

Iliia Kastornykh*

Postgraduate Student
Alfred Nobel University
49000, 18 Sicheslavskya Naberezhna Str., Dnipro, Ukraine
<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-9059-6241>

Preparation of future bachelors of psychology to educational and advisory activities on psychosexual development of adolescents

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Abstract. The purpose of the study was to find out the level of readiness of future bachelors of psychology for educational and advisory activities on the psychosexual development of adolescents. The research methodology was based on a combination of theoretical analysis of educational and professional programmes and empirical methods, in particular, content analysis of the curricula of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and Odesa Mechnikov National University questionnaires and surveys of students at these higher education institutions. The results showed that the preparation of students for work in the field of psychosexual development of adolescents remained insufficiently holistic, because educational programmes reflected the topic in fragments, limited to general issues of advisory practice. The average level of readiness of future psychologists was 3.68 points, which indicated a partial development of professional knowledge, skills, and value orientations. The highest rates were recorded for the motivational component, where 39.5% of students demonstrated a high level of positive attitude to the topic of sex education, realising its social significance. However, only 25.5% of respondents achieved a high level of activity skills, which reflected a lack of practical experience and lack of training forms of education. Students named socio-cultural barriers (68%) and lack of methodological training (21%) as the main difficulties. A comparison of the results of the two universities showed a slight difference in integral indicators (3.72 and 3.65 points, respectively). Modernisation of educational programmes for training psychologists requires the integration of psychosexual development topics, advisory ethics, and practice-oriented modules. The practical significance of the results obtained lies in the fact that they could be used by teachers of higher educational institutions in improving the content of educational programmes and developing educational and methodological materials for preparing future psychologists for educational and advisory activities in the field of psychosexual development of adolescents

Keywords: practical skills; issues of ethics of sexual relations; methodological materials; competencies; barriers

*Corresponding author

INTRODUCTION

The growing complexity of social and interpersonal challenges of adolescence determines the need for effective psychological support for their psychosexual development. The educational practice of preparing future bachelors of psychology requires orientation to the development of applicants' professional readiness for educational and advisory work with adolescents, which provided for a com-

bination of theoretical knowledge and practical skills. In addition, attention should be paid to the integration of knowledge on developmental psychology, pedagogy, and ethics of sexual relations into an integral system of professional competence of a specialist. Insufficient development of methodological approaches to the training of future psychologists in this area led to the need for



theoretical substantiation and experimental verification of the pedagogical conditions of such training. Determining the content, organisational and technological foundations for the development of readiness for educational and advisory activities was the main task of the study.

In a number of scientific papers, the researchers' attention was focused on general aspects of professional training of future psychologists and psychosexual development of adolescents, in particular, A.S. Sadykina (2025) considered the issue of preparing future bachelors of psychology for educational activities. The researcher analysed the content of professional education of future psychologists and determined the pedagogical conditions for the development of readiness for educational and advisory work. The paper highlighted the problems of integrating theoretical and practical training, including ways to improve professional competencies in the context of contemporary social challenges. S. Silva *et al.* (2024) conducted a systematic review of the sources and types of sexual information used by adolescents. The researchers identified the main channels for gaining knowledge about psychosexual development, namely school, peers, media, and digital resources. The results showed a lack of structured and scientifically based information, which led to the need for professional education of adolescents. D.V. Sokolenko (2023) substantiated the socio-pedagogical foundations of the development of sexual culture of children in the educational environment. The researcher defined the role of teachers and psychologists in creating conditions for safe and morally balanced psychosexual development. Attention was paid to the influence of the educational environment on the development of adequate social and sexual representations in children.

The importance of understanding psychosexual development and sex education for adolescents in Vietnam was investigated by N.T. Lan & N.H. Huong (2021). The researchers analysed cultural and social factors that influenced the formation of young people's ideas about sexuality. The need to train professionals capable of conducting advisory and educational work within culturally sensitive approaches was emphasised. C.M. Lillard *et al.* (2020) examined differences in psychosexual development among juvenile delinquents with different types of sexual behaviour. The researchers compared cognitive, emotional, and behavioural development scores in three groups of adolescents. The data obtained helped to determine the relationship between psychosexual identity disorders and social behavioural abnormalities. J. Kotiuga *et al.* (2022) conducted a study of adolescents' perception of their own sexual identity, their ability to build relationships, and their attitude to sexual pleasure. The researchers collected empirical data on self-assessment of sexual competence and personal values in adolescence. The results showed significant individual differences due to the level of awareness and social conditions of education.

The areas of training future educational psychologists to work with young people based on national values were

determined by K.K. Kabekeyeva *et al.* (2025). The researchers developed a model for the development of professional competencies that combined humanistic, cultural, and advisory aspects. The practical part of the study showed the effectiveness of step-by-step development of skills in working with young people in the context of social and psychological support. S. Eleuteri *et al.* (2024) examined the goals and content of sex education in the school environment, considering the principles of inclusivity. The researchers analysed how various educational programmes contributed to the development of a conscious and safe attitude to sexuality. The importance of an interdisciplinary approach in training teachers and psychologists to work with different categories of children was shown. A study of psychosexual development and sex education of young people with autism was conducted by T.T.W. Au Yeung *et al.* (2024). Analysis of the experience of autistic and neurotypical young adults revealed specific barriers to the perception of information about sexuality. The researchers emphasised the importance of adapted learning methods to improve psychological understanding in this group.

In a mixed study, D.M. Abbott *et al.* (2023) analysed the views of students of the specialty "Psychological Counselling" on training in psychosexual education. The researchers found a low level of inclusion of development topics in the training programmes of future psychologists. The results highlighted the need for increased training that would cover the educational and advisory component in the field of psychosexual education. The above-mentioned studies mainly covered certain aspects of psychosexual development of adolescents or general issues of professional training of psychologists, without revealing integrated approaches to the development of readiness for educational and advisory activities. The pedagogical conditions, content, and technologies of preparing future bachelors of psychology to work with adolescents in the field of psychosexual development remained insufficiently developed. The purpose of the study was to determine the degree of readiness of future bachelors of psychology to carry out educational and advisory work related to the problems of psychosexual development of adolescents. Research objectives: to analyse the curriculum and content of professional training of future psychologists; to determine the level of awareness, motivational attitudes, and professional readiness of students for consultative and educational activities in the field of sex education; to determine the areas for improving the training of future psychologists for the implementation of educational functions in the context of psychosexual development of adolescents.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was applied in nature with elements of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The study was conducted during March-June 2025 at two higher educational institutions of Ukraine: Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Faculty of Psychology) and Odesa Mechnikov National University (Faculty of Psychology and Social Work). The

sample included 200 full-time students (100 people from each higher education institution), aged 20 to 23 years, who received a bachelor's degree in psychology in the 4th year. The inclusion criteria were: practical training in an educational institution and consent to participate in the study. The study was conducted in accordance with the World Medical Association (1964).

The study included three stages: theoretical (analysis of theoretical aspects of training future specialists and educational programmes), empirical (data collection through questionnaires and surveys) and analytical (generalisation of results, determination of pedagogical conditions for the development of readiness and allocation of practical recommendations). Empirical data was collected using an integrated approach. A content analysis of educational materials, in particular, educational programmes and curricula, was conducted (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, 2022; Odesa Mechnikov National University, 2025a). The structure and content of educational and professional programmes that determined the main competencies and learning outcomes were analysed separately (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, 2025; Odesa Mechnikov National University, 2025b). The study was also based on an analysis of international standards in the field of education and upbringing (Winkelmann, 2010; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation *et al.*, 2018). Questionnaires and surveys were used to obtain quantitative and qualitative indicators.

Content analysis was used to determine the degree of representation of the topic of psychosexual development in existing bachelor's degree programmes in psychology. Content modules of disciplines on developmental psychology, counselling practice, and preventive work with adolescents were analysed.

For the survey, the author's questionnaire was used, created based on adapted criteria for assessing readiness for advisory activities. The questionnaire covered three main components of readiness: cognitive (the system of knowledge about age, psychological and social features of psychosexual development), motivational (value-semantic attitude to the problems of sex education, professional interest, orientation to humanistic principles of interaction), and activity (the ability to advise, apply psychoeducational methods, analyse and interpret behavioural manifestations). To determine the level of readiness of future specialists, a three-level assessment scale was used: 4.1-5.0 – high level of development of practical skills; 2.6-4.0 – medium level; 1.0-2.5 – low level of readiness for practical activities. The average integral readiness score was calculated as the weighted arithmetic mean of scores for three components (cognitive, motivational, and activity) determined by summing up the survey results. The results of the survey helped to quantify and qualitatively assess the level of awareness of students, identify the features of their attitude to the problems of psychosexual education and determine the areas for improving educational training (Table 1).

Table 1. Questionnaire for determining the readiness of future psychologists for consulting and educational activities on the psychosexual development of adolescents

No.	Questions
I. Cognitive component (level of knowledge and understanding of the problem)	
1.	I have a basic knowledge of the patterns of psychosexual development of adolescents.
2.	I understand the psychological factors of sexual identity development.
3.	I know the main models of sexual socialisation in adolescence.
4.	I am familiar with the regulatory aspects of sex education in Ukraine.
5.	I can explain the role of a school psychologist in shaping a healthy attitude to sexuality.
6.	I have knowledge of typical adolescent problems related to puberty and identity.
II. Motivational component (attitude, values, professional orientations)	
7.	I consider the topic of sex education important for the professional activity of a psychologist.
8.	I feel an inner willingness to work with teenagers on sex education issues.
9.	I am interested in participating in educational programmes aimed at supporting healthy sexual development.
10.	I am positive about the inclusion of the topic of sex education in the training programmes of psychologists.
11.	I believe that the work of a psychologist in the field of sex education contributes to the harmonious development of young people.
12.	I am ready to independently improve my knowledge of sex education.
III. Activity component (practical skills and professional confidence)	
13.	I can develop part of a teen sex education training session.
14.	I have the skills to conduct a consultation conversation on sensitive topics related to sexuality.
15.	I know how to act in cases where teenagers are treated with sexual identity issues or violence.
16.	I am confident in my ability to adhere to ethical standards when working with the topic of sexual development.
17.	I can interact with parents and educators on child sex education issues.
18.	I am able to use advanced psychoeducational technologies in the school environment.

Source: compiled by the author

The survey method was qualitative in nature and was aimed at identifying students' motivational attitudes,

ethical beliefs, and ideas about the role of a psychologist in adolescent sex education. An adapted version of the

Adolescents' Perception Management and Attitudes Towards Sex Education Questionnaire (APMATSEQ) developed by F.O. Arop *et al.* (2019) was used to collect empirical data. Adaptation of the tool was to change the wording of statements in accordance with the context of professional training of future psychologists and supplement it with questions aimed at assessing professional and ethical orientations and motivational factors of participation in educational and advisory activities. The questionnaire consisted of 15 statements rated on a five-point Likert scale (from "totally disagree" to "totally agree"). In addition, the qualitative part included 5 open-ended questions aimed at clarifying professional ideas, barriers, and difficulties that may arise during sex education of adolescents. The questions offered to the respondents covered the following aspects: how they understood the role of a school psychologist in the field of adolescent sex education; what difficulties they thought might arise when discussing sexuality with adolescents; what personal qualities they thought were most important for a psychologist working with sexual development issues; what topics they thought needed more detailed coverage during the professional training of future psychologists; and what forms of work, in particular trainings, consultations or projects, they considered most effective in sexual education of adolescents. The answers received helped to better understand the specifics of students' professional vision, their attitude to the problems of psychosexual development of schoolchildren, and expectations for improving the content of professional training.

Interpretation of the obtained results was carried out using comparative and content analysis. Quantitative survey data were processed using descriptive statistics to determine trends in student readiness levels, and qualitative data on open-ended questions were analysed by categorising responses. This approach helped to identify the main semantic blocks that characterised students' ideas about the role of a psychologist in the psychosexual development of adolescents, and correlate them with modern scientific approaches to professional training. Based on the results obtained, practical recommendations were developed for improving the content of educational programmes for training future psychologists, in particular, on integrating the topic of psychosexual development into training courses, improving professional training of consulting practice, and developing professional and ethical competencies necessary for effective educational activities in the educational environment.

RESULTS

Theoretical foundations of professional training of future psychologists for consulting and educational activities

Theoretical understanding of the problem of preparing future psychologists for educational and advisory activities on the psychosexual development of adolescents is based on the integration of psychological, pedagogical, ethical, and socio-cultural approaches that determine the content of professional competence of a specialist. In accordance

with the scientific provisions of F.O. Arop *et al.* (2019), preparation of a psychologist for counselling work in the field of psychosexual development involves three interrelated components: cognitive (knowledge of the patterns of puberty, ethical standards, socio-psychological factors of sexual identity development); motivational (value attitude to educational activities, awareness of its social significance); activity (ability to organise consultations, communicate with adolescents, create a safe space for discussing intimate topics). The process of becoming ready for such activities should be considered as a component of the professional development of the future psychologist's personality. This readiness is formed in conjunction with the development of ethical consciousness, reflexivity and empathy, which ensure the humanistic nature of psychological assistance. A. Hegde *et al.* (2022) stressed that without proper assimilation of theoretical knowledge about adolescent psychosexual development and understanding of the cultural contexts of sexuality, it is impossible to conduct high-quality counselling in the school environment. Within the framework of the competence approach, the training of future psychologists should include the development of professional and ethical, communicative and preventive, and educational competencies. Educational and advisory activities involve not only providing individual consultations, but also participating in collective forms of work – seminars, trainings, school programmes to form a culture of healthy relationships. Theoretically, this activity is based on the principles of age adequacy, gender sensitivity, and scientific reliability of information provided to adolescents.

Theoretical analysis also showed that the concept of educational and advisory activities covers a wider range of tasks than conventional individual counselling. It is aimed at preventing destructive behaviours, developing responsibility for one's own health, developing positive self-esteem and assertive behaviour skills. A psychologist prepared for such activities should not only provide advice, but also create conditions for the development of critical thinking in adolescents about sexual stereotypes, develop their ability to make informed decisions (Ragaglia *et al.*, 2023). As part of professional training, this requires the integration of interdisciplinary knowledge in developmental psychology, pedagogy, medicine, sociology, and the ethics of sexual relations. It is interdisciplinary training that ensures the development of a holistic understanding of psychosexual development as a phenomenon that combines biological, emotional, cognitive, and social components. The key theoretical guide for training specialists in this field is also the humanistic paradigm of education, according to which a psychologist should be not only a consultant, but also a facilitator of personal development. Effective assistance is possible only if the client is unconditionally accepted, empathically listened to, and respects their autonomy. These principles are particularly important in the field of sex education, where issues of personal freedom, cultural, and moral values are becoming sensitive. Therefore, the theoretical analysis showed that the preparation of future

psychologists for educational and advisory activities on the psychosexual development of adolescents should be based on the integration of knowledge about age-related patterns of development, professional ethics, gender aspects, social norms, and advanced pedagogical technologies. The systematic inclusion of these elements in the content of educational programmes will contribute to the development of future specialists' readiness for competent, ethically balanced and scientifically based activities in the field of sex education of adolescents.

International standards of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) define the conceptual framework for training future psychological specialists for educational and advisory activities on the psychosexual development of adolescents. The main focus is on the development of competencies that provide a scientifically based, ethically balanced, and culturally sensitive approach to sexuality issues. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation *et al.* (2018) emphasises that training of specialists working with young people should be based on the principles of comprehensiveness, reliability, age compliance, and human rights. According to this document, professionals should be able to integrate the topic of psychosexual development into the broader context of mental health, personal development, and social responsibility. The World Health Organisation in the standards of sex education for the European region (Winkelmann, 2010) defines the need for professional training of counsellors and psychologists capable of supporting adolescents in matters of self-awareness, interpersonal relationships, prevention of violence and risky behaviour. According to these recommendations, effective advisory and educational work is possible only if the specialist has knowledge of the basics of reproductive health, communication ethics, gender equality and the socio-cultural context of sexuality. In addition, importance is attached to the development of nonviolent communication skills, tolerance, the ability to work with different value systems and religious beliefs of clients. The above-mentioned international documents also emphasise the interdisciplinary nature of specialist training. They are aimed at educating a professional who combines scientific awareness with a humanistic worldview, adheres to the principles of gender equality, non-discrimination, and respect for the personal autonomy of the client. Thus, contemporary educational programmes in the field of psychology should integrate the provisions of international standards into training courses, practical modules, and ethical trainings, ensuring the development of students' readiness for effective, tolerant and professionally responsible consulting and educational activities in the field of psychosexual development of adolescents.

Results of the analysis of current educational and professional programmes and curricula of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (2022) and Odesa Mechnikov National University (2025b) showed that the national system of training psychologists only partially covers aspects

of the concept of educational and advisory activities. The content of the curricula indicates that the main focus is on general issues of mental development of the individual, psychodiagnostics, social adaptation, and counselling techniques. Topics related to sex education, sexual identity, the development of a value attitude to own body and intimate relationships are presented fragmentally or completely absent. In most cases, training is limited to the acquisition of theoretical knowledge without developing practical skills in advising adolescents on sexual development issues. The content of the analysed documents showed that both programmes are built in accordance with the competence approach focused on the development of professional knowledge, skills, and ethical orientations of the future psychologist. However, there are no specialised academic disciplines devoted to psychosexual development in the programme structures.

Within the framework of the discipline "Developmental Psychology", the topic of puberty was considered only in passing – in the context of the general emotional and social development of adolescents. There was no emphasis on the psychological aspects of sexual identity, ethical interaction, or counselling support for adolescents in the process of sexual development. There was also no systematic coverage of the pedagogical conditions for maintaining healthy psychosexual development. The course "Counselling Psychology" contains modules devoted to the basics of psychological assistance to clients of different ages, but there are no separate topics that reveal the issues of sexual education or counselling teenagers on the problems of intimate relationships. The content of the curricula demonstrates the predominance of general approaches to building a consultative process, active listening techniques and ethical standards, without including practical cases related to the psychosexual sphere (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, 2022; Odesa Mechnikov National University, 2025a). The course "Psychological Prevention of Deviant Behaviour" contains content modules related to the problems of psychosexual development (prevention of violence, addictive behaviour or social maladaptation). However, even in these topics, the issues of ethics of sexual relations, sexual culture and the development of responsible behaviour of adolescents are considered superficially, without specifying counselling methods or strategies for psychoeducation. None of the curricula studied contains educational topics or practical tasks directly aimed at preparing students for educational activities in schools. There are also no methodological materials that would offer algorithms for developing trainings, lectures, or consultations on sex education. The structure of curricula is dominated by theoretical disciplines, while the practical component necessary for the development of readiness for consulting work in the field of psychosexual development remains insufficiently represented.

Comparative analysis revealed that the curriculum of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv focuses on humanistic values, ethical standards and the development

of reflexive competence, while the curriculum of Odesa Mechnikov National University pays more attention to practical aspects of psychoprophylaxis and social and psychological support. However, in none of the programmes does the topic of psychosexual development of adolescents' act as a systematic educational component or competence result. The results of the content analysis confirmed the fragmentary nature of the representation of psychosexual development issues in educational programmes for bachelor's degrees in psychology. This indicates the lack of a holistic concept of forming students' readiness for educational and advisory activities in the field of sexual education. The results of the analysis indicate the potential of existing

disciplines to integrate relevant topics by expanding content modules, updating educational and methodological support, and introducing practice-oriented forms of training (trainings, role-playing exercises, case analysis).

Analysis of the level of readiness of students of Ukrainian higher education institutions for consulting and educational activities

The results of a survey of future bachelors of psychology of the 4th year students of Ukrainian higher education institutions confirmed the need for constant updating of the content of professional training. The obtained data is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2. Level of readiness of future psychologists for consulting and educational activities on the psychosexual development of adolescents

Readiness component	Level of development	Students of the Kyiv National University named after T. Shevchenko	Students of the Odesa Mechnikov National University	Total for the sample (200 people)
Cognitive	High	32%	28%	30%
	Average	53%	56%	54.5%
	Low	15%	16%	15.5%
Motivational	High	41%	38%	39.5%
	Average	49%	51%	50%
	Low	10%	11%	10.5%
Activity	High	27%	24%	25.5%
	Average	52%	55%	53.5%
	Low	21%	21%	21%
Average integral readiness indicator		3.72	3.65	3.68

Note: determined according to the survey questions (Table 1)

Source: compiled by the author

The overall level of readiness of students of both universities was within the average range (3.68 points), which indicates the partial development of knowledge, skills, and professional and value orientations necessary for effective advisory and educational activities. The highest indicators were recorded for the motivational component: 39.5% of respondents showed a high level. This indicates a positive attitude of students to the problems of psychosexual education, an understanding of its relevance for professional practice and an awareness of the social significance of the role of a psychologist in supporting the healthy development of young people. The reason for such results can be considered the growth of public interest in sex education, the strengthening of information influence of the media, and the activation of interdisciplinary discussions in the field of psychological and pedagogical training of specialists. The cognitive component showed a predominance of the average level of education (54.5%), which indicates moderate awareness of students about the patterns of psychosexual development of adolescents, but with a pronounced lack of knowledge in the field of regulatory aspects and practical models of sexual education. Such results are conditioned by the fact that the curricula of the universities under study only partially cover the topic of psychosexual development, and the lack of systematic methodological materials makes

it difficult to form a holistic understanding of this problem. As a result, students' knowledge remains fragmented, which limits their ability to effectively conduct advisory work in an educational environment. The lowest rates were recorded for the activity component: only 25.5% of students demonstrated a high level of development of practical skills related to the training sessions, conducting consultation conversations on sensitive topics, and interaction with parents and teachers. This result indicates insufficient practical training of future psychologists, which is a direct consequence of the orientation of the educational process mainly to the theoretical assimilation of the material without sufficient study of real cases or simulated situations. The lack of training modules and specialised workshops on psychosexual topics limits the development of students' professional confidence and hinders the development of readiness for interpersonal communication in the context of consulting activities.

A comparative analysis of the results of the two universities showed minor differences: an integral indicator of students' readiness of the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (3.72 points) slightly exceeded the same indicator of students of the Odesa Mechnikov National University (3.65 points). This indicates similarities in curricula and educational approaches, but the higher results of

students at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv may be conditioned by a greater number of theoretical courses in developmental psychology and the availability of electives that partially cover issues of gender identity. Summarising the data obtained, it is possible to identify a number of causal relationships that determine the level of students' readiness for counselling and educational activities. Firstly, the fragmentary reflection of the topic of sex education in the curriculum leads to a lack of systematic knowledge about psychosexual development. Secondly, the predominance of theoretical forms of education causes low practical confidence of students in working with sensitive issues. Thirdly, the growth of public attention to the problems of sex education contributes to the development

of positive motivational attitudes, but without practical implementation, they remain declarative. Fourthly, the lack of an interdisciplinary approach in educational programmes leads to a weak development of integrative consulting skills and communication strategies.

The survey helped to identify the features of motivational, value, and ethical orientations of psychology students on issues of psychosexual education of adolescents, and to assess the degree of their readiness to participate in educational and advisory activities. When analysing the responses, the average scores for each statement of the questionnaire were determined, reflecting the degree of agreement of respondents with the corresponding positions (Table 3).

Table 3. Average scores according to the APMATSEQ adapted questionnaire

Statement	Students of the Kyiv National University named after T. Shevchenko	Students of the Odesa Mechnikov National University
Psychologist should take an active part in the issues of sex education of adolescents.	4.52	4.48
Sex education is an important component of psychological support for students.	4.61	4.57
I have sufficient knowledge about the age characteristics of psychosexual development.	3.84	3.79
During counselling, it is important to consider the cultural and religious characteristics of families.	4.46	4.43
I am ready to conduct conversations with teenagers on sexual behaviour issues.	3.58	3.54
Issue of sex education should be included in the training programmes of future psychologists.	4.64	4.59
I am confident in my ability to respond adequately to teenagers' questions about relationships or sexuality.	3.47	3.42
It is important to observe ethical boundaries when talking to teenagers about sexuality.	4.71	4.69
I understand the role of a psychologist in preventing risky sexual behaviour.	4.28	4.25
I believe that the topics of sex education should be coordinated with parents and teachers.	4.34	4.36
I feel psychologically ready to conduct educational trainings for students.	3.52	3.47
I support the need to integrate sex education into the school curriculum.	4.50	4.45
Professional ethics of a psychologist implies neutrality and tolerance in matters of sexual behaviour.	4.65	4.63
I am aware of the need for my own additional training in psychosexual development.	4.08	4.10
I am ready to participate in the development of educational programmes for schools.	3.74	3.68

Note: survey results are rated on a five-point Likert scale

Source: compiled by the author based on F.O. Arop *et al.* (2019)

The results obtained showed a balanced structure of professional readiness of future psychologists, in which motivational and value orientations played a leading role. The highest average scores were observed for statements related to ethical responsibility and the importance of sex education in psychological training (4.71 and 4.64 points, respectively). This indicated a high awareness of students about the need to comply with professional norms and recognise the role of sexual education in the development of

a healthy personality of a teenager. The lowest rates were recorded for statements related to practical confidence in interaction with adolescents (3.47-3.58 points), which reflected a certain gap between theoretical training and applied skills. This trend led to the need to expand training modules aimed at developing communication and consulting skills. High ratings of ethical aspects of professional activity (average score – 4.65) confirmed the development of humanistic orientations and tolerance of future specialists.

In general, the identified structure of indicators demonstrated that the development of readiness for consultative and educational activities in the field of psychosexual development is complex and requires a systematic approach that combines cognitive, motivational, and activity components. The high level of ethical maturity of students creates favourable conditions for the development of practical skills, but the effectiveness of this process largely depends on the expansion of practice-oriented forms of education and interdisciplinary cooperation in the educational environment. Thus, the results of the survey confirmed the need to modernise training programmes for psychologists with an emphasis on integrating the topic of sex education into the content of academic disciplines and practical trainings.

The results of a qualitative analysis of open questions showed the multidimensional nature of students' professional ideas about the role of a psychologist in the field of adolescent sex education, and the presence of a number of barriers that prevent the effective implementation of the educational function. The majority of respondents (82%) identified the main task of a school psychologist in creating a safe, emotionally supportive space where teenagers can openly discuss issues related to sexuality and receive reliable information without fear of judgement. This position indicates the humanistic orientation of future specialists and their understanding of the importance of psychological comfort as a prerequisite for effective sex education. 11% of students focused on the advisory role of a psychologist in working with parents and teachers, considering a specialist as a mediator between school, family, and child. The remaining 7% of respondents noted the educational function of a psychologist, which involves organising thematic events, lectures and trainings for schoolchildren. When analysing responses to possible difficulties that may arise in the process of discussing sexuality, 68% of students noted socio-cultural barriers, in particular, taboo and conservative public ideas about sexuality, which often leads to misunderstandings on the part of parents or the administration of educational institutions. Another 21% of respondents pointed out the lack of their own theoretical and methodological preparation for working with sensitive topics, and 11% drew attention to the lack of clear instructions and practical recommendations in the regulatory and methodological framework of educational programmes. Consequently, the dominant problem is the lack of preparation of psychologists for sexual education in the school environment due to limited educational and methodological resources, and the lack of systematic support from the educational institution. In answering questions about the personal qualities necessary for effective work in this field, 74% of students identified empathy and tolerance as key professional traits of a psychologist. More than half of the respondents (52%) noted the importance of the ability to maintain neutrality and professional distance, and 37% – the need for a high level of ethical culture, which implies confidentiality and an invaluable attitude to the client. An additional 28% of respondents emphasised

the importance of personal maturity, reflexivity, and self-confidence, which help to overcome emotional stress when working with sensitive topics. These data confirm that future specialists are aware of the importance of not only knowledge, but also personal qualities that determine the quality of consulting interaction.

When analysing topics that require more in-depth coverage within educational programmes, the majority of students (61%) noted insufficient attention to issues of gender identity and sexual orientation, which, in their opinion, is relevant in the context of contemporary social transformations. Almost half of the respondents (49%) noted the need to study the topic of prevention of sexual violence among adolescents, and 33% – the need to develop skills of interaction with parents in matters of sex education. Thus, the results point to students' demand for greater integration of applied aspects of sex education into academic disciplines, and the need for an interdisciplinary approach that combines psychological, pedagogical, and legal knowledge. Regarding effective forms of work in the field of sexual education, 58% of participants preferred interactive methods, such as trainings, group discussions and role-playing games, which promote communication skills and increase the level of trust among participants. 27% of respondents identified individual consultations as the most effective form of interaction, while 15% suggested expanding the practice of implementing information and educational projects with the participation of teachers, medical professionals, and representatives of public organisations. These results demonstrate students' orientation to practice-oriented forms of learning and interaction, which is consistent with current trends in psychological education. Summarising the results of a qualitative survey, it should be stated that students are aware of the social significance of the topic of sex education, but they feel the need to improve their own professional competence, in particular, in the field of consulting practice and ethical support of adolescents. The identified trends indicate the need for a systematic update of the content of professional training of psychologists by integrating the topic of psychosexual development into training courses, the development of practical trainings and methodological recommendations aimed at forming readiness for educational and advisory activities in the educational environment.

Areas for improving the professional training of future psychologists

The results of the empirical study showed the need for a systematic update of the content of educational programmes for the preparation of future bachelors of psychology, focusing on the readiness for advisory and educational activities in the field of psychosexual development of adolescents. The students' responses revealed both a certain fragmentation of knowledge and the need for practical guidelines, which determines several key areas for improving professional training. It is advisable to provide for the introduction of separate training modules or topics within

such disciplines as age psychology, psychology of sexual development, psychoprophylaxis of deviant behaviour, and the basics of counselling practice. These modules should cover contemporary theoretical approaches to psychosexual personality development, cross-cultural aspects of sexual socialisation, and the specifics of gender-role expectations in adolescence. It is important to ensure a practical focus of training through case analysis, analysis of consultation situations, and development of models of educational programmes for young students. To develop the practical skills of future psychologists, it is recommended to expand training modules that contribute to the development of skills in conducting a consultative conversation on issues of sexual identity, interpersonal relationships and sexual security. It will be effective to introduce simulation classes, role-playing games, video analysis of consultation cases, and supervision discussions. It is also advisable to create an electronic methodological bank of materials (questionnaires, diagnostic maps, memos for parents and teenagers), which can become the basis for educational platforms and workshops.

The results of the study show that students feel insecure about the ethical aspects of psychosexual development counselling. Therefore, special training elements on professional ethics should be integrated into the programmes, which will address the principles of confidentiality, tolerance, gender sensitivity, and a non-pathological approach. The introduction of ethical trainings and discussion seminars with the analysis of real or simulated dilemmas will help future specialists to learn the standards of professional behaviour and develop their own system of value orientations. Given the complexity of the problem of sexual development, it is recommended to strengthen interdisciplinary links between the courses of psychology, pedagogy, bioethics, sociology, and law. This will contribute to the development of a holistic vision of the phenomenon of psychosexuality in the context of educational, family, and social interaction. An effective form can be the creation of inter-faculty educational and scientific projects or modular interdepartmental courses. It is advisable to expand the bases of internships and internships, involving schools, psychological support centres, and youth organisations. Such interaction will contribute to the development of students' realistic vision of professional activities, the development of communication skills with adolescents, teachers and parents, and an understanding of the socio-cultural context of working with sensitive topics. In addition, it is recommended to create an online platform or e-course for self-education on the topics of psychosexual development, advisory ethics, and crisis psychology. Such a resource can contain video lectures, case studies, ethical guidelines, and interactive tasks for self-monitoring. In general, the proposed recommendations are aimed at improving the quality of professional training of future psychologists by combining theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and value-ethical guidelines. Their implementation will ensure the development of holistic readiness for counselling activities in the field of psychosexual development of adolescents,

which is a necessary condition for effective psychological and pedagogical support for young students in the contemporary educational environment.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that the preparation of future bachelors of psychology for educational and advisory activities in the field of psychosexual development of adolescents remains insufficiently systematic. The detected average level of readiness reflects the partial development of cognitive, motivational, and activity components of competence. This correlates with the findings of A. Costello *et al.* (2022), who reported that teacher education programmes rarely include holistic modules of sex education, and specialist training is limited to general psychological courses without developing specific counselling skills. The results of the study showed a fragmentary reflection of the topic of psychosexual development in the curricula of universities, which is consistent with the conclusions of E.S. Goldfarb & L.D. Lieberman (2021), who emphasised that the lack of structured teacher training is one of the main obstacles to the effective implementation of sex education. The researchers emphasised the need to move from informative to competence-oriented programs that form practical skills in counselling, communication, and ethical support of adolescents. The highest results in the study were recorded for the motivational component (39.5% of students with a high level), which indicates a positive attitude of future psychologists to the topic of sex education. This is consistent with the conclusions of T.M. Bass & M.J. Davis (2024), G. Atfield *et al.* (2023), who noted that even in conditions of limited training, students' motivational readiness prevails over cognitive readiness, since future specialists are aware of the social significance of the problem, but do not have methodological tools for the practical implementation of advisory activities.

The average level of cognitive training found in this study (54.5%) is consistent with the results of A.A. Chianese *et al.* (2021), who found that even among professionals working with adolescents with autism, the level of knowledge in psychosexual development remains insufficient. This confirms the need to develop specialised training modules and workshops on sexuality, identity development and counselling. A comparison of the results of the two universities showed slight differences in the level of readiness (3.72 and 3.65 points, respectively), which indicates similar approaches to educational training. A similar trend was described by D.R. LaForett *et al.* (2022), who studied the training of future school psychologists in the United States and concluded that curricula have a common weakness, namely, a lack of practical counselling training, especially in the psychosexual development of children and adolescents. In addition, some of the surveyed students (82%) in this study saw the main task of a school psychologist in creating a safe environment for discussing sexuality issues. This correlates with the findings of J. García-Vázquez *et al.* (2024), which proved that the effectiveness of

emotional and sexual education programmes depends on the extent to which the educational space provides trust, openness, and an invaluable attitude to the topics of intimacy. 68% of respondents noted socio-cultural barriers and taboo topics of sexuality, which partly explains the low level of practical confidence. Similar results were obtained by Y. Fang *et al.* (2022), who recorded that even in countries with advanced sex education systems, students' level of knowledge and openness largely depends on family and school support. Thus, the success of training psychologists requires not only updating curricula, but also changing social attitudes.

The results of the study also confirm the importance of integrating psychological, pedagogical, ethical and socio-cultural approaches in the training of specialists, which is consistent with the concept of psychosexual development outlined by F. Kong (2025), who emphasised that the development of psychosexual competence occurs through the interaction of cognitive, affective, and social factors. Such an integrated approach is also necessary in the professional training of future psychologists, who should be able to understand the dynamics of sexual identity of adolescents in different cultural contexts. The leading role of the motivational component found in the study also correlates with the results of S. Kauer *et al.* (2025), who showed that the positive attitude of educators and school psychologists towards sex education determines students' willingness to engage in an open dialogue about their own experiences and relationships. The researchers noted that effective programmes are formed when teachers show empathy, tolerance, and readiness for unbiased discussion. In addition, the study found that only 7% of students considered educational work as the main aspect of the school psychologist's activity. This result is consistent with conclusions of A. Aldiwan *et al.* (2024), who, when examining the psychosexual development of young people, emphasised that even among specialists, the medical-oriented approach dominates, while the educational-advisory dimension remains out of the spotlight of systematic training. The relevance of the problem is also confirmed by the results of J. Kang *et al.* (2020), who emphasised that effective psychosexual support requires specialised psychological training, ethical sensitivity, and interdisciplinary knowledge.

The results of this study, which indicate insufficient methodological and practical preparation of students to work with various groups of adolescents, correlate with the conclusions of L.M. Mediã *et al.* (2023) and J.A. Wagman *et al.* (2024). Their research has shown that adolescents and young adults with differences in sexual development are often left without competent psychological support, as most specialists do not have proper knowledge in the field of psychosexual counselling. The results also showed that some future psychologists noted the lack of theoretical and methodological training as a key problem. This is consistent with the findings of R. Zoltán *et al.* (2022), which emphasised the role of socialisation in the psychosexual development of the individual and the need for systematic training of

specialists to understand the social and cultural factors of sexual behaviour development. The results of the study also showed that students tend to limit their understanding of psychosexual development only to the period of adolescence, without considering it as a continuous process of personality formation. This approach reflects a certain narrowness of academic training and is consistent with the conclusions of A. Russell (2020), who emphasised that psychosexual development covers the entire period of childhood and adolescence, and educators and psychologists should be prepared to advise not only adolescents, but also young children who develop primary ideas about gender, physicality, and social roles.

This result correlates with the conclusions of N. Voughi *et al.* (2022), who proved that psychosexual education not only increases the level of knowledge, but also improves psychological comfort, reduces distress, and strengthens a positive perception of own body. This underlined the importance of developing empathy and emotional sensitivity as components of professional training of future psychologists, which was also reflected in the high indicators of the motivational component in this study. Therefore, the preparation of future bachelors of psychology for educational and advisory activities on the psychosexual development of adolescents requires a holistic competence approach. This involves a combination of cognitive training, ethical education, empathy development, and practical counselling skills. The consistency of the data obtained with the conclusions of international researchers confirms the universality of the identified trends and the need to improve educational programmes by integrating interdisciplinary courses, modelling professional situations.

CONCLUSIONS

The theoretical analysis showed that the preparation of future psychologists for educational and advisory activities on the psychosexual development of adolescents requires the integration of psychological, pedagogical, ethical, and socio-cultural approaches. Such activities should be based on a combination of cognitive, motivational, and activity components of professional competence, and the development of empathy, reflexivity, and ethical consciousness. A content analysis of educational and professional programmes of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and I.I. Mechnikov Odesa National University showed that the topic of psychosexual development of adolescents in the training of psychologists is presented fragmentary. Educational programmes focus primarily on general counselling training, without ensuring a holistic development of competencies for educational work in the field of sex education. The curricula do not include specialised disciplines, practical cases, and methodological materials aimed at developing the skills of advising adolescents on sexual development.

The survey revealed the average level of readiness of future bachelors of psychology (3.68 points) for counselling and educational activities in the field of psychosexual development of adolescents. The highest results were

recorded for the motivational component (39.5% – high level), which indicated a positive attitude of students to the topic and awareness of its significance. The cognitive component mostly remained at an average level (54.5%) due to insufficient coverage of the topic in programmes and a lack of methodological materials. The comparison of universities showed a slight difference, namely 3.72 points for students of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and 3.65 points in Odesa Mechnikov National University. The motivational component turned out to be the leading one, but there was still a gap between theoretical training and practical skills – only 25.5% demonstrated a high level of activity competencies. Qualitative analysis showed that the majority of respondents (82%) considered the main task of a school psychologist to create a safe space for frank discussion of sexuality issues, while 68% called socio-cultural barriers the main obstacle, 21% – lack of training, and 11% – lack of regulatory guidelines. The results of the

study confirmed the need to modernise educational training programmes for future psychologists. It is advisable to introduce specialised modules, trainings, and interdisciplinary courses. The limitation of the study was the focus on two universities, which does not allow fully generalising the results for the entire system of training psychologists in Ukraine. Prospects for further research are to expand the sample of educational institutions, compare Ukrainian and international approaches.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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Ілія Касторних

Аспірант

Університет імені Альфреда Нобеля

49000, вул. Січеславська Набережна, 18, м. Дніпро, Україна

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-9059-6241>

Підготовка майбутніх бакалаврів психології до просвітницько-консультативної діяльності з психосексуального розвитку підлітків

Анотація. Метою дослідження було з'ясувати рівень готовності майбутніх бакалаврів психології до просвітницько-консультативної діяльності з питань психосексуального розвитку підлітків. Методологія дослідження ґрунтувалася на поєднанні теоретичного аналізу освітньо-професійних програм і емпіричних методів, зокрема контент-аналізу навчальних планів Київського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка та Одеського національного університету імені І.І. Мечникова, анкетування та опитування студентів зазначених закладів вищої освіти. Результати показали, що підготовка студентів до роботи у сфері психосексуального розвитку підлітків залишалася недостатньо цілісною, адже освітні програми відображали тематику фрагментарно, обмежуючись загальними питаннями консультативної практики. Середній рівень готовності майбутніх психологів становив 3,68 бала, що свідчило про часткову сформованість професійних знань, умінь і ціннісних орієнтацій. Найвищі показники зафіксовано за мотиваційним компонентом, де 39,5 % студентів продемонстрували високий рівень позитивного ставлення до тематики статевого виховання, усвідомлюючи її соціальну значущість. Водночас лише 25,5 % респондентів досягли високого рівня діяльнісних умінь, що відображало дефіцит практичного досвіду та відсутність тренінгових форм навчання. Основними труднощами студенти називали соціокультурні бар'єри (68 %) та недостатність методичної підготовки (21 %). Порівняння результатів двох університетів засвідчило незначну різницю в інтегральних показниках (3,72 і 3,65 бала відповідно). Модернізація освітніх програм підготовки психологів потребує інтеграції тем психосексуального розвитку, консультативної етики та практикоорієнтованих модулів. Практична значущість отриманих результатів полягає в тому, що вони могли бути використані викладачами закладів вищої освіти під час удосконалення змісту освітніх програм і розроблення навчально-методичних матеріалів із підготовки майбутніх психологів до просвітницько-консультативної діяльності у сфері психосексуального розвитку підлітків

Ключові слова: практичні навички; питання етики статевого стосунку; методичні матеріали; компетентності; бар'єри