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Integration-related Experience and Preparedness from the Aspect of Hungarian Preschool Teacher Candidates

Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the experience of graduating preschool teacher candidates related to children with special needs, moreover to reveal their attitudes and perceptions of preparedness and competence regarding integration. A survey was used to collect data from 360 (mean age: 26.09 yrs.) graduating students attending 10 Hungarian preschool teacher training institutions. Besides revealing the experience and self-perceptions, our purpose was to investigate the factors influencing the development of attitudes and perceptions of preparedness and competence. The hypotheses were justified: the more and positive experience gained related to children with special needs and integration lead to more positive attitudes and self-perceptions. Differences between the answers of full-time and part-time students also appeared regarding their opinion about their competence in connection with integration. The participants also expressed the need for more practical training related to integration and inclusion. These results are a key of importance regarding the development of inclusion related elements of preschool teacher training.

Keywords: integration, inclusion, preschool, teacher candidates

Introduction

Recently it is an internationally accepted principle that the institutional education of children with special educational needs should be implemented together with typically developing children (Ferguson, 2008). Since the 1970-1980s integration and inclusion emerged in several ways in different countries (Ferguson, 2008; Ainscow, Dyson & Weiner, 2013).

The Salamanca Statement: Framework for Action for Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994) turned the attention of several nations to the topic of integration and inclusion (Nutbrown, Clough & Atherton, 2013).

Although the principle is given, by investigating the international literature of the topic it can be found that the realization of inclusion and the related terminology shows a diverse picture. This raises the question of the possibility of international comparisons (cf. D'Alessio & Watkins, 2009) as

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well as the need that countries should learn from each other's experience (cf. e.g. "Early Inclusion" international project. www.early-inclusion.eu).

In the last decades integration increasingly became widespread in Hungary (Perlusz, 2013); the majority of children with special educational needs are placed in integrated settings. For example, in the school year of 2015/2016 81% of preschool-aged children with special educational needs attended integrated preschools (Hungarian Central Statistical Office, 2016).

Integration and inclusion at preschool

Integration or inclusion at preschool compared to that of implemented in school has special characteristics. In recent years great emphasis has been put on early childhood education (Stephen, 2006) attracting the attention on the importance of the educational experiences provided to children before they go to school. Early childhood education institutions – including preschools – are the venues where both children and parents gain their first experience about institutional education and where the foundation of future school progress of children is set (Smith and Smith, 2000, cited in Aldrich, 2002). Preschool has key importance as the scene of integration; furthermore, it maintains a close relationships with early intervention (Kereki, 2015; Nutbrown, Clough & Atherton, 2013). The fact that children have special educational needs is often realised and/or diagnosed during early childhood. In certain cases, the difference is not so apparent compared to the typically developing children of this age (Odom, Vitztum, Wolery, Lieber, Sandall, Hanson, Beckman, Schwartz and Horn, 2004). Preschool differs from school in several aspects: e.g. the characteristics of educational planning are different and preschool is less performance-oriented (Odom et al., 2004; Venterné, 2006, cited in Böddi, 2010).

It is a well-known fact that preschool integration provides numerous positive impacts on both children with special educational needs and typically developing children (Wolery & Wilbers, 1995; Odom, 2000). Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise that these positive effects do not work automatically; great amount of awareness is required to achieve these outcomes (e.g. Wolery & Wilbers, 1995; Lundquist, Allodi & Siljehag, 2015).

The place of preschool in the Hungarian educational system

In Hungary preschool (or kindergarten, in Hungarian "óvoda") is the first compulsory educational institution for children (ages 3 to 6 years) (Act CXC of 2011 on National Public Education). Using the terminology of International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) (UNESCO, 2012) Hungarian preschool belongs to Early Childhood Education (level 0) and „preprimary education” (the second stage of level 0) which begins at the age of 3 and lasts to the beginning of primary school (age of 6 or in some cases 7) (Török, 2015). Previous to the compulsory preschool children can attend nurseries or daycares, which level is not compulsory and does not belong to the educational system in Hungary.

The milieu in preschools can be considered open to integration; the idea of a child in preschool can be described by respecting individuality and uniqueness, acceptance and reducing disadvantages. (Cf. Government Decree 363/2012 (XII. 17.) on the Core Programme for Kindergartens).

Preschool teacher training

As integration in preschools became a widespread principle and practice, preschool teacher training incorporated elements related to special educational needs, integration, and inclusion into the curricula.

It is well known that teachers have a key role in the effectiveness of inclusion. The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2014) defined "Five Key Messages for Inclusive Education" where one of the messages has been: "Highly qualified professionals". The quality of the training of teachers and other professionals are crucial in managing inclusion. "Highly qualified professionals' concerns issues of initial and in-service training, the profile, values, and competence of teachers, effective approaches to recruitment, and attitudes, as well as networking and coordination of all professionals." (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2014, pp. 16).

Attitudes and perceptions of teachers are also of key importance regarding successful integration and inclusion (Štemberger & Kiswarday, 2017). In their systematic review, Avramidis and Norwich (2002) divided factors influencing teacher's attitudes into three groups: child-related,

teacher-related and environment-related factors. Attitudes and perceptions about integration of teachers as well as their beliefs related to for example their own roles are well explored topics in the scientific literature (Smith & Smith, 2000; Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005; Mitchell & Hegde, 2007; Horne & Timmons, 2009; de Boer, Pijl & Mannaert, 2011; Savolainen, Engelbrecht, Nel & Malinen, 2012; Dias & Cadime, 2016; Štemberger & Kiswarday, 2017). Inclusiveness can be named as a component of teacher identity (Domović, Vlasta & Bouillet, 2017). "The professional identity of contemporary teachers should involve the inclusive component, or, in other words, they should consider themselves capable of teaching diverse pupils. In that sense, inclusive education is based on a number of central values such as equality, participation, developing and sustaining communities, and respect for diversity (Watkins 2012)" (cited in Domović, Vlasta & Bouillet, 2017, pp 177).

Training has a crucial effect on attitudes of teachers related to integration or inclusion (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). This emphasises the role of studying integration related topics, preparedness, attitudes and beliefs of preschool teacher candidates. Researches with student teachers or pre-service teachers deal with attitudes related to special educational needs and integration or inclusion (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000; Jeon & Peterson, 2003; Hastings & Oakford, 2003; Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005) and also with their knowledge (Aldrich, 2002) and beliefs for example about their self-efficiency (Savolainen, Engelbrecht, Nel & Malinen, 2012; Aldrich, 2002; Jordan, Schwartz & McGhie-Richmond, 2009) or the role of the teacher in inclusive education (Domović, Vlasta & Bouillet, 2017). These issues are of key importance regarding the preparation of future teachers being ready to work in integrated groups or classes.

Recently in Hungary preschool teacher training is related to university bachelor (BA) level. Students can attend university either in full-time or part-time forms. Preschool teacher training has incorporated compulsory courses related to special pedagogy, integration, and inclusion, therefore it can be said that preschool teacher candidates have a basic knowledge in the topics of children with special educational needs and integration. After graduation preschool

teachers (similarly to teachers at other levels of education) start to work as trainees (for two years) supported by appointed mentors (Act CXC of 2011 on National Public Education). Graduated preschool teachers also have the opportunity to continue their studies in Educational Science MA (master level).

The aim of our research was to study the integration-related attitudes of Hungarian graduating preschool teacher candidates focusing on their self-perception preparedness. Our goal was to learn what kind of experience – in- and outside of teacher training – contributes to the sense of preparedness and competence and which fields are assessed as challenging.

Our research questions were the following:

1. What is the opinion of graduating students about their own theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the field of integrated and inclusive education?
2. What kind of experience (in- and outside of teacher training) has they gained in connection with integration?
3. What are their expectations and possible fears?
4. What kind of preparation would they request beyond the one they have received during their education?
5. In what extent do they consider themselves ready to integration and its challenges?

Besides our research questions hypotheses were also defined:

1. Based on literature data experience gained in the education of children with special educational needs and inclusion are connected to more positive integration-related attitudes (cf. Avramidis and Norwich, 2002), therefore we presume that
 - 1.1. experience gained in- and outside of teacher training in connection with children with special educational needs correlates with more positive attitude towards integration as well as extended perception of competence and preparedness.
 - 1.2. characteristics of the preschools where students completed their practical training (i.e. whether the groups were integrating or not; whether they gained practical experience in the field of integration)

are related to the perception of preparedness.

- 1.3. positive experience in integration leads to the extended perception of competence and preparedness.
- 1.4. since experience (such as work, family, characteristics of practical training) of full-time and part-time students are different, it is predicted that differences appear in their perceptions of preparedness.
2. Students identify insufficiencies regarding their preparation for integration

Method

Participants

Participants consisted of 360 graduating students attending 10 Hungarian preschool teacher training institutions. 355 participants were female and 3 male; at the age between 20 and 50 years (mean age: 26.09 ys). There were 224 and 134 full-time and part-time students, respectively, among them (2 of them have not provided data).

Data collection

Experience and attitudes of graduating preschool teacher students about integration as well as their perception of self-preparedness were examined by a survey filled in online (Qualtrics Survey Software) or in a paper-based format. The survey contained mainly closed questions.

Topics of the survey:

1. *Questions determining the sample (age, sex, form of education (full-time/part-time), institution, etc.)*
2. *Experience originating from sources different from teacher training related to children with special educational needs:*
 - 2.1. place of gaining experience: e.g. informally, at their own family, at the workplace
 - 2.2. the frequency of gaining experience
 - 2.3. kinds of special educational needs they met
 - 2.4. the existence of work experience related to young children (at the age of 0-7 ys.)
 - 2.5. type of it (e.g. babysitting, working at an educational institution, e. g. nursery, preschool)
 - 2.6. field of work (e.g. pedagogical assistant)
 - 2.7. work experience with not typically developing children

3. *Training experience – Theoretical training*

- 3.1. the contribution of certain subjects and group of subjects to the general knowledge of children, children with special educational needs and integration (Likert scale)
- 3.2. elective courses in the field
- 3.3. intentional search for courses involving the subject of integration

4. *Training experience – Practical training*

- 4.1. integrating status of the teacher training preschools where they studied and worked during their university years
- 4.2. integrating status of preschool group where they studied and worked during their training
- 4.3. the children with special educational needs they met in the preschool groups
- 4.4. tasks of the student connected to integrated education
- 4.5. positive and negative, integration-related experience gained in practical training in the teacher training preschools

5. *Perception of preparedness and emotions regarding integration (Likert scale)*

- 5.1. reflecting on the knowledge and perspective derived from the theoretical training
- 5.2. reflecting on the practical knowledge derived from teacher training
- 5.3. reflecting on their own competence and the borders of it (tasks and challenges)
- 5.4. emotions (generally and in specific situations; e.g. anxiety, emotionally demanding situations)

6. *Identifying recommendations for preschool teacher training regarding integration related preparation*

Descriptive statistics were calculated and tests were completed (chi-squared test, t-test) in data processing. The statistics were calculated by using Qualtrics Survey Software.

Results

Experience with children with special educational needs and integration

Based on the answers given in the survey it can be determined that large proportion of teacher candidates have met children out-

side the framework of education whose development altered from the typical. Patterns from the answers of full-time and part-time students differ in both the scope ($\chi^2=9.16$; $p<0.05$) and frequency ($\chi^2=72.19$; $p<0.01$) of experience. Less than half of those completing the survey deal with children aged 0 to 7 years outside the framework of their studies (39.85% and 60.15% for full-time and part-time students, respectively) mainly in institutions (41.04%) or as babysitters (32.95%). Part-time students usually involved in the former type of engagement while full-time students choose babysitting more frequently. Among institutions preschools were indicated the most often; less than half of those working in institutions (45.16%) have already gained experience on children whose development altered from typical.

Teacher candidates consider that subjects related to psychology and pedagogy contributed the most to their theoretical knowledge connected to integration. 28.44% of the survey participants completed integration-related courses beyond their compulsory studies; the proportion of those indicating that they intentionally looked for topics of this field in their studies is similar (32.92%).

The great majority of the students completed their practical training in integrating preschools and integrating groups (94.12% and 85.67%, respectively). They usually had experience on children with special educational needs as regards of behaviour, adjustment, and speech; moreover, they had often met children with other psychological development disorders and autism. Students answered most often (152 participants) that they fulfilled all tasks of preschool teachers related to children with special educational needs. However, not all of them gave this answer, there were differences regarding certain pedagogical tasks.

As for the experience gained on children with special educational needs during practical training teacher candidates declared considerably more positive than negative experience (227 and 138 participants, respectively). Altogether 949 answers were given indicating the source of positive experience: gladness felt for the

inclusion of children (176 cases) and creating teacher-children relation (170 cases) took the first two places.

Contrary to the great number of sources of gladness experiencing the perception of competence was rare (5.69%) (Figure 1).

Sources of negative experience were mainly linked to emotions (e.g. frustration, emotionally demanding situations) (Figure 2). Only four participants answered that dealing with these children had been, on the whole, a negative experience.

Perception of preparedness and emotions regarding integration

Self-reflections about preparedness and competence of students (a kind of "well-being for integration") has been assessed by a Likert scale question set. The mean values of the statements were analysed.

Based on their answers teacher candidates perceive that the attitude of acceptance toward the development of children has been established during their studies. They are aware of the fundamental knowledge connected to children with special educational needs and integration, although they consider practical preparation for integration as not so well-articulated within their studies.

In case of integration students generally provided a positive opinion in the field of exact tasks and challenges around preschool teacher competences; they consider themselves relatively well-prepared. Discussing the problems and special development needs of children with their parents is the task they feel themselves the least prepared for.

It seems to graduate students would likely be involved in the education of children with special educational needs (mean: 2.76); at the same time feel themselves prepared for this work in a slightly lower extent (2.61).

The answers related to "well-being for integration" were examined alongside certain questions of the survey revealing experience on integration. Results were determined by significant t-tests (Tables 1 to 4)

Figure 1.

Positive experience of the participants gained during their practical training in integrated preschool groups.

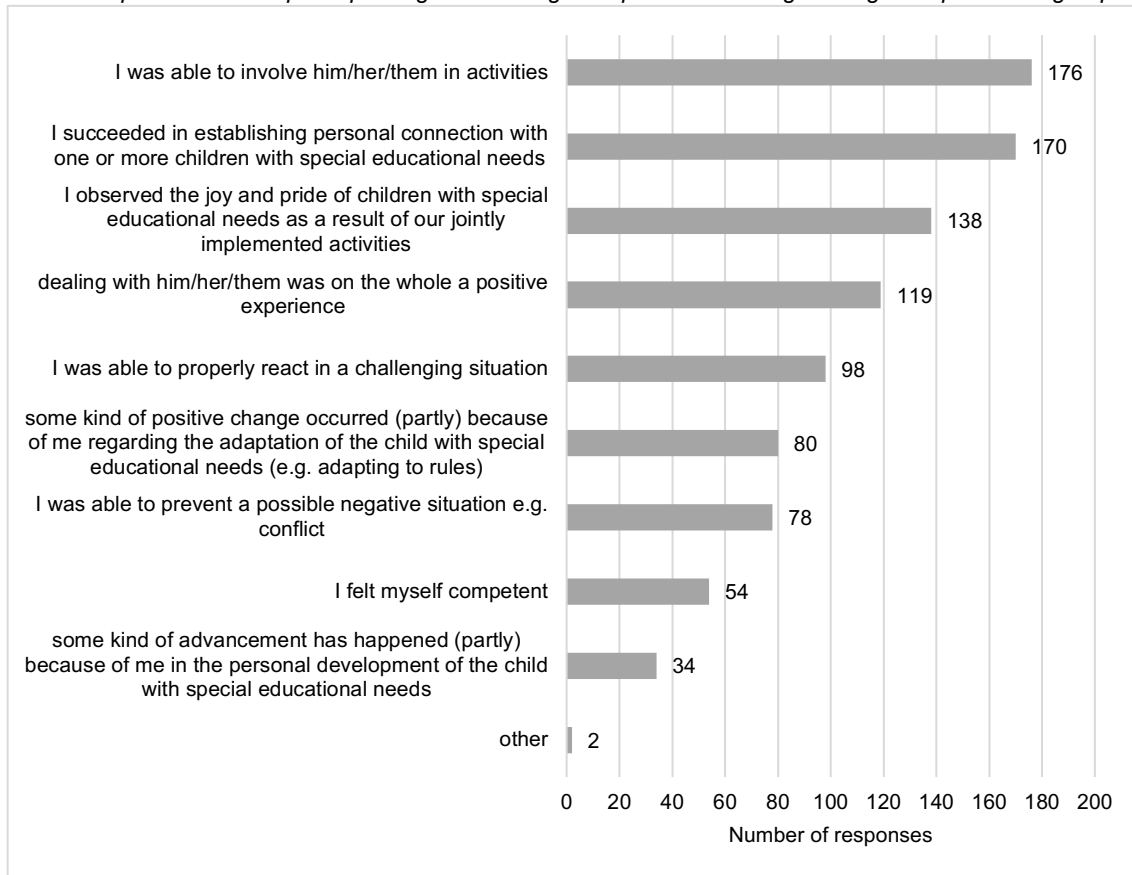


Figure 2.

Positive experience of the participants gained during their practical training in integrated preschool groups.

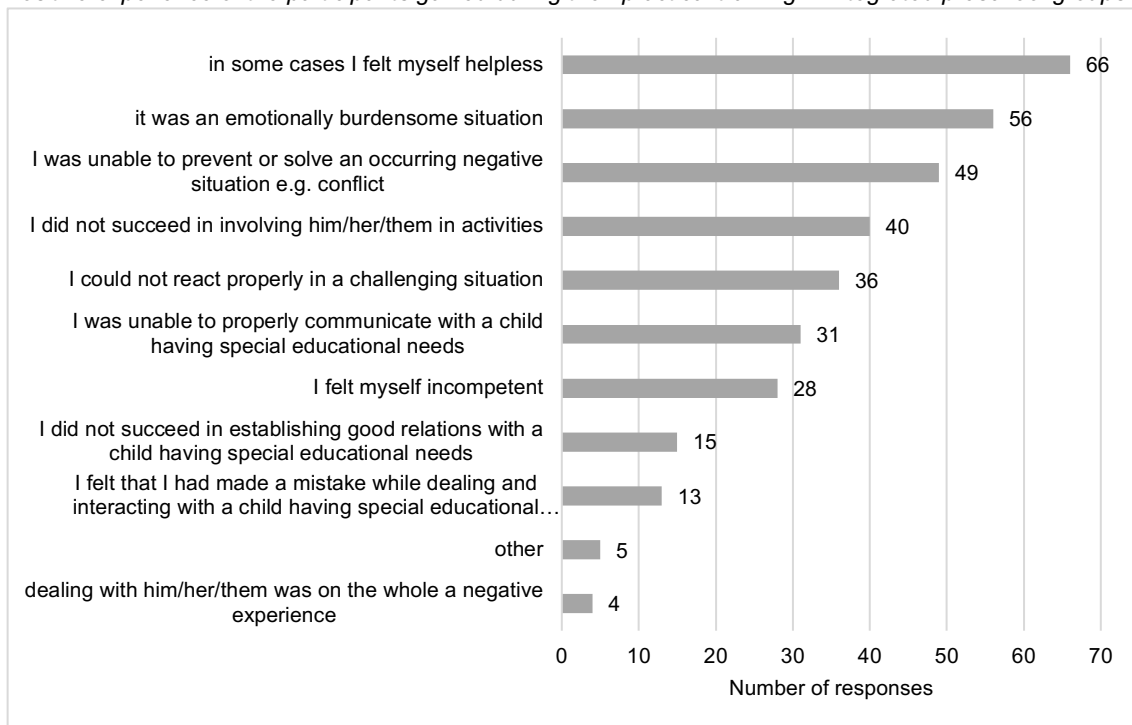


Table 1.
Experience gained outside the university on children with special educational needs.

Item	Experience outside the university?	Working with children between the age of 0 and 7 years?	Working with children with special educational needs?
At the end of my preschool teacher education, I feel I know the possibilities of differentiation.	t=2.02; p=0.05 no		
I consider myself not having enough experience regarding the integrated preschool education of children with special educational needs.*			t=3.63; p<0.01 no
I am fully aware of what kind of professionals I can, as a preschool teacher, turn to in relation with the integration of children with special educational needs.	t=2.11; p<0.05 yes		
I feel myself helpless when thinking about the integration of a child with special educational needs.*	t=2.06; p<0.05 yes		
I am afraid of talking with parents about the problems and special educational needs of their child.*		t=2.47; p=0.01 no	
I fully know who to ask for information and advice in case I learn that a child with special educational needs is about to arrive in my group.*	t=2.06; p<0.05 yes		
I plan to complete further trainings related to children with special educational needs and integration.*	t=2.62; p=0.01 yes	t=2.41; p<0.05 yes	
I am worried about working in a preschool group that integrates children with special educational needs.*	t=2.34; p<0.05 no		
On the whole, I consider myself prepared to receive children with special educational needs in my preschool group.*		t=2.78; p=0.01 yes	

* The items contain negative statements.

Note. The name of the groups having higher means is written below t and p values.

Table 2.
Motivation originated in theoretical training for gaining experience related to special educational needs

Item	Whether he/she sought SEN-related contents during education?
I am fully aware of what kind of professionals I can, as a preschool teacher, turn to in relation to the integration of children with special educational needs.	t=2.21; p<0.05 yes
I feel myself helpless when thinking about the integration of a child with special educational needs.*	t=2.27; p<0.05 no
I would gladly accept working in a preschool group integrating children with special educational needs.	t=2.61; p=0.01 yes
I plan to complete further training related to children with special educational needs and integration.	t=4.39; p<0.01 yes
I think I am able to properly approach a child with special educational needs.	t=2.79; p=0.01 yes
I am worried about working in a preschool group that integrates children with special educational needs.*	t=2.44; p<0.05 no
On the whole, I consider myself prepared to receive children with special educational needs in my preschool group.	t=3.96; p<0.01 yes

* The items contain negative statements.

Note. The name of the groups having higher means is written below t and p values.

Table 3.
Characteristics of preschool teacher-training from the practical aspect

Item	Integrating group?	Whether the student completed tasks involving child(ren) with special educational needs?
During my preschool teacher education, I have received practical knowledge that I consider useful in connection with integrating children with special educational needs.	t=2.42; p<0.05 yes	t=2.35; p<0.05 yes
At the end of my preschool teacher education, I feel I know the possibilities of differentiation.	t=2.63; p=0.01 yes	
I consider myself not having enough experience regarding the integrated preschool education of children with special educational needs.*	t=2.25; p<0.05 no	t=2.33; p<0.05 no
I feel myself helpless when thinking about the integration of a child with special educational needs.*	t=3.39; p<0.01 no	
I would gladly accept working in a preschool group integrating children with special educational needs.*		t=2.06; p<0.05 yes
I think I am able to properly approach a child with special educational needs.*		t=3.17; p<0.01 yes
I am worried about working in a preschool group that integrates children with special educational needs.*	t=3.08; p=0.01 no	
On the whole, I consider myself prepared to receive children with special educational needs in my preschool group.*		t=2.46; p<0.05 yes

* The items contain negative statements.

Note. The name of the groups having higher means is written below t and p values.

Table 4.
Experience with children with special educational needs during practical training

Statement	Had positive experience	Had negative experience
During my preschool teacher education, I have received practical knowledge that I consider useful in connection with integrating children with special educational needs.	t=3.32; p<0.01 yes	
During my preschool teacher education, I have gained an attitude of acceptance toward development.	t=2.19; p<0.05 yes	
At the end of my preschool teacher education, I feel I know development methods.	t=2.04; p=0.05 yes	
I consider myself not having enough experience regarding the integrated preschool education of children with special educational needs.*	t=2.63; p=0.01 no	t=2.83; p<0.01 yes
I am fully aware of what kind of professionals I can, as a preschool teacher, turn to in relation to the integration of children with special educational needs.	t=2.5; p<0.05 yes	
I feel myself helpless when thinking about the integration of a child with special educational needs.	t=2.24; p<0.05 no	t=2.29; p<0.05 yes
I fully know who to ask for information and advice in case I learn that a child with special educational needs is about to arrive in my group.	t=3.23; p<0.01 yes	
I would gladly accept working in a preschool group integrating children with special educational needs.	t=3.58; p<0.01 yes	
I think I am able to properly approach a child with special educational needs.	t=2.76; p=0.01 yes	t=2.35; p<0.05 no
On the whole, I consider myself prepared to receive children with special educational needs in my preschool group.	t=3.12; p<0.01 yes	t=2.16; p<0.05 no

* The items contain negative statements.

Note. The name of the groups having higher means is written below t and p values.

Results can be summarised in the followings. Experience on children with special educational needs and integration gained outside the framework of university education has impacts on how prepared students perceive themselves. As a generalisation, it can be said that those having experience on children with special educational needs, dealing with children aged 0 to 7 years and gaining integration-related work experience perceive themselves more prepared and competent regarding some aspects of integration.

An interesting result that teacher candidates who do not have experience on children with special educational needs beyond their studies declared to the greater extent that they were aware of the possibility of differentiation.

It turned out that students intentionally selecting courses connected to special educational needs and integration consider themselves both generally and in different exact fields of integrated education.

Teacher candidates who have completed their practical training in integrating groups perceive more so that their studies provided practical knowledge about integration, they are less inexperienced, know the possibilities of differentiation, struggle less about the feeling of frustration. Their attitudes are more positive: they would more likely work in integrating groups and perceive themselves altogether more prepared in the topic of integration.

The hypotheses indicating that experience on children with special educational needs gained in- an outside of university studies lead to more positive attitudes and better perception of preparedness and competence were, therefore, justified.

Experience acquired during practical training proved to be decisive. Positive experience was accompanied by the better perception of preparedness and competence. The hypothesis stating that positive experience results positive relation to integration has been justified.

Differences were identified between the answers of full-time and part-time students. The former rather expressed their fears about discussions with parents, while part-time students generally feel better prepared in the field of integration. Thus the hypotheses regarding differences based on the status of the students have been justified.

It was presumed that teacher candidates were going to express dissatisfaction and identify deficiencies in connection with the specific characteristics of integration in preschool teacher education. It has been corroborated by the fact that only 1.36% and 1.02% of the participants found their preparation proper and sufficient. Students expressed their requirements about increasing preparation mostly in the fields of methodologies (25.31%), communication, managing conflicts (23.28%) and more knowledge in special education (22.94%). The participants clearly expressed the need for more practical knowledge and the importance of learning through practical forms. Presentation of best practice (19.81%), conversation with teachers having great experience in the field of integration (18.19%), visiting institutions (17.51%), simulating situations (12.21%) and participating in training (10.67%) were on the first five places.

Discussion

It can be stated that out-of-university experience of part-time students on children with special educational needs is more intensive and more strongly connected to work implemented on institutions. Similar experience of full-time students is sparser and usually gained within less formal frameworks. It cannot be left unnoticed that some part-time students acquire no experience beyond their compulsory education. Both starting their careers and integration can represent great challenges for them.

A remarkable result emerged indicating that students having, beyond their university studies, no experience on children with special educational needs rather consider that they are aware of differentiation. The explanation of this can be that those meeting more children with special educational needs and getting familiar with the situation have experienced the need for flexibility on behalf of teachers. Thus, they perceive themselves less prepared while those who know differentiation from a rather theoretical aspect consider themselves more prepared.

Motivation connected to integration-related education proved to be important as well: more information and education are accompanied by more positive attitude (Aramidis and Norwich, 2002) and higher level perception of preparedness and compe-

tence. At the same time, it is important to note that only cca. 30% of the survey participants looked intentionally for the integration-related content of subjects. Their motivation was obviously already stronger.

It seems great proportion of students gained experience in integrating groups where most of them were required to fulfill every task teachers perform. However, attention shall be paid to the fact that, although differentiation is a method pedagogically connected to integration, it appeared rarely in the answers. In some cases, the task of the student was to only “occupy” (sic!) the child (aiming rather “exclusion” than differentiation).

Importance of the experience and feelings acquired in connection with integration can also be outlined based on the results. Positive experience provides the basis for more positive integration-related perceptions of teacher candidates (cf. “contact hypothesis” – Avramidis and Norwich, 2002). Education has a key task in facilitating the interpretation, awareness-raising, and reframing of positive and negative experience gained during practical training. Both university teachers and mentoring preschool teachers play emphasised roles in these steps.

The above-mentioned results and conclusions could be made more detailed and precise by the future continuation of this research. Combining the method of the survey with other research methods e.g. observations or focus-group interviews with students (Aldrich, 2002) would provide more information about the perceptions of teacher candidates. Moreover, follow up-studies (e.g. asking similar questions when the research participants will work as in-service teachers in integrated preschool groups) would draw a detailed picture about the experience of the participants and clarify their reflections on teacher training (Aldrich, 2002).

Reflections about teacher training revealed that teacher candidate requires, beyond theoretical knowledge, practical ways of gaining experience since these can decrease their uncertainty. Students expressed clearly the need for more practical knowledge, which would make them feel less frustrated and incompetent. Although it can be said that preschool teacher training has elements focusing on the practical tasks of integration, it revealed from the feedback of students that they missed the

more practical aspect of teacher training related to integration and inclusion.

Although integration is a widely extended practice in Hungary, it can be said that there are some preschools where no children with special needs are represented or only a few of them attend those preschools. In some cases it can happen that preschool teacher students meet only a few types of disabilities during their practical training (e.g. only autistic children are included in that kindergarten), thus preschool teacher students gain less experience about inclusion, or they observe only specific situations during their studies. Teacher training faculties should pay more attention to choose and cooperate with practical training places to assure learning possibilities for their students on various types of special education needs.

In addition to this, the mentors of students have also different quality of integration related competence, thus students can observe not only appropriate ways of professional treatment of children with special needs. The preparedness and attitude to inclusion and disability of the mentors also influence the preparedness of the students. As a conclusion it can be said that teacher training should focus on the training of the mentors as well.

Training programmes, such as “Early Inclusion” – “Training and Methods Sharing for Early Inclusion” international project (www.early-inclusion.eu) focusing on improving inclusion related skills of the participants are of a key importance in increasing teachers and teacher candidates’ practical knowledge related to children with special educational needs. Also by exchanging knowledge and experience with other countries on inclusion, innovative elements can be added to Hungarian preschool teacher training.

Incorporating some new elements and methods into teacher training is also useful. For example workshops, videos and conversations with preschool teachers having inclusion related experience would help students by giving more useful knowledge about managing challenging situations related to inclusion.

It would be useful to organize further courses besides the compulsory ones focusing on preparedness, feelings, satisfaction and anxiety of teachers and teacher candidates related to inclusion. Not only

educational trainers but psychologists could cooperate in these trainings.

Although there is communication between the researchers and educators of mainstream education and special educations in Hungary, it can be also mentioned that more effective cooperation is needed on the level of education and teacher training as well.

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