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### Р. И. Остапенко, Г. С. Остапенко, И. В. Щербакова

# Обеспечение психологической безопасности лиц с ограниченными возможностями здоровья и других субъектов образовательной среды с учетом гендерновозрастных особенностей

Актуальность исследования связана с тем, что психологическая безопасность лиц с ограниченными возможностями здоровья и других субъектов образовательной среды является ведущей характеристикой, определяющей ее развивающий характер.

<u>Цель исследования</u> состояла в изучении мнения студентов о возможностях и способностях граждан, имеющих ограниченные возможности здоровья (ОВЗ) и формировании к ним толерантного отношения, а значит их социальной и психологической безопасности.

Исследование осуществлялось на базе Воронежского государственного промышленно-гуманитарного колледжа (Российская Федерация) в котором приняло участие 1000 человек (среди них 38% юношей и 62% девушек). Методы исследования: анкетирование; корреляционный анализ по Спирмену; метод главных компонент; семантический анализ.

На этапе констатирующего эксперимента частично освещена проблема психологической безопасности лиц, имеющих ОВЗ. Анализ экспериментальных данных, полученных в результате анкетирования, показал, что на момент опроса 51,5% респондентов по гендерному признаку (23% – мужчины, 28,5% – женщины) относятся к людям, имеющим ОВЗ как обычным, признавая их навыки, достоинства и способности.

Результаты факторного анализа позволили выявить главный фактор «толерантное отношение к лицам, имеющим OB3», который не зависит от возрастных, гендерных признаков и местожительства. Как правило, это отношение формируется в результате общения с ними. Все респонденты намерены «относиться к лицам с OB3, как к людям с (особыми) потребностями, а не с ограниченными возможностями, и создавать все условия для их психологической и социальной безопасности».

**Ключевые слова:** психологическая безопасность, лица с ограниченными возможностями здоровья, толерантное отношение, образовательная среда, анализ мнений студентов

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# Ensuring the psychological safety of persons with disabilities, taking into account gender and age differences

The relevance of the research is related to the fact that the psychological safety of persons with disabilities is the leading characteristic that determines its developmental nature.

The research objective was to study students' opinions about the capabilities and abilities of citizens with disabilities and to form a tolerant attitude towards them, and hence their social and psychological safety.

The research was carried out on the basis of the Voronezh State Industrial and Humanitarian College (Russian Federation), in which 1,000 people took part (among them 38% were boys and 62% were girls). Methods: survey, Spearman correlation analysis, principal component analysis, and semantic analysis.

At the stage of the ascertaining experiment, the problem of the psychological safety of persons with disabilities is partially covered. The analysis of experimental data obtained from the survey showed that at the time of the survey, 51.5% of the respondents by gender (23% – men, 28.5% – women) treated persons with disabilities as ordinary, recognising their skills, dignity, and abilities.

The results of the factor analysis revealed the main factor "tolerant attitude towards persons with disabilities", which does not depend on age, gender, and place of residence. As a rule, this attitude is formed as a result of communication with them. All respondents intend to "treat persons with disabilities as people with (special) needs, not with disabilities, and create all conditions for their psychological and social safety".

**Keywords:** psychological safety, persons with disabilities, tolerant attitude, educational environment, analysis of students' opinions

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#### Introduction

he study of the social phenomenon of "psychological safety" is due to new trends in the development of society. The subject of safety psychology is the psychological safety of the individual and the social environment. The object of safety psychology is a social mental reality, which meets the needs for the protection of the psyche of persons with disabilities from external threats to the social environment. Scientists consider psychological safety as a process, as a state [3, p. 11]; as a personality trait [2, p. 129]; as a branch of psychological knowledge [5; 8]; as a necessary factor of development (Posokhova, Yasvin et al.); as one of the level needs in security and protection (Must; Sidorkin; Maslow; Kimberg [10]).

There are two main system-forming types of safety – physical and psychological, and all the rest can be included in the structure. Therefore, this phenomenon requires a deeper interpretation to understand the severity of the problem of inclusion and ensuring a comfortable environment in the system of interaction between persons with disabilities. Gender and age differences of all subjects should also be taken into account. The interpretations of "psychological safety" should be considered from the perspective of historiogenesis.

If to turn to the analysis of the stages of the origin and development of the definition of "safety", one can see that for the first time, safety was mentioned in the works of the ancient philosopher Plato, who considered safety "as the absence of danger or evil for a person" [15]. Safety is interpreted as a calm state of mind of a person who considers him/herself protected from any danger. In scientific and political circles of Western European states, the term "safety", due to the philosophical concepts of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Spinoza, and other thinkers of the 17th-18th centuries, means a state of calmness that appears as a result of the absence of real danger (both physical and moral). Public figures of that time included safety as the main goal of society and used the concept of safety in defining political freedom.

Zelenkov [9], in his works "Philosophy of life", in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, defended the essence of his position that danger was not only not removable, but also a necessary factor in the evolution of all living things, the progress of social life.

Maslow [11], one of the founders of humanistic psychology, in his hierarchical model of motivation identified the need for safety and protection among five "levels". This includes the needs for the organisation, stability, law and order, predictability of events, and freedom from such threatening forces as disease, fear, and chaos. Maslow suggested that certain types of neurotic adults are mainly motivated by the search for safety.

Psychological safety is reflected in the socio-cultural theory of personality, authored by Karen Horney [21]. She identified a number of basic needs that determine the normal development of a child, among them — the need for security, which means to be loved, desired and protected from danger and a hostile world. If this basic need is not met, basal hostility develops, which manifests itself in feelings of fear, feelings of helplessness, and guilt, which later affect the nature of relationships with others, both in the present and in the future. According to Kimberg [10], the psychology of safety in Russian science developed within the framework of labour psychology. Its main task was to develop safety rules taking into account the psychological characteristics of working activity, and as soon as new high-

tech professions appeared in the labour market, there was a need to study and identify the psychological characteristics of the individual, and psychological safety mechanisms. Its main task was also to develop methods for diagnosing a person prone to risk.

The need to ensure the social and psychological safety of students with disabilities is growing both at schools and higher education institutions [4; 9; 16].

To do this, according to Kislyakov et al. [17], it is necessary to develop and implement at educational institutions a comprehensive psychological and pedagogical support for the socio-psychological safety of children with developmental disabilities. This will create conditions for: facilitating children's adaptation to the social environment; developing safe social interactions; reducing aggression and forming social tolerance [16].

According to Vinogradova and Kohan [21], "psychological safety of students is a state characterised by perception and assessment of the danger of the university educational environment, awareness of oneself as a future professional in assessing the level of one's information and cognitive competencies, experience in overcoming problem situations, predicting risk factors for psychophysiological disorders and self-preservation, creating stable educational and professional relationships with all subjects of the educational environment".

According to Bogomyatkova [6], "the psychologically safest educational space of an inclusive class is perceived by students, the expressed risks for psychological health are experienced by teachers and parents. At the same time, the parental position requires the formation of tolerance, the pedagogical one – the prevention of professional burnout syndrome and the search for self-help resources, the child position requires the development of communication skills of social interaction and the search for personal resources".

Psychological safety, its practical tasks and modern purpose for persons with disabilities are not only reducing threats to mental health in the social environment but also help in mobilising the internal state and personal resource of the human resistance, as well as sensory-perceptual, cognitive, and behavioural development. In this regard, a pilot study was conducted, the strategy of which is aimed at studying a comfortable and safe environment.

For this reason, at the first stage of the organised research, the authors needed to determine the risks of the psychological and social safety of persons with disabilities.

#### Materials and methods

The research was carried out on the basis of the Voronezh State Industrial and Humanitarian College (Russian Federation). For this purpose, a questionnaire was compiled, which was offered to full-time and part-time students. The research was conducted within the framework of the state programme of the Voronezh Region "Accessible Environment" by order of the budgetary institution of the Voronezh Region "Voronezh Regional Rehabilitation Centre for Young People with Disabilities".

The purpose of the questionnaire survey is to study students' opinions about the capabilities and abilities of citizens with disabilities and to form a tolerant attitude towards them, and hence their social and psychological safety.

Research methods: survey, analysis, generalisation, grouping, comparison, mathematical statistics (Spearman correlation analysis; principal component method).

The questionnaire text is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**Questionnaire "Features of healthy people's perception of citizens with disabilities"

Do you have any experience in communicating with citizens with disabilities?	
Daily	
Rarely	
I have no experience in communicating with them	
Do you have friends among the disabled?	
Yes, I do	
No, I don't	
What is your attitude towards people with disabilities?	
As to ordinary people	
As to people in constant need of help	
I feel pity for them	
I can't decide	
Could you help a disabled person in any way for free?	
I could, willingly	
I could if there is an urgent need	
I could, in exceptional cases	
Do you think people with disabilities can work (study)?	
At ordinary enterprises (ordinary educational institutions)	
At specially-created enterprises (in the workplaces)	
At home	
Do you think all the conditions are created for a barrier-free environment for the disabled?	
Created completely	
Created partially	
Not created	
In your understanding, tolerance towards people with disabilities is	

Contingent. One thousand people took part in the survey. Among them, 38% were boys and 62% were girls. Gender characteristics and the age structure of the respondents: 41% of the respondents were under 18 years old, 52% from 18 to 45 years old, and 7% over 45 years old (see Figure 1).

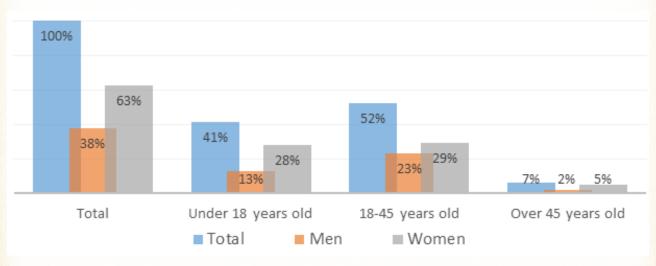


Figure 1 Gender and age characteristic of the respondents, %.

Among the respondents under 18 years old, there were 13% males, 28% females, in the 18–45 age group – 23% men, 29% women, in the over 45 age group – 2% men, and 5% women.

Results

The experience in communicating with people with disabilities is noted among the respondents as follows: 11% communicate daily, 58% – rarely, and 31% do not have such experience. Women have more experience with people with disabilities than men.

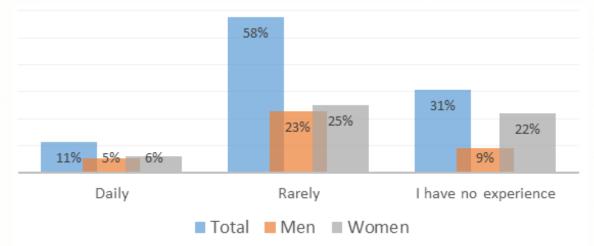


Figure 2 The respondents' experience in communicating with people with disabilities, %.

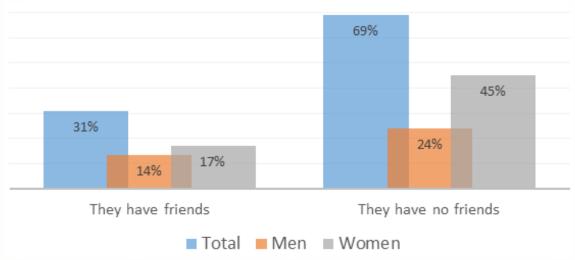
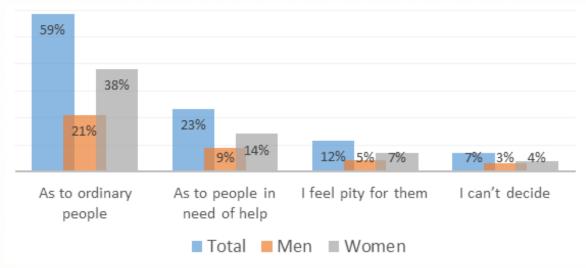


Figure 3 The presence of friends with disabilities among the respondents, %.

The presence of friends among people with disabilities is found in 31% of the respondents, and among men -14%, among women -17% (see Figure 3).

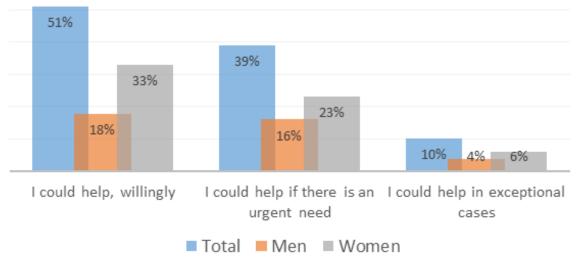
Fifty-nine per cent of the respondents (of which 21% are men, and 38% – women) treat persons with disabilities as ordinary people. Subsequent responses indicate that the data obtained in the research can be commented on as a result of a not indifferent attitude in society towards persons with disabilities. According to the results of the questionnaire, one can judge the safe and tolerant attitude towards them. On the whole, the society and the social environment of the respondents do not dislike them, and they are perceived as full-fledged members of society.

Twenty-three per cent of the respondents (9% – men, 14% – women) treat persons with disabilities as people who constantly need help, 12% of the respondents feel pity for them (5% of men and 7% of women). The diagram shows that women are slightly more empathetic towards persons with disabilities (see Figure 4).



**Figure 4** The respondents' answers to the question: "What is your attitude towards persons with disabilities?", %.

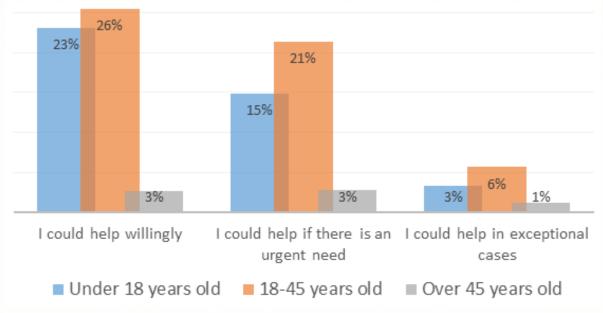
To the question "Could you help persons with disabilities in any way?", the respondents answered as follows: 51% of the respondents could help willingly (18% – men and 33% – women); 39% of the respondents are ready to provide assistance in the case of urgent need (16% – men and 23% – women) and only 10% are ready to help in exceptional cases, specifically 4% – men and 6% – women (see Figure 5).



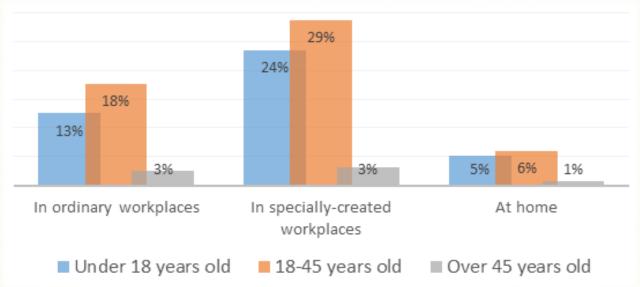
**Figure 5** The respondents' answers to the question: "Could you help persons with disabilities in any way?", %.

Bar charts are presented as follows (see Figure 6).

When determining the ability to work, only a small part of the respondents in the region are convinced that persons with disabilities can work at home (12% of the respondents). Work at ordinary enterprises for people with disabilities is considered possible by 33% of the respondents, and the most part (55%) believe that it is necessary to create special workplaces for them and a safe psychological and social environment.



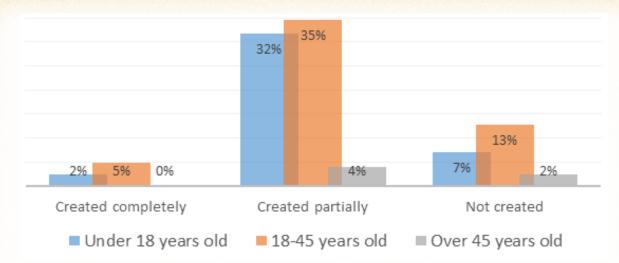
**Figure 6** The respondents' answers to the question: "Could you help persons with disabilities in any way?", %.



**Figure 7** The respondents' answers to the question: "Where do you think persons with disabilities can work in the future?", %.

Of those who believe that persons with disabilities can work in ordinary workplaces, most of them are people under 18 years old - 13%. Of 55% of the respondents who believe that persons with disabilities can work in specially-created workplaces, most of them are people from 18 to 45 years old - 29% of people. Among 12% of the respondents who believe that students with disabilities should work at home, there are 5% of people under 18 years old. When determining the existing conditions for a barrier-free environment for persons with disabilities, the majority of the respondents said that such conditions were partially created (69% of all respondents) (see Figure 8).

Moreover, 7% believe that the conditions for a barrier-free environment are fully created. Also, 22% of people, 13% of them aged 18 to 45 years old, noted the absence of barrier-free living conditions for students with disabilities. Additionally, a correlation analysis of the results obtained from the sample (Spearman) was performed and the result of factor analysis was presented (see Table 2).



**Figure 8** The respondents' answers to the question: "Do you think all the conditions are created for a barrier-free environment for the disabled?", %.

Table 2
The matrix of rotated components of "psychological safety"

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Age	.104	092	796	083
Gender	275	.617	127	.376
Residence	119	058	.019	.568
Education	.098	081	.030	.726
Attitude_towards_employment	.027	.002	.842	069
Communication_experience	.233	.725	.092	178
Friends	.186	.715	.103	210
Attitude	.561	.075	.008	213
Help	.643	.134	191	119
Disabled_labour	.621	.137	.201	.233
Barrier-free_environment	.429	121	156	.325

#### Interpretation of the factors:

- 1 Tolerant attitude towards persons with disabilities.
- 2 Gender and sex and age characteristics of persons with disabilities (young men communicate with them more than girls).
  - 3 Bipolar factor (the older, the busier with work, and vice versa).
  - 4 More educated people live in the city.

As a result of the conducted analysis, the main factor was revealed – this is a tolerant attitude towards persons with disabilities, which does not depend on age, gender and place of residence. As a rule, this attitude is formed as a result of communication with them.

At the end of the survey, the respondents were asked the question: "How do they understand tolerance towards persons with disabilities"?

As a result, data was obtained in which 81% of the respondents expressed certain judgments about the tolerant attitude towards persons with disabilities, and 13% of the respondents treat persons with disabilities in the same way as ordinary people. Accordingly, there are prerequisites for a safe psychological environment. The majority of the respondents

expressed a desire to perceive such students as ordinary healthy people, not to make them feel infringed, to treat them as full-fledged members of society. Also, 8% of the respondents described the term "tolerance" as patience. Likewise, 8% of the respondents understand tolerance as respect and understanding of the disabled, and the same 8% of the respondents answered that tolerance is the same attitude as towards ordinary people, but if necessary, psychological help should be provided first to those with disabilities. This assistance should be targeted, and, moreover, it should be unobtrusive, according to 7% of the respondents. That is, not focusing on their condition, not treating them as helpless, not showing excessive care, pity, prejudice, and leniency.

Students with disabilities, according to the respondents, need emotional and physical support, and hence psychological safety. Percentages in providing assistance are divided as follows: providing just help (8%), understanding (7%), empathy (4%), respect (4%), perceiving oneself as equals of healthy people (2%), not separating them, treating as full-fledged members of societies, not infringing on their rights, at the same time understanding their features, problems (3% of responses).

Some indicated the need for assistance and support (5% of responses) both on the part of the state and society, which can be special or carried out if necessary (4% of responses). It is also important to create special comfortable conditions for self-realisation, psychological safety, development of abilities with health opportunities, in which it is possible to fully realise the right to life and happiness; optimal conditions for life, study and working activity (2% of responses).

The semantic analysis of respondents' statements about what they mean by tolerance towards persons with disabilities allowed identifying the top 10 words that make up the "semantic core" of such a concept as psychological safety (see Table 2).

Table 3
Statistical analysis of the words "psychological safety"

No.	Word	Number	% in the text
1	person	260	6.8%
2	respect	251	6.6%
3	attitude	251	6.6%
4	understanding	139	3.6%
5	compassion	128	3.3%
6	assistance	117	3.1%
7	tolerance	84	2.2%
8	to help	45	1.1%
9	patience	41	1%
10	empathy	30	0.7%
11	disabled	27	0.7%
12	disabilities	25	0.6%
13	desire	24	0.6%
14	acceptance	23	0.6%
15	pity	21	0.5%
16	to treat	21	0.5%

The most common words are "attitude", "understanding" and "respect", also used in bundles: "understanding their problems", "understanding their way of life", "respectful attitude", "psychological safety", etc.

The definition of "tolerance towards persons with disabilities" is presented as a word cloud, where the most common words are indicated by the appropriate font size and colour (see Figure 9).

желание	desire
OB3	disabilities
сострадание	compassion
помочь	to help
терпение	patience
обычным	ordinary
людям	people
понимание	understanding
принятие	acceptance
помощь	assistance
отношение	attitude
хорошее	good
уважение	respect
терпимость	tolerance
жалость	pity
сочувствие	empathy
доброжелательность	benevolence



Figure 9 Word cloud "psychological safety"

The result of this research showed that all respondents intended to "treat persons with disabilities as people with (special) needs, and not with disabilities, and create all conditions for their psychological and social safety".

Discussion

The data obtained by the authors are consistent with the results of other studies; for example, according to Volkova [22], "81.75% of students believe that the disabled and persons with disabilities can study together with them at higher education institutions"; "to the question: what feelings do you feel when communicating with persons with disabilities, the respondents experience tolerance – 7.94%" [12; 23].

Also, the statement that the attitude towards persons with disabilities is formed as a result of communication with them is experimentally confirmed in the work by Movkebayeva et al. [19]. The authors prove that students who do not have experience in co-education with peers with disabilities tend to feel pity for them (73.8%), and students who have experience in co-education with peers with disabilities – the desire to cooperate, friendliness (75%) [20].

Radion [20] offers a model for the development of a tolerant attitude towards persons with special mental or physical development needs among university students, which is the subject of prospective research.

#### Conclusions

The theoretical analysis of the problem of providing psychological safety to persons with disabilities, taking into account gender and age differences, showed that there were not enough literature sources on the stated problem. The existing works by well-known scientists can only be supplemented with experimental data that allow imaginatively presenting a diagnostic integral picture of persons with disabilities and ordinary, healthy peers.

Therefore, experimental research, at the stage of an ascertaining experiment, allows partially highlighting the problem of the psychological safety of persons with disabilities. The analysis of experimental data obtained from the survey showed that at the time of the survey, 51.5% of the respondents by gender (23% – men, 28.5% – women) treated persons with disabilities as ordinary people, recognising their skills, dignity, and abilities.

The correlation analysis of the obtained data showed that the respondents who effectively interacted with persons with disabilities evaluated them as fellow students who could successfully engage in labour activities at ordinary enterprises. Students with disabilities, being among their peers or colleagues, can feel completely psychologically safe or study at educational institutions, and those who have daily experience in communicating with persons with disabilities, as a rule, interact constructively with them and are ready to help them. In this regard, it is necessary to develop and implement educational programmes for training specialists in adaptation, entering a new educational environment along with healthy people, and creating conditions for the psychological safety of the individual and society.

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