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THE STATE OF READINESS OF FUTURE TEACHERS-PSYCHOLOGISTS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

The article explores how future educational psychologists are trained to work with children, who have emotional and behavioral difficulties, particularly ADHD. The authors discuss the phenomenon of hyperactive in the context of modern society and describe the real challenges faced by parents and teachers of such children. The paper also highlights international approaches to training psychologists, drawing on examples from the United States and several European countries. The main aim of study is to assess how well today's psychology students are prepared to support children with ADHD. Based on these findings, the authors propose practical steps for improving training programs so that graduates can work with these children more effectively.

The study emphasizes the importance of quality training for specialists to effectively work with children experiencing emotional-volitional disturbances and offers ways to optimize the educational process, taking into account the specific needs of this category of children.

The practical value of this work lies in identifying what already functions well in the training of psychologists who support children with ADHD, and what still needs to be improved. Based on this analysis, the authors suggest specific steps for updating the training programs. Putting these measures into practice should help specialists work with such children more effectively and make their integration into school everyday life easier.

As a result of the research, it becomes possible to develop high-quality skills and competencies for specialists working with children with ADHD and to improve the quality of their training.

Keywords: teacher-psychologist, children with attention deficit and hyperactivity, training of teacher-psychologists, educational program, research.

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Болашақ психолог мұғалімдердің гипербелсенділік және назар аударудың жетіспеушілік синдромы бар балалармен жұмысқа дайындық жағдайы

Бұл мақалада психологтарды эмоционалдық және ерікті сферасы бұзылған балалармен, әсіресе гипербелсенділік және зейін жетіспеушілік синдромы бар балалармен жұмыс істеуге дайындау аспектілері қарастырылады. Авторлар қазіргі әлемдегі ГЗЖС феноменін зерттейді, осы синдромы бар балаларды тәрбиелеу және оқыту мәселелерін анықтайды, сонымен қатар шет елдерде психологтарды дайындау тәжірибесін қарастырады.

Зерттеудің мақсаты болашақ педагогикалық психологтардың ГЗЖС бар балалармен жұмыс істеуге дайындығын зерттеу болып табылады. Алынған нәтижелер психологтарды даярлаудың білім беру бағдарламаларын жетілдіру бойынша ұсыныстар әзірлеуге негіз болды. Зерттеуде эмоционалдық-еріктік сферасы бұзылған балалармен тиімді жұмыс істеу үшін мамандарды сапалы дайындаудың маңыздылығы атап өтіліп, осы санаттағы балалардың ерекшеліктерін ескере отырып, оқу-тәрбие процесін оңтайландырудың жолдары ұсынылады.

Зерттеудің практикалық маңыздылығы ГЗЖС бар балалармен жұмыс істеуге педагогикалық психологтарды дайындаудың күшті және әлсіз жақтарын анықтауда және білім беру бағдарламаларын жетілдіру бойынша ұсыныстар әзірлеуде жатыр. Осы ұсынымдарды жүзеге асыру педагогикалық психологтардың осы санаттағы балалармен тиімді жұмыс істеуіне, олардың бейімделуі мен оқуын жақсартуға ықпал ете алады. Зерттеу нәтижесінде ГЗЖС бар балалармен

мыс істеу үшін мамандардың сапалы дағдылары мен құзыреттерін қалыптастыруға және оларды оқыту сапасын арттыруға мүмкіндік туады.

Түйін сөздер: педагог-психолог, гипербелсенділік және назар аударудың жетіспеушілік синдромы бар балалар, педагогикалық психологтарды дайындау, білім беру бағдарламасы, зерттеу.

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Состояние готовности будущих педагогов-психологов к работе с детьми с синдромом дефицита внимания и гиперактивности

В данной статье рассматриваются аспекты подготовки педагогов-психологов к работе с детьми, имеющими нарушения эмоционально-волевой сферы, в особенности детьми с синдромом дефицита внимания и гиперактивности (СДВГ). Проводится анализ феномена СДВГ в современном мире, обозначаются проблемы воспитания и обучения детей с данным синдромом, а также рассматривается опыт подготовки педагогов и психологов в зарубежных странах.

Цель исследования направлена на изучение готовности будущих педагогов-психологов работать с детьми с СДВГ. Полученные результаты стали основой для разработки рекомендаций по совершенствованию образовательных программ подготовки педагогов-психологов. Исследование подчеркивает значимость качественной подготовки специалистов для эффективной работы с детьми с нарушениями эмоционально-волевой сферы и предлагает способы оптимизации образовательного процесса с учетом специфики данной категории детей.

Практическая значимость исследования заключается в определении слабых и сильных сторон подготовки педагогов-психологов к работе с детьми с СДВГ и в разработке рекомендаций по усовершенствованию образовательных программ подготовки педагогов-психологов. Внедрение этих рекомендаций может способствовать более эффективной работе с данной категорией детей, улучшая их адаптацию и обучение. В результате исследования становится возможным формирование качественных навыков и компетенций специалистов для работы с детьми с СДВГ и повышение качества их подготовки.

Ключевые слова: педагог-психолог, дети с дефицитом внимания и гиперактивностью, подготовка педагогов-психологов, образовательная программа, исследование.

В данной статье используются следующие сокращения: СДВГ – синдром дефицита внимания и гиперактивность, ОП – образовательная программа, ННПЦРСИО – Национальный научно-практический центр развития специального и инклюзивного образования.

Introduction

The educational system of Kazakhstan encompasses a significant cohort of learners who require particular attention, understanding, and individualized support. These are children with special educational needs, each of whom encounters distinct challenges that necessitate a specialized approach to their schooling. While Kazakhstan has made considerable progress in reforming its educational policy and systems to ensure greater inclusivity, the endeavor to enhance comprehensive and effective psycho-pedagogical support for these children remains a persistent priority.

This article explores the multifaceted domain of educating children with special needs in Kazakhstan, with a specific focus on the intricacies of the psycho-pedagogical support provided to them within the nation's schools. It is imperative to ac-

knowledge that the challenges and corresponding solutions in this field are influenced by both the specific national context and broader global discourse. A paramount objective is to secure equal access to quality education for all children, irrespective of their individual learning abilities or disabilities. Kazakhstan, alongside many other nations, has adopted inclusive education as a foundational principle, thereby affirming the right of every child to learn in a supportive environment that is responsive to their specific requirements. Nevertheless, the practical implementation of this principle presents substantial complexities.

This analysis takes into account the evolving landscape of psychological support for these children within Kazakhstani educational institutions. By integrating data-driven analysis with illustrative real-life case studies, we seek to provide a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics character-

izing inclusive education in Kazakhstan and to propose potential pathways for the enhancement of existing support systems.

Having considered the importance of investigating the prevalence of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) among children worldwide, we will now delineate the concept of ADHD in greater detail and outline its key characteristics that must be taken into account when working with children and adolescents.

ADHD, also known as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or hyperkinetic disorder, is a significant clinical condition—a behavioral and neurodevelopmental disorder with an onset in childhood (Polanczyk, 2015: 345). It is manifested by symptoms such as difficulties in sustaining attention, hyperactivity, and poorly managed impulsivity (Anderson, 2012: 511). In the DSM-4, ADHD was classified among hyperkinetic disorders—a group of emotional and behavioral disorders typically observed in childhood—while in the DSM-5, it is categorized as a neurodevelopmental disorder. The symptoms of ADHD arise from executive dysfunction, and emotional lability is often considered a core symptom. In children, attentional problems can lead to poor academic performance in school (Armour, 2016: 60).

Currently, in the Republic of Kazakhstan, several universities offer training programs for future school psychologists.

Yet reasonable question arises: do these programs devote enough attention specifically to children with ADHD? We need to rethink our approach and design courses that are not just general in nature, but deliberately tailored to preparing psychologists to work with hyperactivity. After all, it is often the school psychologist who first notices signs of ADHD and becomes the child's primary source of support. Without focused, well-targeted training, future specialists simply will not.

The present study constitutes a preliminary analysis of the needs and competencies of young specialists in this field (Moghaddam, 2009: 1).

According to the press service of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in the 2021–2022 academic year, approximately 50,000 children with special needs were enrolled in general education schools, a figure which included children with ADHD; by 2023, this number had increased to 55,000.

Within the framework of the legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan, including the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan «On Education» of 2007 (Article 8) places a special obligation on the

state: to guarantee that the special education needs of citizens, including children, are met and to create all necessary conditions for this. It concerns opportunities for continuous development, Learning at any age, the free expression of individual abilities, and – which is very important – the right to choose an appropriate form of education based on each child's individual characteristics.

These legal provisions emphasize how important the task of building a truly inclusive and accessible educational environment is in Kazakhstan. It must be a system that not only provides equal opportunities for everyone but also respects each person's right to an individual path of development, especially when it concerns special educational needs. The key principle here is a personalized approach: support for every child is based on his or her uniqueness, interests, and capabilities. In schools where such children study, educational goals extend beyond the standard curriculum. The main priority is to ensure high-quality education for every student on equal terms. At the same time, it is essential not to overlook children who face learning difficulties, attention deficits, or hyperactivity (ADHD). These children are at a higher risk of themselves in situations of social or educational exclusion. This position is also supported by international standards, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and UNESCO recommendations: inclusiveness, equality of rights, and the active involvement of every child in the learning process – regardless of psychological or physical characteristics – must form the foundation of modern education.

This approach not only aligns with international standards but also fosters the creation of an educational environment that is genuinely conducive to inclusion.

Current Situation and Research Framework

Today, the staffing structure of schools includes support professionals such as speech therapists, special needs educators (defectologists), and psychologists. However, the question of these specialists' preparedness to work with children with special needs within the context of a general education organization remains pertinent.

Research objective: to determine the level of competence and readiness of future educational psychologists to work with children with ADHD.

Object of the study: future educational psychologists.

Subject of the study: the content and structure of the training of future educational psychologists aimed at working with children with ADHD.

Theoretical Significance of the Research. The obtained results will contribute to the expansion of scientific knowledge concerning the challenges of inclusive education and the specificities of training specialists who provide psychological and pedagogical support to children with ADHD.

Practical Significance of the Research. The research findings can be used to improve the educational programs for training educational psychologists, as well as to implement practical recommendations within the school system to enhance support for children with ADHD.

Literature review

To understand the importance of training psychologists in line with contemporary realities, it was necessary to analyze the experience of other countries. Psychology is currently one of the most sought-after courses worldwide. According to the international QS ranking, 10 out of the 15 top universities globally offering psychology programs are located in the United States (Major Sources Baker, 2009:67).

In the United States, there are more than 50 specializations within the field of Psychology. An undergraduate program in psychology typically involves four years of study at a college or university. Curricula for studying psychology include topics such as cognitive psychology, social psychology, developmental psychology, and physiological or comparative psychology (Benjamin, 2005:1).

Aspiring psychologists continue their professional education at the master's level and within doctoral programs. For instance, the University of Texas at Concordia offers education in the field of behavioral sciences (McFall, 2006:27). Given that most children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) attend regular classes, Germany recognizes the importance of robust training to provide these children with proper care and education based on a deep knowledge of ADHD (Martin, 2014:29).

Psychologists must have sufficient opportunities to study ADHD within their curriculum before commencing professional practice.

In Italy, significant knowledge and experience regarding Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) exist; however, it is important to note that students and future specialists still require a specialized and individualized approach to studying and treating this disorder. The understanding of ADHD among educators and psychologists has been stud-

ied primarily in the United States and Australia. For example, Sciutto, Terjesen, and Bender Frank (2020) assessed the knowledge of American school psychologists about ADHD using the Knowledge of Attention Deficit Disorders Scale (KADDS). It was found that the score for accurate knowledge among American school psychologists was 47.80% (Sciutto, 2020:15).

Similar studies have been conducted in South Korea. A survey of elementary school teachers (grades 1-6) was carried out to assess their knowledge of ADHD. The overall score for the quality of knowledge was 53.50% (Kang, 2016:136).

In Germany, Schmiedeler conducted a comparable study, which revealed that the level of accurate knowledge about ADHD among educators and psychologists remains insufficient (Schmiedeler, 2013:143). Research by Lee underscores the importance of preparing teachers to appropriately manage children with ADHD in the classroom, including their role in the early diagnosis and developmental support of such children (Lee, 2015:110).

The training in psychology is based on an interdisciplinary approach and requires knowledge of various disciplines such as biology, pedagogy, philosophy, marketing, and scientific research. The field of psychology encompasses the study of general psychology, personality psychology, developmental psychology, educational psychology, clinical psychology, psychodiagnostics, test theory, social psychology, biological psychology, and neuropsychology.

Furthermore, numerous studies have evaluated the readiness of future educational psychologists to work with children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Among them, a study conducted by American researcher Du Paul in 2019 found that while psychology students demonstrated an excellent theoretical understanding of ADHD, they lacked practical skills in managing the behavior of children with ADHD during lessons. This is attributed to limited opportunities to work with such children prior to the commencement of work experience and training. Overall, even if psychology students have a sound theoretical grasp of ADHD, additional practical training and experience may be required to develop the skills necessary for working with children with ADHD.

Educators require a comprehensive educational program to manage the behavior of children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and to create a positive educational environment for all students (DuPaul GJ, 2015:169).

In another study conducted by Wagner and colleagues, it was found that psychologists who received training in behavioral methods for working with children with ADHD reported fewer problems in their classrooms compared to psychologists who did not undergo such training (Wagner, 2019:234).

Power and colleagues conducted a study in which they established that the implementation of a school intervention program improved academic performance and reduced ADHD symptoms in children with this disorder. The program provided training for teachers and psychologists in ADHD management, including behavior management strategies, academic support, and parent involvement (Power, 2018:67).

The results of these studies highlight the role of training programs in preparing specialists to work with children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Thus, the importance of integrating the skills, knowledge, and attitudes related to ADHD management into the training programs for educational psychologists cannot be overstated. This will enhance the readiness of specialists to work with children with ADHD and help them provide the necessary support for successful learning and socialization.

Based on the conducted research, it can be concluded that, although students have a good theoretical understanding of ADHD, they require more practical experience to develop the necessary behavior management skills for children with ADHD. Furthermore, educators and psychologists need more comprehensive and practical training to enable them to work effectively with children with ADHD.

Materials and methods

The questionnaire included the collection of demographic information, encompassing age, gender, place of residence, and year of study. The survey was conducted using the Google Forms platform and consisted of 9 questions, each offering three to four response options. To enable a deeper analysis and to clarify frequently encountered difficulties among students, structured interviews were also conducted. These interviews supplemented the quantitative data with qualitative insights, thereby enriching the understanding of the challenges and perspectives.

The pilot stage of the research involved the preliminary processing of responses from one group of students. This stage was aimed at identifying ambiguities in the question wording and difficulties encountered during the questionnaire completion process. Based on the results of the pilot study, ad-

justments were made to the survey structure, which enhanced its reliability and validity. A crucial step was obtaining electronic informed consent from the participants, which ensured adherence to high ethical standards of research and confirmed voluntary participation.

A thorough statistical analysis of the data was performed within the framework of the study. Given the diversity of participant characteristics, particular attention was paid to the accuracy of result interpretation. Fisher's exact test became an important analytical tool, allowing for the identification of statistically significant patterns and relationships between variables. This approach not only provided a robust methodological foundation for the conclusions but also expanded the scientific understanding of the phenomena under investigation. Furthermore, the application of mixed-methods analysis revealed hidden dependencies that would have otherwise remained unnoticed, thereby strengthening both the theoretical and practical significance of the study. Thus, the integration of quantitative and qualitative analytical methods significantly enhanced the scientific value and validity of the obtained results.

Research results and discussion

An analysis of the university's educational program allows for several conclusions to be drawn. The curriculum courses are designed to develop skills in diagnostics and a general understanding of working with diverse groups of children. The university's educational programs include subjects such as Special Psychology," "Clinical Psychology," and "Health Psychology." However, a critical analysis of the program indicates a need for its updating to align with the current requirements and needs of the educational system.

Data regarding the employment prospects for future psychologists within the educational system is noteworthy.

The data from the National Scientific and Practical Centre for the Development of Special and Inclusive Education show where graduates of the corresponding specializations are employed. Most of them – 6,981 individuals – work in mainstream schools. The rest are distributed across more specialized institutions 55 individuals work in rehabilitation centres, 118 in psychological-medical-pedagogical consultation services, and 397 in psychological-pedagogical correction offices. In addition, 139 graduates work in special schools, and 51 in specialized kindergartens (Figure1).

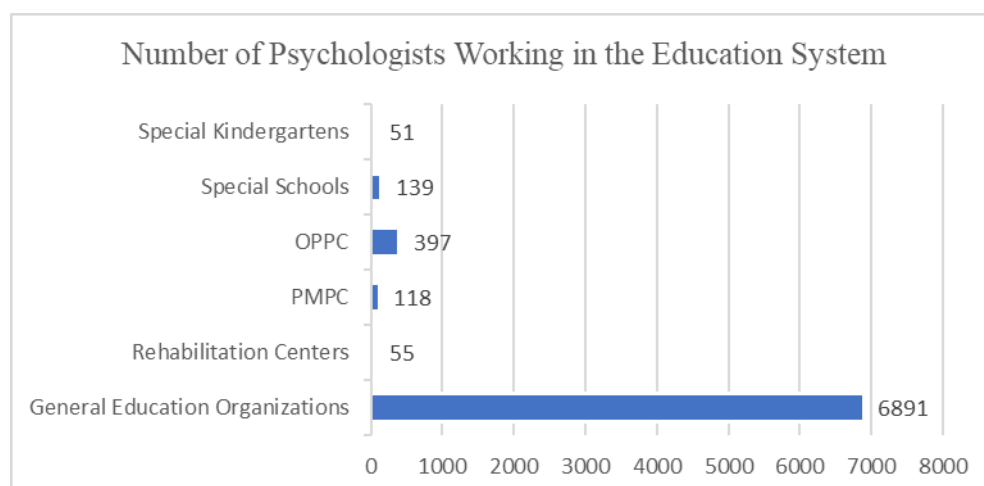


Figure 1 – Number of Psychologists Employed in the Education System

Current Demand for Psychological Professionals

The heightened demand for psychological professionals today is driven by the increasing presence of children with special educational needs in educational institutions. According to the National Scientific-Practical Center for the Development of Special and Inclusive Education (NNPCDSIE), 175,082 children with special educational needs were registered in 2022. On one hand, all children with special needs require psychological support to varying degrees. On the other hand, educational institutions face significant challenges in recruiting qualified personnel capable of conducting psychological and pedagogical work, for instance, with children diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Thus, a distinct contradiction emerges between the existing system of training psychologists and the actual needs of educational organizations.

To assess the readiness of future psychologists to work with children with ADHD, we conducted a study that included surveying students, data processing, and analysis. The respondents were 1st to 4th-year students majoring in “Pedagogy and Psychology” at the Kazakh National Women’s Teacher Training University, studying in both Russian and Kazakh languages. The total sample consisted of 127 students. All participants in the survey were female.

The aim of the survey was to determine the level of readiness of future educational psychologists to

work with children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. The survey was conducted using Google Forms.

Out of the 127 respondents, 30 were first-year students, 50 were second-year students, 38 were third-year students, and 9 were fourth-year students. The distribution by language of instruction was 78.5% Kazakh and 21.5% Russian. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 23 years, with the primary age group being 19-20 years old (38.5%). The majority of respondents resided in rural areas prior to enrolling at the university.

The significance of this line of inquiry was determined by the need to understand whether the surveyed students perceived children with ADHD as a challenging group requiring special attention *before* their university studies. The distribution between urban and rural first-year students provides additional insight into the respondents’ initial level of awareness. The third question sought more substantive information regarding the students’ knowledge about ADHD. The results were as follows: 56.2% had heard of the issue but did not understand the specifics of working with this category of children; 32.3% were familiar with the signs and symptoms of ADHD; and 11.5% reported having had direct experience communicating with children with ADHD.

Simultaneously, additional questioning of the respondents revealed that they possessed only a general, and often very superficial, understanding of this category of children. This data is presented in Figure 2.

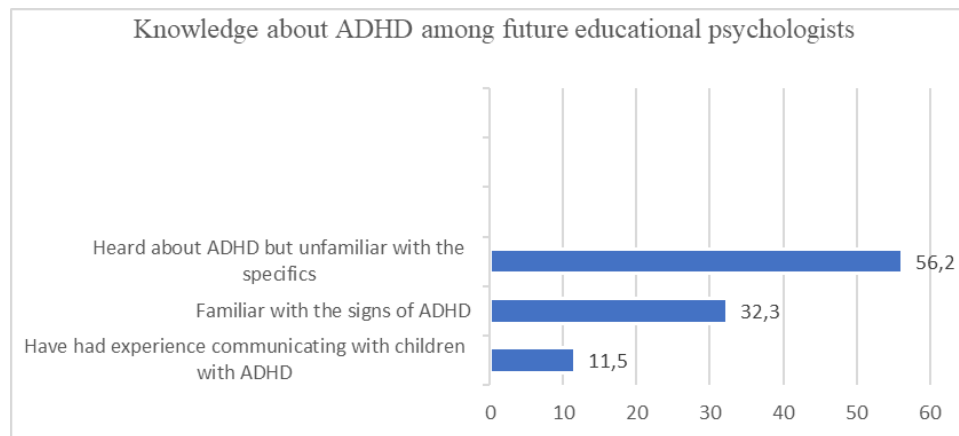


Figure 2 – Knowledge About ADHD

Research results and discussion

The study results reveal a substantial gap in future educational psychologists' knowledge regarding the etiology of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Analysis of the responses demonstrated that 65.4% of respondents reported poor awareness, 23.1% admitted they had not delved into the causes of ADHD, and only 11.5% claimed knowledge of these causes. However, in-depth discussion confirmed only a superficial understanding of the issue. This indicates the necessity of incorporating specialized disciplines focused on studying ADHD into educational programs.

The problem of underestimating the disorder was also reflected in the responses: 46.2% of participants pointed to society's lack of understanding regarding the seriousness of ADHD, 42.3% noted that people around them are poorly informed about the problem, and 11.5% found it difficult to answer.

Meanwhile, 53.9% of respondents reported encountering children with ADHD, most often in general education schools. However, a tendency was observed among students to confuse ordinary childhood activity with manifestations of hyperactivity, underscoring the importance of professional training.

Of particular note is the students' interest in studying the problem: 57.7% expressed a desire to deepen their knowledge about the causes and methods of working with children with ADHD, while 30.8% wished to acquire basic information about this disorder. Only 11.5% showed no interest, believing they would not encounter this category of children in their professional practice. The obtained data highlight the need for developing educational programs aimed at building solid professional competencies for working with this group of children, which would enhance the quality of their support and adaptation.

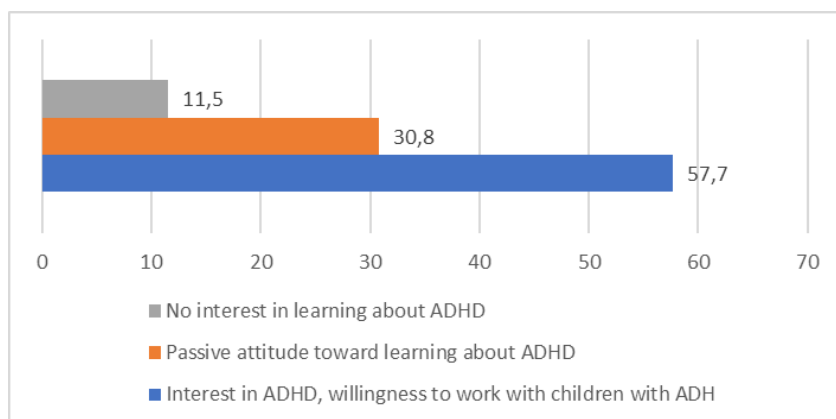


Figure 3 – Levels of Interest in Working with Children with ADHD

The Composition of Urban and Rural Students at the Kazakh National Women's Teacher Training University

The student body at the Kazakh National Women's Teacher Training University is characterized by a predominance of students from rural backgrounds. To determine whether the proportions of categories within two categorical variables differ significantly from each other, Fisher's exact test was employed. The categorical variables were defined based on the criterion of possessing knowledge about ADHD. Given that students from the 2nd to the 4th year of study are, to some extent, familiar with ADHD-related issues, the test was specifically applied to first-

year students. The data include a total of 50 first-year respondents, further divided into 36 students originating from suburban and rural areas, and 14 who are residents of urban areas.

The predominance of rural students in the university population underscores the importance of assessing potential differences in proportions between these student categories. The application of Fisher's exact test serves as a valuable statistical tool for examining these differences within this context, where the categorical variables are defined based on familiarity with ADHD-related information, ensuring methodological rigor in comparing the subgroups.

Table – Comparison of Proficiency Levels in ADHD Knowledge Using Fisher's Exact Test

Group	Possess ADHD knowledge	Do not Possess ADHD knowledge	Total
	Number of Participants	Number of Participants	
Rural Areas	16 (44.4%)	20 (55.6%)	36 (100%)
Urban Areas	12 (85.7%)	2 (14.3%)	14 (100%)

**The empirical value $\phi = 2.88$ falls within the critical region, indicating a statistically significant association between the variables at the established significance level ($p < 0.05$).*

It is imperative to examine the differences between students from urban and rural areas to establish a scientific foundation for developing evidence-based educational pathways tailored to each student.

The collected responses have enabled us to visualize certain aspects of how students future educational psychologists comprehend future educational psychologists comprehend Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Thus, we emphasize the critical need for a thorough and detailed examination of psychopedagogical assistance for children with ADHD to identify avenues for enhancing educational training programs.

Conclusion

How can a psychologist be trained to work effectively with children with ADYD? This task has no simple solutions and requires a comprehensive approach. Drawing on research data and practical experience, we can identify several fundamental principles that should guide the training of specialists.

First and foremost, there is an urgent need to integrate additional disciplines into psychology

training programs. These disciplines must provide in-depth understanding of methodologies and techniques required for working with children with ADHD. This involves both theoretical comprehension of the disorder and the acquisition of practical skills applicable in future professional practice. For instance, mastering cognitive-behavioral therapy techniques and behavior management strategies enables specialists to work effectively with children in both school and family settings.

The second key aspect relates to recognizing the necessity of an individualized approach for each child with ADHD. Manifestations of the disorder vary significantly among children, underscoring the importance of psychologists' readiness to adapt their methods and strategies. Individualization allows for more precise accommodation of children's unique characteristics, creating conditions for successful learning and social adaptation. In practical terms, this entails the psychologist's ability to adjust educational plans, implement play-based learning methods, and develop self-regulation skills in children.

It is Equally important to collaborate with the family. For the parents of a child with ADHD, the psychologist becomes not only an expert but also a

partner who helps them learn to better understand and support their child. Practice shows that when the family and the specialist act together, the situation changes dramatically – therapy becomes more effective, and the child is adaptation at school becomes easier. By organizing workshops or individual meetings, the psychologist helps establish a consistent and comprehensible system of rules and support for the child both at home and in the classroom.

Finally, teamwork is indispensable. A child with ADHD often needs support not only from a psychologist but also from a neurologist, a teacher, and a speech therapist. Therefore, a modern specialist must be able to work in coordination with other professionals in order to create an individualized development program that takes into account all aspects of the child's life. Only in this way is possible

to help the child cope with difficulties in behaviour and communication.

All of this together forms the framework of competent support for ADHD. It is built on deep knowledge, a systemic perspective, and the psychologist is continuous professional growth. And it is precisely this approach that makes it possible not merely to educate theorists but to train practitioners who can truly improve the life of the child and their family.

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