

# Pre-service Primary School Teacher Efficacy to Implement the New Ukrainian School Reform Objectives

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**Abstract:** The article deals with the issue of teacher efficacy and self-efficacy that are considered to be the main factors in understanding the reform results. The survey administered at university in the western part of Ukraine to pre-service primary school teachers helped to identify student perceptions of their efficacy to teach in the New Ukrainian School (NUSH) environment. They were asked questions about the key components of the New Ukrainian School reform, the new requirements for the reformed school environment, their attitude to inclusive education, pedagogy of partnership, teaching practices and strategies, communication skills, and professional development. It was concluded that the pre-service teachers in the full-time programs, both bachelor's and master's, have an almost similar level of their perceived self-efficacy, while part-time master's students, who have more than one year of teaching experience, perceive their efficacy at a higher level. The problem areas in the skills were identified that will require some additional adjustment to the curriculum. It is important for universities to teach their students to prioritize knowledge acquisition, developing numerous skills, professional qualities, value system, gaining initial experience, which will ensure their efficacy and self-efficacy to effectively work and implement the objectives of the New Ukrainian School concept. In terms of reforming, the national education system requires a new model of teacher training, that can provide pre-service teachers with quality education and help them feel efficacious to implement the objectives of the New Ukrainian School reform.

**Keywords:** *Teacher training; pre-service primary school teachers; New Ukrainian School (NUSH) reform; teacher efficacy; self-efficacy; readiness; preparedness.*

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## 1. Introduction

Following its independence in 1991, Ukraine has always declared education the priority for the country's development. Since then Ukraine has oriented itself to the fundamental values of the Western culture, viewing its development within the context of integration into Europe. Striving to be a full-fledged member of the European community Ukraine signed in 1997 and ratified in 2000 the Lisbon Recognition Convention. Ukraine proved its willingness to compete with European countries by signing the Berlin Communiqué and the principles of the Bologna process. Following the outlined principles, the higher education in Ukraine has been modernized to ensure that students meet the European Qualifications Framework requirements. The higher education reform is followed by the New Ukrainian School reform or the NUSH (Nova Ukrainska Shkola – in Ukrainian) that has been in action since 2016. Therefore, the issue of preschool teacher training at a modern university in Ukraine requires thorough attention in terms of meeting European standards in preparing highly qualified educators.

The Ukrainian scholars publish widely the results of their research on teacher efficacy and self-efficacy to implement the NUSH, however, this term is translated by researchers as “preparedness” or “readiness” (hotovnist (Ukrainian) and self-efficacy as self-preparedness or self-readiness, or personal readiness, psychological readiness (psychologichna hotovnist (Ukrainian). Such translation-related difference creates misunderstanding in the pedagogical discourse (Bondar, 2019).

The interest in teacher efficacy can be explained by a now well-known fact that no state reform can be realized successfully if teachers do not believe they can make a change; that is the changes are within the realm of their control. When teachers believe that they can control the situation, they realize consciously that they can have an impact; they can change the situation to produce effects. The importance of teacher efficacy and its main component of self-efficacy is the key for understanding whether the reform succeeds or fails due to the RAND corporation and A. Bandura's research. These aspects attracted our attention as we are looking for the ways to enhance student motivation. We agree that when well-prepared and motivated, in-service teachers will not experience difficulties in the classroom, that their motivation will have a significant influence on their students' performance and learning outcomes. The higher the level of self-efficacy is the more willing teachers are to experiment with new teaching methods to meet their students' needs. Teachers with higher levels of

perceived self-efficacy are likely to be more supportive, more enthusiastic, and have more commitment to the field than other teachers.

Historically, the notion of a set (*ustanovka*) that can be referred to as self-efficacy originated in Dimitry Uznadze's works (1940-1950), the founder of the theory of attitude and set (Uznadze, 1961). He believed that set identifies what an individual is capable of doing. Furthermore, he believed that the attitude of an individual (predisposition) largely influenced by set is largely dependent on character and experiences of the individual. His works were further expanded by O. Leontiev and S. Rubinshtein. However, the psychologists did not expand on the impact that set (self-efficacy, predisposition) could have had on reforms. Although, in Soviet psychology, the idea of set started the new strand of research on efficacy, this psychological phenomenon was not considered as a crucial factor for reforms either, because in the Soviet period, teacher self-efficacy was not important to consider. The ideology of the ruling Communist Party did not consider the role of an individual teacher. The nucleus and the driving force of any reform was a ruling political party, its leaders and 'collective' or team.

The importance of understanding a teacher self-efficacy factor for realizing the reform was proved in the USA. When Congress enacted the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975, the necessity to implement the comprehensive inclusive education reform made the RAND corporation organize a study to examine teacher attitude to the national reform. When developing a questionnaire to explore teachers' attitude, the RAND researchers blended the ideas of J. Rotter's social learning theory (Rotter, 1966) and the concept of A. Bandura's social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977). The results of the survey gave birth to the construct of teacher efficacy – the extent to which teachers believed that they controlled the situation (internal control) or they could not change the situation because the environment or the situation was stronger (external control) and the issue of self-efficacy – the ability of an individual to construct beliefs about the individual capacity to succeed or fail. These personal beliefs were extremely important as they had a huge impact on the further actions of an individual. Teachers' beliefs according to A. Bandura (Bandura, 1977) or set according to D. Uznadze (Uznadze, 1961) could influence the amount of effort teachers invest into attainment of their goals or could identify the level of teachers' resilience in overcoming challenges. The strategic role of the New Ukrainian School reform and the teacher's role in its implementation require the faculty affiliated with teacher training universities to constantly monitor teacher efficacy whether it is pre-service or in-service teacher efficacy.

## 2. Literature Review

The government of Ukraine enacted the New Ukrainian School (NUSH – the acronym that stands for Nova Ukrainska shkola or New Ukrainian School), the concept aiming at reforming the general secondary education for the period up to 2029. The Concept explains the obstacles education in Ukraine is facing and outlines the main directions to overcome them, applying the experience of the world's leading countries. There are many progressive ideas in the Concept, however, the most relevant for our study is the transition to a competency-based approach that will help teachers and students grow both professionally and personally (Cabinet of Ministers, 2016). Following this, the Education Act of Ukraine (Law of Ukraine, 2017) was enacted as part of this reform (Law of Ukraine, 2017). The issue of education in Ukraine under reforms has been investigated by Fentsyk, Atroshchenko, Pinzenik (2020) who state that the New Ukrainian School reform encourages scholars to explore different concepts for training a professionally competent primary school teacher in higher education institutions. Teachers must be able to plan, design and model the technological process of learning, create a comfortable learning environment on a partnership basis, be able to reflect on pedagogical activities (content, methods, forms of interaction) and adjust teaching to the modern educational environment (Fentsyk, Atroshchenko, Pinzenik, 2020, p. 161).

Discussing various competencies Varetska, Nikulochkina, Tonne, Kuzminskyi, Bida, Vdovenko think that primary school teacher preparation is of great importance since primary school teachers lay the fundamental basis in children's' further education. They note that social competency is especially critical for primary school teachers as they need to be able to cooperate with other teachers, to manage conflict situations, and to reach consensus (Varetska, Nikulochkina, Tonne, Kuzminskyi, Bida, Vdovenko, 2019, p. 310). Exploring the ways to prepare pre-school teachers to operate successfully in the New Ukrainian School Fedirchuk and Nikula focus on the future teachers' methodological culture (Fedirchuk, and Nikula, 2019).

When discussing the issue of pre-service primary school teacher efficacy or as the authors referred to it "readiness" ("hotovnist in Ukrainian is translated as 'readiness' or 'preparedness' in many publications of Ukrainian scholars), Makoviichuk et al. argue that the current core standards for primary education in Ukraine focus on developing in primary school students constructive skills. Their research findings describe the methodology of teacher training to improve pre-service primary school teacher efficacy to integrate teaching constructive skills in their curriculum

area (Makoviichuk et al., 2020). Similarly, Bulgakova, Krymova, Babchuk, O., & Nepomniashcha investigated the preschool teacher training at a modern university in Ukraine focusing on professionally important qualities of future specialists. They determined the level of student self-efficacy for teaching and proposed ways to improve teacher training (Bulgakova, Krymova, Babchuk, & Nepomniashcha, 2020).

We identified different approaches that scholars use to conceptualize the construct of teacher efficacy. The variety of strands can be explained by the complexity of the notion of ‘efficacy’ and / or by its elusive nature (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Various researchers explored different factors related to teacher efficacy. According to Kondrashova, teacher efficacy depends on teacher mastery, the foundation of which is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is referred to as a complex construct made up of ideological, moral, professional views, beliefs, optimism, attitude to work, ability to overcome difficulties, self-assessment of work results, and the need for professional self-education that provides high work results (Kondrashova, 2006). Another direction in teacher efficacy findings focuses on the structure of teacher efficacy that include motivational component – interest in and attitude to teaching; cognitive component – knowledge of theory; instrumental component – teaching practices, technologies and strategies, volitional component that depends on self-control, self-regulation, and the ability to manage oneself when performing professional duties; evaluation component that includes self-assessment of professional training, and the level of its compliance with the requirements for teaching (Tomchuk, 2010).). The issue of teacher efficacy and self-efficacy is extensively researched due to the complexity of the construct that requires regular attention.

### **3. Background information**

The New Ukrainian School reform officially started on December 14, 2016 when the Cabinet of Ministers signed into action Prescript # 988-r. Shortly before that, on August 17, 2016 the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine drafted *the New Ukrainian School: conceptual principles of secondary school reform*, where the main competencies that can make students competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are outlined. This publication explained strategies for changes in five different areas including partnership pedagogy, innovation self-efficacy (readiness in NUSH), new standards and learning outcomes, the school and teacher autonomy, education funding (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2016). The society was involved in broad discussions to voice their suggestions and criticism. In 2017 after long

debates the Education Act was enacted by the Supreme Council of Ukraine. This law is considered to be crucial for education in Ukraine as it has initiated many projects to modernize the educational system. According to this law students are required to study for 12 years instead of 11 (primary, middle, high school); schools have received greater autonomy; teachers' salary is supposed to increase; a wider range of in-service training opportunities have been offered; powers of school principals and regulation of their cadence and election have been stated clearly. Furthermore, the Education Act identifies the main competencies that schools in Ukraine are expected to equip students with. These competencies include communication in the national language; communication in foreign languages; mathematical literacy; competencies in science and technology; information communication technology and digital competencies; environmental awareness and healthy lifestyle; lifelong learning; civic and social competencies related to the ideas of democracy, justice, equality, human rights, equal rights and opportunities; cultural competency; a sense of entrepreneurship and financial literacy; and other competencies provided by the core standards (The New Ukrainian School, 2016; Education Act of Ukraine, 2017).

Common to all competencies are the following skills including reading comprehension, the ability to express personal opinion orally and in writing, critical thinking, the ability to logically justify personal opinion, creativity, initiative, the ability to manage emotions, assess risks, make decisions, resolve conflicts, and the ability to cooperate with other people (Education Act of Ukraine, 2017). The transition to competency-based education determines the need to rethink new tasks in the system of teacher training and adjust pedagogical programs to the new requirements. These adjustments are related to the aim, objectives, content, and structure of organizational and methodological support. Thus, universities of higher pedagogical education in Ukraine have to ensure that their students are prepared to realize the New Ukrainian School Reform.

#### **4. Methodology**

The general purpose of the research is to identify the efficient practices to improve pre-service primary school teacher efficacy and prepare them for implementing the New Ukrainian School reform ideas. This paper discusses the research findings received from the survey targeted at investigating the bachelor's and master's students' self-perception of teacher efficacy. The on-line survey was administered to bachelor's and master's students majoring in primary school education. The participants gave their

informed consent for participating in the study after they had been informed of the possibility to withdraw from the survey with no other consequences on their status. They were surveyed to identify the initial level of their efficacy.

The questionnaire was designed by university professors in Ukraine using the methodology of quantitative research. Prior to the survey the theoretical analysis was used to develop the questionnaire to identify the student perceived self-efficacy. The questionnaire was based on the one developed by Tschannen-Moran, M., Woolfolk Hoy A. (2001). In terms of adjustment, some items were reworded, and other questions related to the NUSH were constructed. There are 16 items on the form, where items 1, 2 determine the efficacy in the NUSH content; items 3, 10, 11 determine the level of efficacy in establishing partnership relations; items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 determine the level of perceived efficacy in teaching practices; items 9, 12, 13, 16 evaluate self-efficacy related to learning new competencies; items 14 and 15 are based on the RAND questionnaire. All the answers were distributed using the Likert scale from very well-prepared to badly-prepared. Then an initial draft of a questionnaire was tried out with a trial run to avoid ambiguity and eliminate poorly constructed items. When the survey was judged to be satisfactory, the data collection began. As students were asked to do on-line evaluation, there was no need for printing and distributing questionnaires and data in electronic format were immediately processed. Because of an accessible format the questionnaire was filled out by most respondents quickly and without complications. This service provides a visual representation of quantitative information, after all respondents' answers are recorded and accumulated in the database immediately in format convenient for their processing and analysis.

Participants are undergraduate (in their final year) and graduate (in their first year) students who major in primary school education at the state university in the western part of Ukraine. They were given questions and statements about the NUSH concept, school organization, teaching practices used in the NUSH school, and pedagogy of partnership. Of 120 students total (both full time and part time students) 95 students filled out a questionnaire. The specific information about the age, education and experience is given in Table 1.

**Table 1.** The demographic information

Demographic factors	Bachelor's students (full time)	Master's students (full time)	Master's students (part time)
Gender	100 % females	100 % females	100 % females
Age	20-22 – 34 n 35 – 1 n	22-25 – 26 n 26-30 – 1n 30+ – 3 n	22-25 – 19 n 26-30 – 8 n 30+ – 3 n
Experience in teaching primary school students	No experience 100 %	Under three years – 12 n	Under three years – 14 n Under five years 8 n

The purpose is to collect information pertaining to a student sense of teacher efficacy regarding given statements. We included in the questionnaire an address to the students pointing out that we are interested only in their frank opinions. Students were asked to circle the appropriate response to each question that would indicate their frank opinion. They were expected to arrange the responses to questions or statements along a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = very well-prepared, 2 = well-prepared; 3 = less than well-prepared, 4 = badly prepared, 5 = know nothing of the issue in question. In Table 2 items 4 = badly prepared, and 5 = know nothing of the issue in question were not indicated if there were no data.

## 5. Research findings: data analysis

First, the explanation will refer to bachelor's and master's full-time students, because of the similarities in their age, training (initial) and experience. Then we will explain how part-timers were similar or different from both groups. The division for analysis can be explained by evidence given by many scholars that the impact of the training on students at different stages of their careers can be different (Tschannen-Moran, M., Woolfolk Hoy A., 2001).

Both bachelor's and master's students rank their general understanding of the New Ukrainian School concept as very good accounting for almost similar percentages 51.4 % and 50 % respectively. While 10 % of master's students believe that they are well-prepared, the percentage for bachelor's students is considerably lower at 2.9 %. Thus, more bachelor's students (45.7 %) indicate that they are less than well-prepared as opposed to 40 % of master's students. When answering the questions about the main components of the NUSH to be focused in



teaching, pre-service teachers consider themselves well-prepared (48.6 % for bachelor's and 50 % for master's). There are no students who could rank themselves as very well-prepared, while the percentage of those who perceive themselves as badly prepared stand at 11.4 % for bachelor's and 13.3 % for master's.

There is a big difference in students' perception of how well they understand the pedagogy of partnership and child-centered principle in education. 10 % of master's students consider themselves very well-prepared as opposed to 2.8 % of bachelor's students, while more bachelor's students (57.2 %) perceive themselves as well-prepared opposed to 46.7 % of master's students. The percentage of those who were badly prepared for the pedagogy of partnership and student-centered approach was almost similar at 5.7 % and 3.3 % respectively.

Speaking about practices, methods and teaching aids that can ensure quality teaching in the NUSH there are not any students among both groups who could have ranked themselves as badly prepared. The distribution of other scores is almost similar with a higher percentage for master's students who rank themselves as well-prepared (at 13.3 % to 11.4 %). A significant gap in teacher efficacy between bachelor's and master's students is seen in students' preparation to teach in the new Ukrainian school following the new *Core State Standards for Primary Education*. Whilst 60 % of bachelor's students and 54 % of master's students were very well and well-prepared, 46 % of master's students perceived themselves as less than well-prepared as opposed to 40 % of bachelor's students. The highest teacher efficacy is seen in students' judgement about their capacity to plan and organize teaching and student learning in accordance with the NUSH requirements. 77 % of bachelor's students and 73 % of master's students perceive themselves as very well and well-prepared while none indicate bad preparation.

A significant percentage in both groups of pre-service primary school teachers perceive themselves as badly prepared when asked about their efficacy to integrate teaching practices (at 6.2 % on average). Similarly, in both groups 7.65 % of pre-service primary school teachers on average think that they are badly prepared to apply the competency-based approach in the NUSH teaching. The worrisome issue is students' personal sense of efficacy for involving students into research programs. Very well and well-prepared students accounted for 35 % for bachelor's as opposed to 60 % for master's while the percentage for the badly prepared in this question and those who knew nothing about the issue stood at about 23 % and 11 % respectively. In terms of efficacy in communication with NUSH students 30 % of master's students indicate that they are less than well prepared to

communicate efficiently opposed to 70 % of those are very well and well-prepared. The distribution for bachelor's students is different as 5.7 % indicate that they are badly prepared for communication. Although, the number of bachelor's students who are very well and well-prepared is almost similar to the numbers of master's students when combined, the percentage of master's students who perceive themselves as very well-prepared is significantly higher. A good score is seen in the question about co-teaching efficacy. 63 % of bachelor's and 70 % of master's perceive that they are very well and well-prepared.

The New Ukrainian school is supposed to provide an inclusive environment for students with special educational needs. 73 % of respondents from master's students believe that they are ready to create an inclusive educational environment to provide quality education for children with special educational needs while the figure for bachelor's students is 10 % lower (at 63 %). Assessing their digital efficacy, only 3 % of master's students think that their digital skills are less than well-developed. Other students stated that they were very well and well-prepared to use information communication technology in the NUSH teaching.

We included two statements from the RAND corporation about students' self-perception of teacher efficacy. These two statements depict the locus of the teacher's control. The first statement reads, "I believe that I can have a great impact on the student's outcomes", where 100 % of bachelor's students responded positively, while 93.3 % of master's agree that they control the situation and have a great impact on students' results. The second statement from the RAND corporation questionnaire places the locus of control on the environment. It states: "I realize that I can have a little influence on my students' outcomes because their home environment has a far bigger impact on my students' achievements". The figures here are reverse. While 100 % of master's students believe that, 85.7 % of bachelor's students disagree. We realize that these statements refer to the Rotter's locus of control (internal and external), meaning that they do not give us exact information about students' perceived teacher efficacy. According to A. Bandura, locus of control is different from the perceived sense of efficacy or self-efficacy. Self-efficacy or perceived sense of efficacy are the beliefs of an individual about the capacity to act, while locus of control is the beliefs about whether these actions can produce outcomes and affect the situation. In our case, the study focuses on perceived self-efficacy that can predict teacher's behavior, while locus of control is unlikely to be a good predictor of teacher's attitude and behavior (Bandura, 1997).

The biggest gap between bachelor's and master's students can be seen in their judgements related to their sense of efficacy for continuous professional self-development, self-analysis, and reflection. The difference was 16 % between two groups, with 84 % of master's and 68 % of bachelor's, claiming that they were very well and well-prepared to improve their skills continuously.

The research findings on the undergraduate and graduate students' perception of self-efficacy are given in Table 2.

**Table 2.** The pre-service and in-service primary school teacher (part-time students') perception of self-efficacy

	Bachelor's students 35 n (full-time) %	Master's students 30 n (full-time) %	Master's students 30 n. (part-time) %
1. How well do you understand the New Ukrainian School concept?			
very well	2,9	10	6,7
well	51,4	50	50
less than well	45,7	40	43,3
2. How well do you understand what main components of the NUSH the primary school teacher has to focus on in teaching?			
very well	-	-	13,3
well	48,6	50	46,7
less than well	40	36,7	30
badly	11,4	13,3	10
3. How well do you understand the pedagogy of partnership and the content of the child-centered principle of education			
very well	2,8	10	13,3
well	57,2	46,7	40
less than well	34,3	40	43,4
badly	5,7	3,3	3,3
4. How well do you understand practices, methods and teaching aids that can ensure quality teaching?			
very well	11,4	13,3	-
well	48,6	46,7	63,3
less than well	40	40	36,7
5. What is your efficacy for teaching in the new Ukrainian school following the new Core State Standards for Primary Education?			
very well-prepared	11,4	16,7	23,3
well-prepared	48,6	36,7	50
less than well	40	46,6	26,7
6. What is your efficacy for planning and organizing teaching and student			

	Bachelor's students 35 n (full-time) %	Master's students 30 n (full-time) %	Master's students 30 n. (part-time) %
learning in accordance with the NUSH requirements?			
very well-prepared	14,3	13,3	6,7
well-prepared	62,9	60	80
less than well	22,8	26,7	13,3
7. How efficacious are you to practice integrated teaching?			
very well-prepared	20	20	16,6
well-prepared	45,7	43,3	36,7
less than well prepared	28,6	30	46,7
badly prepared	5,7	6,7	-
8. What is your efficacy to apply the competency-based approach in in NUSH teaching?			
very well-prepared	22,9	20	13,3
well-prepared	40	43,3	56,7
less than well-prepared	28,5	30	26,7
badly prepared	8,6	6,7	3,3
9. What is your efficacy to involve NUSH students in group research?			
very well-prepared	8,6	23,3	6,7
well-prepared	25,7	36,7	73,3
less than well-prepared	42,9	30	20
badly prepared	17,1	6,7	0
know nothing about the issue	5,7	3,3	0
10. What is your efficacy for communication with NUSH students?			
very well-prepared	22,9	40	30
well-prepared	45,7	30	70
less than well-prepared	25,7	30	0
badly prepared	5,7	0 %	0
11. What is your coteaching efficacy?			
very well-prepared	28,6	33,3	20
well-prepared	34,1	36,7	73,3
less than well-prepared	28,6	26,7	0
badly prepared	8,7	3,3	6,7
12. What do you think about your level of efficacy to create an inclusive educational environment to provide quality education for children with special educational needs?			
very well-prepared	22,8	23,4	20
well-prepared	40	50	56,7
less than well	31,5	23,3	23,3
badly prepared	5,7	3,3	-

	Bachelor's students 35 n (full-time) %	Master's students 30 n (full-time) %	Master's students 30 n. (part-time) %
13. What is your digital efficacy?			
very well-prepared	28,6	33,3	20
well-prepared	45,7	36,7	60
less than well-prepared	25,7	20	20
badly prepared	-	10	0
14. I believe in my ability to implement important components of the NUSH Concept in my teaching.			
Yes	100	93,3	100
No	-	6,7	-
15. I realize that I can have little influence on my students' outcomes because home environment has a far bigger impact on my students' achievements.			
Yes	85,7	100	100
No	14,3	-	-
16. How efficacious are you for continuous professional self-development, self-analysis and reflection?			
very well-prepared	31,4	46,7	26,6
well-prepared	37,1	36,6	66,7
less than well-prepared	22,9	10	-
badly prepared	8,6	6,7	6,7

## 6. Discussion

Comparing bachelor's and master's full-time students' perceived sense of efficacy, it is important to note that bachelor's sense of efficacy accounted for 61 % on average while for master's full-time students this figure stood at 65 %. As noted, self-efficacy means self-evaluation of an individual, her judgment (in our case all respondents are females) about her competence and not the actual level of competence. It is also important to know that overestimating the actual abilities is better than underestimating. Students with higher perception of their own capacities will execute their skills with more zest and students who have low level of self-assurance may not apply their skills effectively. Findings in one experiment proved that junior school students with a similar level of skills performed differently and this difference was caused by differences in their personal efficacy beliefs (Bouffard-Bouchard, Parent, and Larivee, 1991).

Futhermore, both groups showed a comparatively low level of self-efficacy for conducting research. This competency is extremely essential today as the NUSH reform requires innovative approaches to its

implementation. The program needs to scrutinize different aspects of undergraduate and graduate research activities to understand better how to motivate students to conduct research and encourage faculties to engage students in research more actively (Mykhyda et al., 2020, p. 55).

Explaining master's part-time students' perception of self-efficacy, we emphasize the differences in age and experience. Part-time students are comparatively older, and most students have more than one year of school experience. Therefore, the average perception of self-efficacy for this sample stood at 74 % as compared to bachelor's at 61 % and master's at 65 %. Therefore, knowing students' perceived sense of achievement helps to predict students' attitudes toward teaching in the NUSH. Like some researchers noted, the stronger the efficacy, the better the attitude toward teaching and the more interest in solving different problems is exhibited (Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990).

We think that the level of student-perceived efficacy could have been higher, if we think in terms of realizing the important state project, in this case the NUSH reform. Although we admit that Ukraine faces difficulties in terms of student enrollment - Ukraine displayed a dramatic drop in the size of the student population (by 36.53 %) among the countries with the highest expenditures on tertiary education (Bondar, Telychko, Tovkanets, Shcherban, Kobal, 2020) – the pedagogical universities need to enhance student training to meet European requirements in terms of student competency development. We also hope that Ukraine will change the situation with research and development area. Reporting to the European Commission, Ukraine does not indicate any spending on research and development (European Commission, 2018, p. 33), which is crucial for improving education. Although the country is experiencing many challenges, we believe that continuous surveys and other studies are beneficial for the field for many reasons. They contribute to the improvement of education by providing a basis for comparison and perspectives for the further research finding. Also, studying the issue of pre-service teacher efficacy, researchers are contributing to the process of creating valid and accurate self-efficacy measurement tools. These will help schools to provide quality education and prepare competitive workforce for the 21<sup>st</sup> century global economy.

## **7. Conclusions and further research perspectives**

The paper describes the research findings received from the survey that illustrates students' sense of efficacy to implement the New Ukrainian School reform in Ukraine. At this point, the survey was conducted at one state university in the western part of Ukraine to understand which groups

of students experience problems with implementing the NUSH directives. Three groups of students (bachelor's and master's full-time students and master's part-time students) filled out online questionnaires. Statements and questions developed by research group focused on primary teacher self-efficacy for implementing the New Ukrainian School reform. Items embraced different ideas related to the content of the NUSH Concept, teaching practices, strategies, communication, pedagogy of partnership, creating inclusive and conducive for learning environment, involvement in the research, continuous professional and personal self-development. The average percentages that measure the perception of self-efficacy for implementing NUSH principles indicate that students perceive their level of competence higher than average (bachelor's at 61 %, master's at 65 %, and master's students who study part time at 74 %.) Sorting the information into themes, the researchers were able to conclude that bachelor's students and full-time master's students need more training to improve their self-efficacy and be ready to meet the NUSH challenges. Although this study includes the small sample size within one school, it does enable the researchers to draw conclusions regarding the need to design new approaches to teacher training.

Further research prospect is to design an experiment that will measure how new approaches to teacher training improve bachelor's students perceived self-efficacy. The curriculum will be analyzed in terms of adjustments that could be made to the program to satisfy student's educational needs. The areas that require more attention will be identified, practices and strategies will be developed to engage students in active learning. Students' work will be regularly monitored. Finally, the questionnaire will be developed to examine how students have changed their perception of self-efficacy and explore the relationship between teacher efficacy and a willingness to realize the Concept of the New Ukrainian School.

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