with disabilities, whose development is determined by the lack (deficit) of personal resources.

Intensity of indexes, represented in Figure 1, shows non-significant differences in personality profiles in the selected groups of students.



**Figure 1.** Intensity of Self-Attitude Index (on the method of Stolin-Panteleyev)

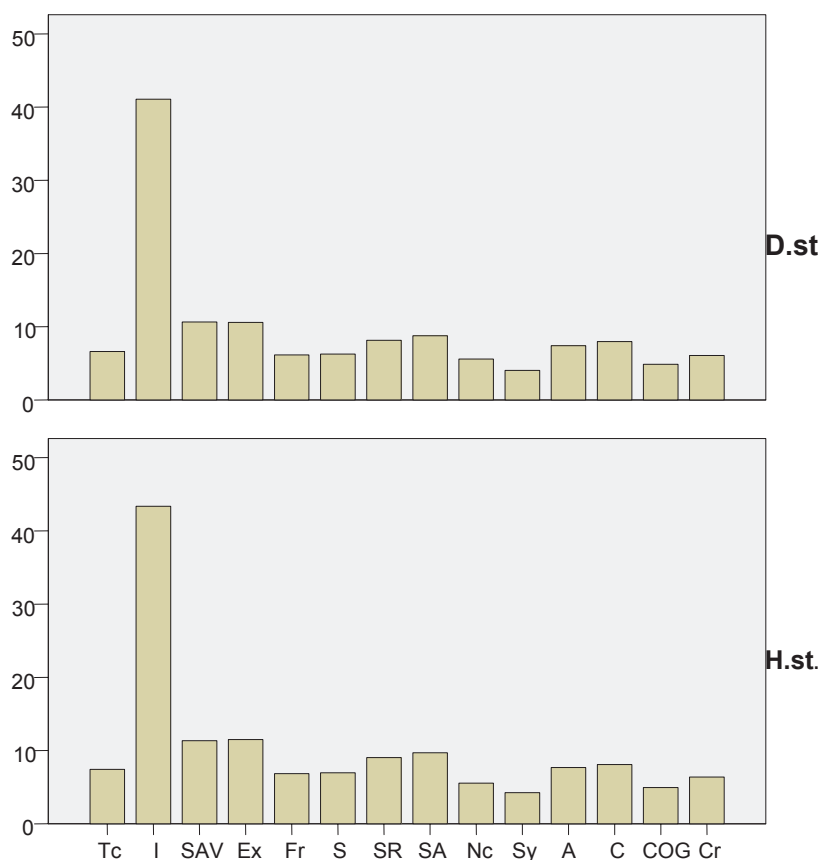
Note: S – integral scale; SI – self-esteem; SII – auto sympathy; SIII – expectancy of others' positive mode; SIV – self-interest; S1 – complacency; S2 – expectancy of others' attitude; S3 – self-perception; S4 – self-consistency; S5 – self-accusation; S6 – self-interest; S7 – self-understanding.

D.st. – students with disabilities; H.st. – healthy students.

To assess differences the samples using t-Student criterion were compared.

Reliable significant differences were found only on the scale of positive expectations of positive attitude to others ( $p < 0,001$ ).

As seen from the data in Figure 2 the similarity of profiles of indexes of personality is characteristic in the selected groups.



**Figure 2.** Intensity of Self-Realization Index (SAT's method)

Note: Tc – competence over time; I – support; SAV – values ; Ex – flexibility behavior; Fr – sensitivity to oneself; S – spontaneity; SR – esteem; SA – self; Nc – understanding of human nature; Sy – Synergy; A – acceptance of aggression; C – communication ability; COG – cognitive needs; C – creativity.  
D.st. – students with disabilities; H.st. – healthy students.

Significant differences were found in indexes of spontaneity scales ( $p < 0,001$ ), competence in time, support, value orientations, behaviour flexibility, sensitivity to oneself, self-esteem, self-perception ( $p < 0,05$ ).

In the orientation of the sense of life the differences are manifested on the scales and focus on process ( $p < 0,001$ ) and control I ( $p < 0,001$ ) indexes which are more shown among students with disabilities. Also for the latter more characteristic feature is persistence in gaining goals ( $p < 0,05$ ).

The method of Kronik was used (Kronik, 1984) to detect the possible regulation of consciousness and behaviour of a person with disabilities through the study of perception of the interrelation of the past, present and future in the structure of psychological time. It made it possible to reveal some psychological differences of students with disabilities and healthy students. The results are presented in Table 1.

The above data show that the span of life of the students with disabilities is expected to be lower than of healthy ones and differ in average by 26 years. Unfortunately, the cases have been encountered when a 20-year old person plans to live 27-40 years. The estimation of life expectancy as an index of psychological well-being is a subjective index of the health level.

**Table 1.** Average Subjective Ratings of Students' Life

		LT	SF	PA	RA	EPr.	EP	EF
<b>D.st.</b>	$\bar{X}$	68,7	0,36	22,6	19,5	3,4	6,3	6,9
	S	12,4	0,08	4,7	2,5	1,5	1,6	1,8
<b>H.st.</b>	$\bar{X}$	94,7	0,23	20,9	19,4	4,9	5,6	6,3
	S	8,2	0,06	2,1	2,3	1,7	1,2	1,6

Note: LT – lifetime (duration of life), SF – a sense of realization, PA – psychological age, RA – real age, EPr., EP, EF – evaluation of the past, present and future; D.st. – students with disabilities; H.st. – healthy students.

Feasibility index depends on the specific gravity of one's past in subjective picture of life. Healthy students have this index lower in data and that shows a bigger perspective in this aspect. But for students with disabilities, this index is within the norm for this age group (0.35–0.40, Kronik).

Psychological age (PA) of a person is an integral index of a person's attitude to life time and its correlation with passport data (chronological age - CA). The PA of healthy students is found to be close to CA.

Students with disabilities have higher index than healthy students.

The difference of the data draws attention: only 40% of students with disabilities have adequate PA and CA; 27% of students of this category have this index within 14 years that can be an indicator of non-realized creative potential; 33% of these students have the difference about 28 years, that can cause pessimism and unbelief in opportunities of life, and may be accompanied by pronounced consumer and hedonistic orientations, because a too high PA correlates with lower rates of health state, energies, mood and life satisfaction (Kronik, 1990).

Indicating a person's attitude to one's present, past and future, estimation of five-year span of life and its level witnesses the high importance of student years in the life of healthy students and students with disabilities. A small number of 10-point rating suggests rational perception of their existence.

### Summary of the research results

Thus, the data of the experiment indicate a lack of expressiveness in personalities of students with special needs and adaptability to the conditions of integrated education.

However, the relationships inside the selected groups have some differences. The students with disabilities need the support from the environment. It concerns the forming of life tasks and receiving feedback in the process of life activity.

The social environment has a significant impact on efficiency and quality of life for students with disabilities, both in the sense of real assistance and psychological support to their subjective well-being.

In intercorrelation matrix of indexes that characterizes the personality of healthy students, most indicators are characterized by an extensive network of mutual correlations. That is not observed in the experiment of students with disabilities.

These characteristics indicate differences in comparable categories of personal organization of examined students. The relationships in personal characteristics of healthy people are interchangeable and flexible, but these links of people with disabilities are organized

in one direction, the links are mainly determined by the indexes of expectations of support of others and expectations of positive attitude from others.

### Conclusion

1. The analysis of the research on this theme has permitted to determine *psychological well-being of the personality* concept as a complicated experience of satisfaction in one's own life that reflects simultaneously urgent as well as potential aspects of personality life. It is integral index of person orientation degree for realization of basic components of positive functioning and the degree of realization of this orientation. Subjectively it is expressed in the experience of self-satisfaction and satisfaction in one's life.

2. The students with disabilities have more expressed demand in support and positive attitude to them. The reliable differences of a number of indexes of self-realization have been found such as spontaneity ( $p < 0,001$ ), competency in time, value orientations, flexibility of behaviour, sensibility to oneself, self-esteem, self-understanding ( $p < 0,05$ ).

The differences of life-sense orientations of students with disabilities are more expressed in such categories: orientation to process ( $p < 0,001$ ), locus of control of 'Self' ( $p < 0,001$ ), and persistence in gaining the goal ( $p < 0,05$ ).

The differences in the indexes of psychological time of personality life are expressed in the evaluation of expected span of life. The span of life of students with disabilities is  $68, 7 \pm 12, 4$  years while the healthy students' one is  $94, 7 \pm 8, 2$ .

Indexes of psychological time of personality life are expressed in the estimation of the expected span of life. Only 40 percent of students with disabilities have adequate psychological and chronicle ages but 27 per cent have overestimated and 33 per cent underestimated indexes.

3. The system of building links on personal characteristics of people with disabilities is less dynamic and adaptive and an important component of this system is a support from others. Due to the resource of this system the self-regulation is completed and other structures of the personality are mobilized.

The success of the self-realization of the person with disabilities is to provide opportunities for "Self" development by one's own efforts in joint activities with other people in an integrated educational environment, and the society in general.

Whereas the psychological well-being of the personality depends on the characteristics of the environment, personal space and opportunities, one can influence on psychological well-being and quality of life of students with disabilities providing positive attitude and optimal psychological support in integrated groups.

Awareness of life is positively correlated with indexes of psychological well-being of the personality. That is why the improving of psychological well-being will promote the increasing of life awareness indexes, awareness of life goals and the possibilities of their achievement.

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