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**TECHNOLOGY OF STUDENTS-VOLUNTEERS TRAINING  
FOR SOCIAL AND PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITY WITH DISABLED  
PEOPLE**

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***Abstract***

The urgency of the problem of students-volunteers training for work with disabled people is determined by a number of factors. On the one hand there is an increase in the number of disabled people, the humanization of modern society, the need to create conditions for the successful positive socialization of disabled people. On the other hand, there is a high potential of volunteer activity, especially in the student environment, and at the same time, the Russian students' unpreparedness for social and pedagogical activities with disabled people. Proceeding from this, the purpose of this study was to identify the peculiarities of pedagogical university students' perception of disabled people as an object of social and pedagogical activity and to develop a technology for preparing volunteer students for accompanying disabled people. In the course of this study, methods of theoretical literature analysis, interviewing, questionnaire survey, as well as the method of free associative experiment were used. As a result, it was revealed that most students of a pedagogical university perceive disabled people only as people who are experiencing problems and in need for help. Meanwhile, the modern approach to the implementation of inclusion implies the possibility of successful constructive interaction of various categories of citizens, including healthy and disabled, and each person within the framework of this interaction is aware of the importance of his own and the partner for interaction.

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**Keywords:** Inclusion, inclusive education, social and pedagogical activity, technology, volunteering, student-volunteer.



## 1. Introduction

The number of disabled people is increasing every year. So, according to statistics in 2017 there were more than 1 billion disabled people in the world, which is about 23% of the world population. In Russia in 2017, the number of registered disabled people was 11.5 million, of whom almost 638.2 thousand were children (Federal Register of Disabled Persons). The principle of humanism, which is the basis of relationships in society, assumes the value of each individual for society, every citizen for the state. This, in turn, indicates the need to create conditions for the successful positive socialization of each individual, including those with disability. The aforementioned actualizes the problem of preparing students of pedagogical universities, in particular student volunteers, to accompany the disabled. It should also be noted that in today's Russia, the significance of volunteer activity is growing. There is good reason that in recent years the Russian Federation has adopted the most important regulatory documents that determine the prospect of the development of volunteerism in Russia (the Federal Law "On Charitable Activities and Charitable Organizations", the Concept for the Promotion of Charity and Volunteerism in the Russian Federation, the Decree of the President of Russia "On the Establishment of the All-Russian Public State Children's and Youth Organization "Russian movement of schoolchildren").

In addition, in modern Russia, the number of volunteers is increasing, including volunteers among students. So, according to the international charity organization "Charites Aid Foundation", in 2015, 23 million people in our country older than 18 years at least once worked as volunteer, and every hird Russian rendered gratuitous help to people in need (FOMnibus, 2013). In fact, every university in Yekaterinburg has a student volunteer detachment. Analysis of 83 sites of schools in the Sverdlovsk region showed that 70% of schools attract students to volunteer activities.

Volunteer students have a special training to participate in various activities, support various categories of people in need of assistance and support. However, to work with disabled people, one-time, situational training is not enough, which confirms the need for systematic training of volunteer students for the support of disabled people.

Thus, the relevance of the study is determined by a number of contradictions between:

- the need to attract students to volunteerism and the lack of its systematic organization;
- the possibility of preparing students of a pedagogical university for social and pedagogical activities with disabled people and the insufficiently developed nature of its theoretical and methodological foundations;
- the theory of preparing students for the implementation of volunteer activities with disabled people and the undeveloped methods of preparing students for a new type of teacher's activity.

## 2. Problem Statement

In modern pedagogical theory and practice, the importance of students' participation in volunteer activities with disabled people is disclosed, but the methods of its organization are practically not described.

- Both in domestic and foreign literature, the theoretical and methodological grounds for preparing students-volunteers for the realization of social and pedagogical activity with disabled people are not disclosed.

- Despite the topicality of the problem of preparing students-volunteers for social and pedagogical activities with disabled people and its relevance, the methodology and technology of preparing students (in particular those who are studying at a pedagogical university) is not sufficiently developed in the national pedagogical practice for a new type of activity.

The authors carried out a series of empirical studies aimed at identifying the specifics of students' perception of a pedagogical institution of disabled people, students' attitudes toward the problems of disabled people, and the peculiarities of their socialization.

- On the basis of the conducted theoretical research, the essence and content of social and pedagogical activity with disabled people, as well as the volunteer activity of students with disabled people, are determined.

- The practical importance of the research is to identify the effective forms and methods of preparing students-volunteers for social and pedagogical activity with disabled people and to develop, based on the revealed, technology for preparing students of a pedagogical university for this type of activity.

### **3. Research Questions**

The main goal of the study was to develop a technology for training volunteer students for social and pedagogical activities with disabled people on the basis of a theoretical analysis of literature on the topic of research and conducting an empirical study among students of the State Pedagogical University "Ural State Pedagogical University". The realization of this goal assumed the solution of the following tasks:

- revealing the essence and content of the concept "social and pedagogical activity of students-volunteers with disabled people";
- conducting an empirical study aimed at identifying students' understanding of the nature and objectives of volunteerism, as well as their perception of disabled people;
- developing the technology for the preparation of student volunteers for the implementation of social and educational activities with disabled people;
- partial implementation of the developed technology on the basis of Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education "Ural State Pedagogical University".

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

**4.1.** The purpose of this study is to develop a technology for preparing students-volunteers for social and pedagogical activities with disabled people. To achieve this goal, the following tasks were accomplished: conducting an empirical study aimed at identifying the specifics of students' perception of a pedagogical institution of disabled people; theoretical analysis of the essence and content of volunteer activities of students with disabled people; identification of effective forms and methods of preparing students-volunteers for social and pedagogical activities with disabled people.

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- On the basis of the conducted theoretical research, the essence and content of social and pedagogical activity with disabled people, as well as the volunteer activity of students with disabled people, are determined.

- The practical importance of the research is to identify the effective forms and methods of preparing students-volunteers for social and pedagogical activity with disabled people and to develop, based on the revealed, technology for preparing students of a pedagogical university for this type of activity.

**4.2.** Various aspects of volunteer activity are widely covered in studies of foreign and domestic scientists. This phenomenon is interdisciplinary in nature and is studied by various sciences (sociology, pedagogy, culturology, psychology).

A number of scientists (Bolotova, 2005; Kuzmin & Sutyryn, 2005; Tetersky, 2000) devote their works to the study of volunteering as a kind of non-professional activity aimed at helping socially vulnerable groups of the population, social groups, individuals .

In the works of Karimov (2010a), Kuzminchuk (2016), Makovei (2006) the issues of training future specialists of the social sphere for volunteering are revealed.

In the research Kuzminchuk (2016) addresses the issues of institutional regulation of volunteer organizations on the example of the Ural-Siberian region. In the author's opinion, regional features of regulating volunteer activity are factors of activating the potential of a regional community of volunteers. Among these factors, gender disparity is identified (shortage of male volunteers); disinterest of volunteers in the performance of their work on a regular basis; low self-identification as a volunteer; the prevalence of informal practices of volunteering; refusal to continue volunteer work; the contradiction between the altruistic nature of volunteering and the selfish motives of volunteers; and (which is extremely important in the context of this study), the low level of training of student volunteers.

Issues of methodology and technology for the preparation of future volunteers are presented in the works of Martynova & Popova (2004); Mitrokhina (2004); Cherepanova N. (2007).

At the same time, in numerous works of Russian authors devoted to the study of various aspects of volunteer activity, there are virtually no studies devoted to the preparation of student volunteers for work with disabled people. Meanwhile, as mentioned above, this problem is extremely urgent. This is also indicated by numerous works reflecting the problems of disabled people and the specifics of social and pedagogical activity with them. In particular, the work of such researchers as Batova (2001); Dobrovolskaya & Shabalina (1992); Leongard, Samsonova, & Ivanova (2011); Shipitsina & Mamaichuk (2004) and others are devoted to the problems of socialization of disabled people.

The aforementioned testifies to the need to study of the problem of technology for preparing student volunteers for the implementation of social and pedagogical activities with disabled people.

## **5. Research Methods**

**5.1.** The main goal of the study was to develop a technology for training volunteer students for social and pedagogical activities with disabled people on the basis of a theoretical analysis of literature on the topic of research and conducting an empirical study among students of the State Pedagogical University

"Ural State Pedagogical University". The realization of this goal assumed the solution of the following tasks:

- revealing the essence and content of the concept "social and pedagogical activity of students-volunteers with disabled people";
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- developing the technology for the preparation of student volunteers for the implementation of social and educational activities with disabled people;
- partial implementation of the developed technology on the basis of Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education "Ural State Pedagogical University".

**5.2.** To solve the problems set in the study, the following methods were used:

- theoretical, in particular, theoretical analysis and synthesis of literature, aimed at revealing the essence and content of the concept of "social pedagogical activity of student volunteers with disabled people"; modeling, by means of which the technology of preparation of students-volunteers for social and pedagogical activity with disabled people was developed;
- empirical, namely, interviewing students who participated in the first world congress for people with disabilities (Ekaterinburg - 2017); free associative experiment with students, potential volunteers.

The empirical study was conducted on the basis of the Ural State Pedagogical University. Its participants were students of the 1st and 2nd year of the Ural Pedagogical University. The study involved students from the Institute of Social Sciences, the Institute of Philology, Cultural Studies and Intercultural Communication, and the Institute of Social Education in the number of 283 people.

The research was carried out in several stages:

- at the first stage, students were interviewed and an associative experiment was conducted;
- at the second stage (December 2017 - January 2018), a technology was developed for training volunteer students for social and pedagogical activities with disabled people;
- at the third stage (February - March 2018) the developed model was partially realized.

## **6. Findings**

**6.1.** In 2017, students-volunteers of the USPU took part in the First World Congress of Disabled People. Surveys conducted after the Congress showed that students accompanying disabled people experienced serious difficulties caused by psychological ungreediness for such activities. The stories of students about their work at the congress were extremely emotional. The most common statements are:

"We did not think that people with disabilities could behave like ordinary people."

"I used to think that a disabled person should be helped in any situation, but often they helped us."

"I used to feel a sense of pity, sympathy for the disabled, and now I feel respect."

In our opinion, the psychological problems in training volunteers for the supporting of disabled people are the main and most difficult to resolve, since they are caused mentally and historically. In different periods of national history, attitude to people with disabilities was determined on the basis of communal and Christian traditions, based on the principle of charity. In the Soviet period, it was decided to use an

isolationist approach to disabled people. And till now in work with disabled people the rehabilitation, instead of inclusive approach is used.

To test the above position, we conducted a study of the attitude of the 1st and 2nd year students of humanitarian specialties of the Ural Pedagogical University to disabled people. The students of the Faculty of History, the Institute of Philology, Culturology and Intercultural Communication, the Institute of Social Education (the direction of training "Legal and Social Studies") in number of 283 people took part in the study. The method of free associative experiment was used. Students should write at least three associations (any part of speech) to the word "disabled» during one minute.

As a result, it was revealed that most associations reflect problems experienced by persons with disabilities; reasons for these difficulties; ways of providing assistance, as can be seen from the table below.

**Table 01.** The most frequent responses of students who chose associations for the word "disabled"

<b>Problems of people with disabilities</b>	<b>Ways to solve problems</b>
Deviation, fear, backwardness, absence of demand, pain, uneasy, weak, needless, incapable, inequality, inferiority, infirmity, disability, illness, uncertainty, burden, limitation, difficulties, inconvenience, isolation, recumbent, discomfort, helpless, deaf-mute	Doctors, help, care, pity, medicine, adaptation, special approach, support, inclusion

There were concepts that expressed external signs of disability (crutch, wheelchair, stick). At the same time, such concepts as help (27 times), support (24 times), limitation (23 times), inclusion (21 times), difficulties (17 times), pity (16 times) turned out to be the most frequent ones.

There were concepts that expressed a neutral attitude to the problem of disability (people, socialization) and a positive attitude towards disabled people (will, strength of spirit, creativity, opportunities, development, aspiration, overcoming, hope). However, in most cases, alongside a neutral or positive association, there were characteristics reflecting certain difficulties of the disabled. So, for example, together with the word "man", there were words "stick", "help".

The study confirmed the need to change the understanding of students, future volunteers, attitudes to the problem of disability, the development and implementation of technology for the preparation of student volunteers to implement social and educational activities with disabled people.

## **6.2. The results of the formative stage**

Before proceeding with the development of the claimed technology, let us turn to the definition of the essence and content of the concept "social and pedagogical activity of students-volunteers with disabled people". Theoretical analysis of domestic and foreign literature on the subject of research allowed us to determine the essence of the concept under consideration.

This concept is specific to social and pedagogical activity. The authors consider social and pedagogical activity in the context of socialization, that is, as a systematic, organized purposeful activity to create conditions for a successful positive socialization of the individual (regardless of whether the individual experiences difficulties in socialization or not). In turn, socialization in the socio-pedagogical

aspect is not only the assimilation of a socially significant experience by an individual, but also a successful self-realization (Galaguzova, Galaguzova, & Dorokhova, 2016.).

In other words social and pedagogical activity presupposes the obligatory activity of all its subjects (both agents of socialization and socialized). Consequently, the subject of social and pedagogical activity (in our case, the student-volunteer) should see in a socialized (disabled person) an individual, who possesses a set of qualities that allow him to be successful. Moreover, - to reveal in him such qualities that healthy people do not have, through which a disabled person can bring real benefits to society and thanks to this feel needful. Thus, the social-pedagogical activity of a student-volunteer with a disabled person is a process of constructive interaction, the result of which is the mutual enrichment of all subjects of interaction, their successful positive socialization.

It should also be noted that a number of researchers interpret the concept of "volunteerism" as an activity that provides "the opportunity to receive all-round satisfaction of their personal, social and / or professional needs through the provision of gratuitous assistance to other people" (Karimov, 2010b). This interpretation also shows the bilateral nature of volunteerism. Students in the process of implementing volunteer activities not only help people who need help (for example, people with disabilities) free of charge, but they themselves satisfy social and professional needs, in particular, in self-realization.

Based on the above, in this study we mean the social-pedagogical activity of a volunteer student with disabled people as an organized, purpose-oriented gratuitous activity of training institutions of vocational education, aimed at creating conditions for the successful positive socialization of disabled people.

The content characteristics of this activity are revealed in the following principles (humanism, activity, mutual influence) and approaches (axiological, activity, personal).

Proceeding from the foregoing, the technology of training students-volunteers for the implementation of social and pedagogical activities with disabled people will include several stages.

At the first stage of its organization a key role should belong to the teacher. It is he who chooses the clients, the institution, determines the possible activities; selects material for lecture and seminar classes to prepare students for this activity. It is especially important at this stage to involve the disabled people in the educational process, which, in the framework of lecture or seminar classes, first, forms the students' understanding of the specifics of interaction with this category of citizens. Secondly, it destroys the psychological barrier that students have in dealing with them. At this stage, the student may yet not know what the teacher is preparing him for, believing that this is a necessary curriculum.

The second stage of the organization assumes the joint activity of the teacher and students, where the teacher expresses his ideas about the importance of volunteering with disabled people and either finds the support and desire of students to do it or not.

It is very important that the student wants to participate in this activity. To do this you need:

- to use various methods of motivation;
- to choose interesting, attractive, meaningful activities for students;
- to discuss together the possible activities, their specification (for example, the scenario of extracurricular activities).

It is worth to note that any event should be held not for the disabled people, but with them. This will make it possible to implement constructive interaction between students and disabled people at every stage of the technology implementation.

The third stage of training students for volunteer work with disabled people provides for students to solve organizational issues arising in the process of preparation for joint activities with disabled people. For example, when preparing various activities, students need to solve possible problems almost independently with the alleged social and pedagogical institution, with the dean's office, to anticipate possible risks and develop measures to prevent and eliminate them. The teacher in this situation plays the role of the predominantly coordinator. He directs and controls students and disabled people.

If the students plan to implement social and pedagogical activity in a social institution for the disabled people, at this stage the teacher together with them should visit the institution several times, get acquainted with its conditions, rules, behavior of disabled people in this environment. All this is necessary to adapt students to new, unusual conditions for them.

The fourth stage is activity itself. Students and disabled people act as active independent "co-thinkers". They implement the activities developed at previous stages, while the teacher again performs predominantly the directing, coordinating, controlling functions.

The last stage is reflexive. It involves discussion of the results and the search for opportunities for further work, perhaps not in the framework of learning or educational activities. Students, for whom volunteer activity becomes really meaningful, realize it independently, without the participation of a teacher. He continues to interact with people with disabilities in various forms, because he realizes the importance of interaction, both for the disabled person and for him. In fact, through constructive interaction, both the student volunteer and the disabled person successfully socialize positively.

If at first all students are involved in volunteer activity, at this stage, as a rule, there is only very few. However, these students who consciously chose this type of activity for themselves understand not only its relevance, significance, but also potential.

### **6.3. The control stage of the experiment**

During the period from February to March 2018, lectures and seminars were held with the students of the 1st and 2nd year of the Ural State Pedagogical University in the framework of the "Pedagogy" training course aimed at increasing their competence in the field of social and pedagogical activity with disabled people. In addition, a series of seminars and workshops with students were held by disabled people. Members of the organizations "White walking-stick" (blind and visually impaired people) and "Noble cause" (people with mental disorders, diseases of the musculoskeletal system).

Together with the disabled students, an extra-curricular event "Day of Inclusion" was prepared and held under the guidance of teachers of the Pedagogical Department. This event included:

- a concert in which disabled people - members of the public organization "Noble cause" and students of the Urals State University took part;
- workshop on making gifts for Easter, choreography, theatrical skill, which were held for students and teachers of the Ural State Pedagogical University by disabled people and teachers of the organization "Noble cause".

After the described event, a reflection was held, through interviewing students. Among the evaluations of the event, positive responses predominated:

"One of the most interesting events in my student life."

"The most vivid impressions of recent months."

"Today I realized that it was worth entering the pedagogical university."

"I looked at disabled people in a completely different way. They are such interesting people. "

"Up to this point, I did not understand that people with disabilities are very much in need for any society, especially ours."

The foregoing testifies to the prospects of the developed technology of preparing students-volunteers for social and pedagogical activity with disabled people.

## **7. Conclusion**

Numerous sources on the development of inclusion in modern Russian society raise various problems, in connection with which this process is extremely slow. At the same time, first of all, we are talking about financial, logistical, personnel problems. In our opinion, the main problems here are psychological problems, in particular, unpreparedness of society to treat disabled people as people who can be useful, in some respects even more than healthy people. This was confirmed by an empirical study conducted among students of the Ural State Pedagogical University.

In addition, as part of the implementation of the technology, more risks were identified, caused by the retention, both in Russian society in general and among disabled people and their parents, in particular, the "helping paradigm", social and pedagogical activity. This paradigm is often expressed in the inactivity of the disabled people, a low level of self-esteem, a dependent attitude towards society. The above also indicates the relevance of the problem solved in the study, the significance of the issues raised in it.

In the view of the foregoing, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- modern Russian society, and in particular students, are not ready to implement a new paradigm of social and pedagogical activity with disabled people;

- at the same time, students have a huge potential for volunteering development, therefore it is necessary to actively involve students, especially of pedagogical universities, in the volunteer activities with disabled people, which will not only create conditions for successful positive socialization of disabled people, but also form volunteer competence for students and their more successful self-fulfillment;

- preparation of student volunteers for the implementation of social and pedagogical activities with disabled people should be carried out purposefully, consistently, systematically, with mandatory involvement of disabled people in various stages of training as active subjects in the training process.

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