MANAGING STUDENTS' SOCIAL ACTIVITY IN THE CONTEXT OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATIONS: SOCIO-CULTURAL DETERMINANTS AND CONSTRUCTIVE BASIS

[1]**Victoria V. Nevolina, [2]Victoria B. Volkova, [3]Irina I. Shatskaya, [4]Kirill A. Prokhodtsev, [5]Alena A. Zharkova, [6]Galina V. Karpenko, [7]Anna M. Yudina**

[1]*Doctor of Education, Professor of the Department of Philosophy, Orenburg State Medical University, Orenburg, Russia. E-mail:* nevolina-v@yandex.ru

[2]*Doctor of Philology, Professor of the Department of Law and Culturology, Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University, Magnitogorsk, Russia. E-mail:* VBL2004@bk.ru

[3]*PhD in Economics, Associate Professor of the Department of Administrative Law, Environmental Law, Information Law, Russian University of Transport (RUT - MIIT), Moscow, Russia. E-mail:* irina_shatskaya@mail.ru

[4]*Assistant of the Department of Philosophy, Orenburg State Medical University, Orenburg, Russia. E-mail:* k.a.prohodcev@orgma.ru

[5]*Doctor of Education, Professor of the Department of Social and Cultural Activities, Moscow State Institute of Culture, Khimki, Russia. E-mail:* kdd007@bk.ru

[6]*PhD in Technical Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of Agrotechnology, Machines and Life Safety, Ulyanovsk State Agrarian University named after P. A. Stolypin, Ulyanovsk, Russia. E-mail:* karpenko.galina@yandex.ru

[7]*PhD in Education, Associate Professor of the Department of Pedagogy, Vladimir State University named after Alexander Grigoryevich and Nikolai Grigoryevich Stoletov, Vladimir, Russia. E-mail:* anna-yudina@mail.ru

Abstract

Social activity at all levels of social and professional life in a certain way affects the preservation of stability and further development of society. The article analyzes the features of students' social activity in the digital age. As a research method, the questionnaire method was used, which allows to effectively identify the features of the ideas of students and university teachers about social activity in the conditions of digital transformation. The article describes the peculiarity of the modern stage of development of students' social activity practices; socio-cultural determinants and the constructive basis of students' social activity are determined; the ideas of students and teachers about the peculiarities of social activity of modern youth are revealed. For the first time, the authors analyzed the implementation of social activity in the context of digital transformations. It is proved that students have a decrease in the desire to participate in the practices of social activity. The reasons for the decrease in the social activity among students are revealed: the proposed and performed activities are monotonous and uninteresting; the results of the student's work are not visible; students do not experience much-needed support and approval from people and social groups and communities that are important to them; the contradiction between the expectations and proposed activity; the performed activity does not entail a real solution to a social problem; as a rule, there are no prospects for personal and professional growth; the difficulty of obtaining new skills that can be applied already at the exit into adulthood. It is determined that students of higher educational institutions explain this situation of a decrease in the practices of participation in the events due to the lack of the common information space. It is proved that it is possible to increase the level of social activity of the modern youth by organizing the common information environment in which there will be news about upcoming events. In the opinion of the interviewed students, specialists engaged in the practice of social activity should have a number of professional competencies.

INTRODUCTION

In the new digital conditions with the rapidly changing content and work of specialists, the activities of higher educational institutions, on the one hand, are aimed at the professional training of competitive specialists and, on the other hand, at the formation of social activity, civic position of young citizens (Kastornov & Kastornova, 2019; Vasilchuk, 2001; Balog, 2017a; Nazarova, 2019). In modern socio-economic conditions and digital transformation of various aspects of public life, a person who is characterized by social activity and social mobility is in demand (Genisaretsky, 1985; Meshcherkina, 2002; Cherdymova, 2016; Tastan & Davoudi, 2019; Tkáčová et al., 2021). However, crisis trends in society negatively affect the formation of value attitudes of young people, their motivation of behavior that leads to violations of moral, mental and physical health. Young people often show themselves as inert, not interested in independent activity, able to assimilate only the existing experience (Derzhavina et al., 2021). At the same time, the advanced part of young people, students in the educational space of the university, is required to make social choices, to change ways of activity, to support active forms of social interaction. The manifestation of constructive social activity requires an organized educational space. That is why the formation of students' social activity in the educational space of the university seems to be an urgent goal of modern Russian education, since social activity expresses the essence of the youth and its potential (Balog, 2017b; Gribakin, 1985; Bakharovskaya, 2011; Kanbul et al., 2021; Mashkin et al., 2021).

The problem of the formation of social activity of students in the educational space of the university has a number of contradictions: the educational function carries a significant load and is a key in the educational process, while the educational one goes into the background; according to the state order, educational organizations need to form social activity, civic position and patriotic consciousness of students, not providing them with all the necessary resources and means to implement this order. Practices of social activity can determine the degree of personal involvement in social relations. The ratio of personal action and activity is the main link in determining the essence of social activity.

Activity (making actions - 1) can be considered as a synonym for activity (the field of work - 2) or the quality of an individual's activity. If the activity (2) is a unity of subject-subject properties, then activity (1) is the person's belonging, to a greater extent - as a subject of activity (2). The nature of the activity (2) and its type will determine the activity (1) of an individual. As the personality's belonging, it affects both the goal-setting process, the creation of motivation, and the choice of ways of activity (Shchukina, 1973; Tikhonova, 2011; Yakovleva, 2015).

In the views of many teachers, the ideal student is presented as a responsible, conscientious, purposeful, responsive, active, multifaceted in his interests and successful in his studies young man. Students engaged in social work include social activities in the everyday activities that are aimed at helping people in difficult life situations (Kryukova, 2007; Shchemeleva, 2019; Cherdymova, 2013; Shaidullina et al., 2018; Sorokoumova et al., 2019).

Students engaged in social work participate in the process of socialization and formation of social activity of the individual. Students engaged in social work use various moral and material means, stimulating initiatives, forming the social activity of students youth, seeking public recognition of innovations, introducing them into the social work of the educational space. In general, the educational space of the university can be represented in the form of a drawing. (Figure 1)
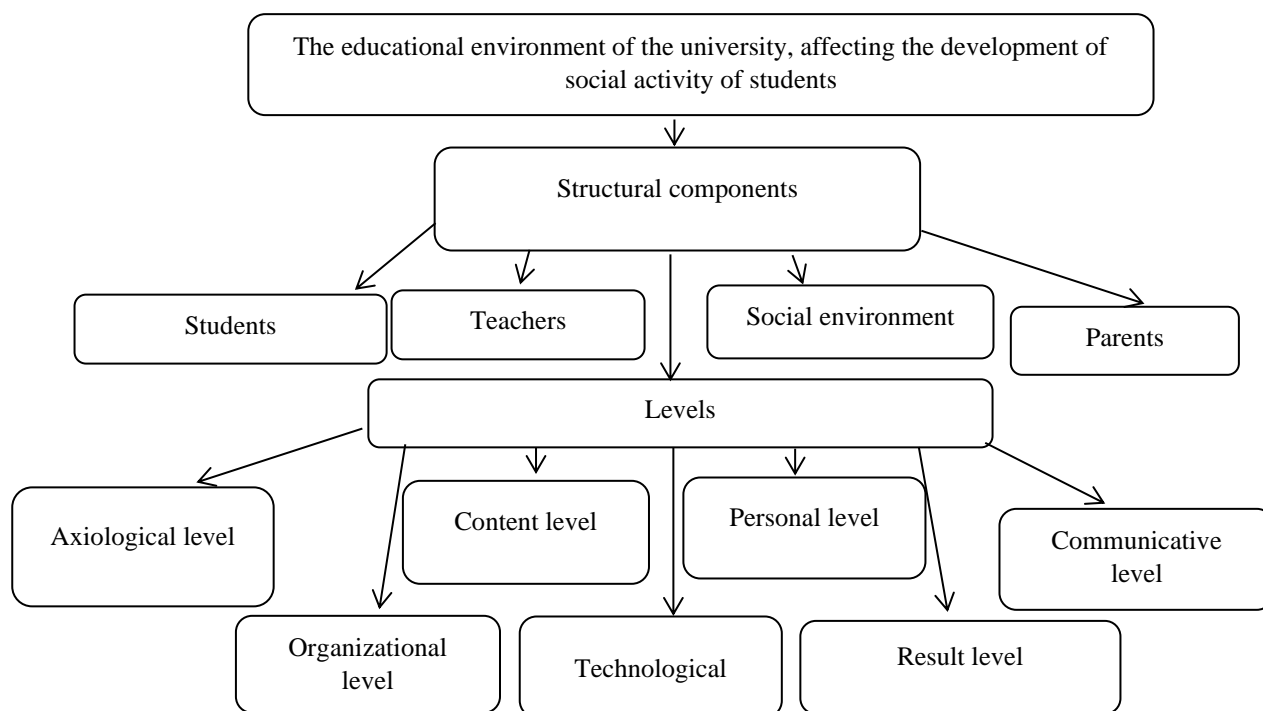
Figure 1. *The educational environment of the university (structural and level components), affecting the development of social activity of students*

Taking into account the importance of the educational space for the socialization of the individual, attention should be paid to the information in this space, its content, changes. Information is necessary not only for the full functioning of the educational system, but also affects the development of the personality in the educational system. The transfer of information experience to the subjects of the educational process allows the education system to prolong information connections over time. Thus, the presence of a person in the educational space makes it possible to satisfy its information needs.

It can be concluded that information in the educational space is defined by its qualitative characteristics as producing, transmitting and consuming information.

The educational space is defined as the space in which educational services are provided, which makes it possible to distinguish the flows of educational information and educational services in society, which is the appropriate channel for the transmission of these services and information (Kravchuk, 1996; Robert, 2019). The objects of the educational space are: traditional objects - school, college, university; innovative objects - gymnasium, lyceum, colleges, etc. The pedagogical foundations of social activity in the educational space can be supplemented with specific theoretical postulates: the idea of social partnership, the principle of activity in social work, the implementation of educational services in the educational space. The educational space has its own structure, which includes: subjects and objects (traditional, innovative), functions (implementation of educational services, information, communication, etc.), principles (didactic, openness of the educational process, subject adaptability, self-reproduction, etc.), the degree of space organization (organized, unorganized), system principles, functional levels (axiological, personal, communicative, productive, etc.), components of the pedagogical system (structural, procedural, resource, subject-activity, spiritual-informational) and other indicators (Gogoleva, 2012; Frumin & Elkonin, 1993; Wittenbeck, 2013; Becker & Zhuravchik, 2009; Martynova, 2013; Masalimova & Shaidullina, 2016; Terekhova, 2013; Davoudi et al., 2018; Kvon et al., 2019; Tugun et al., 2020; Koloskova, Kozlov & Koloskov, 2020; Qarkaxhja et al., 2021).

Research Methods

320 students of higher educational institutions - various fields of training - took part in the research.

At the first stage of it, there were students of technical, humanitarian, natural science faculties from 1st to 3rd years of education.

At the second stage of the research – diagnostic - students were presented with the questionnaire questions.

- What year of education are you a student of?

- What specialty are you acquiring?

- In your opinion, does the university form social activity among the students?

- What educational programs and teaching aids do you use when preparing for classes?

- Is there any improvement of the surrounding world among your life priorities?

- Is achieving professionalism included in your life priorities?

- Is there any improvement to achieve security among your life priorities?

- How do students learn about the possibility of participating in various activities at the university?

- How would you characterize your activity?

- Do you know how to work independently?

- Do you need external guidance and assistance?

- Do you have a desire to help people who find themselves in a difficult life situation?

- Do you have a desire to meet interesting people?

- Do you have a desire to develop your own useful competencies?

- Would you like to take part in various events for free?

- Which direction of social activity, in your opinion, is the most popular among young people?

- What interested you in a particular social activity in which you took part?

- What is your impression of participating in social activity practices?

- What did you like the most?

- Was there anything that you didn't like about this practice of social activity?

- Did you know anything about the organization that organized this practice of social activity before you took part in it? If so, what?

- How many times have you participated in social activity practices?

- Were there any practices of social activity that you refused to participate in? If so, why?

- On what occasion were the social activity practices organized in which you took part?

- Please give examples of social activity practices in which you have participated.

- Do you take part in the student or other collectives for the purpose of showing social activity?

- What activities do you carry out at the university?

- What do you mean by the concepts of "social activity" and "educational space"?

- What means of forming social activity work in the educational space of your university?

- In your opinion, what means of social activity relate to educational, extracurricular activities and to additional education?

- Are there any additional qualities to develop in students in the tasks of the organization, including to form social activity?

- Are any new means of forming students' social activity being introduced now?

- What problems do you face when forming students' social activity?

At the third stage, a pilot research was conducted. The students who took part in the survey were divided as follows: 71% - had no practice of participating in various kinds of social activities, 29% - activists of various kinds of social movements. The analysis of the data obtained showed that students-activists of social movements highly appreciate the opportunity to form social activity through professionally productive activities (81%).

Educational-professional and socio-political activities took approximately equal position in the opportunity to show social activity among students-activists (49%). For the manifestation of artistic and creative abilities, students-activists noted slightly fewer opportunities (38%).

Results

Students of higher educational institutions gave various definitions of social activity. All the students of higher educational institutions noted that social activity is a quality of personality (100%), its deep need (100%). The sociality of the activity emphasizes its focus on the social significance of the student's activity. From their point of view, social activity is a need of the individual and the need to be useful to society.

The educational space is understood by students of higher educational institutions, first of all, as the physical embodiment of the educational institution (88%). However, students of higher educational institutions warn against limiting this concept only due to the physical representations (12%). They talk about the need to interpret this term both as a system, as an environment in which a generation is brought up, and as an extensive network of educational institutions (12%).

Students of higher educational institutions note the high capabilities of universities as the educational space to form and to develop students' social activity. It can be argued that students of higher educational institutions speak about such socio-pedagogical indicators of activity as: the degree of freedom of activity (89%), the degree of expediency (77%), the degree of social significance and public utility (77%), the degree of involvement in socio-cultural creativity (75%).

Students of higher educational institutions speak positively about volunteering in the university environment, note its high potential in the formation of social activity of students (82%). However, 89% of students of higher educational institutions in the course of the survey came out on the topic of reducing social activity among students. Therefore, there is a need to describe these factors as well. From the point of view of students of higher educational institutions, as the main reasons for the decline in social activity

can be named the following: students do not experience much-needed support and approval from people important to them; as a rule, there are no prospects for personal and professional growth; the difficulty of obtaining new skills that can be applied already at the exit into adulthood. Another aspect of the activity as a means of forming students' social activity in the educational space of the university, which was noted during the questionnaire survey, is a number of problems faced by students who are just starting to try this type of activity to develop their abilities and the sphere of social and professional contacts. Many students surveyed (73%) think that the social network is poorly involved in their life concerning social activity. Students stated that they believe that virtual social networks have a significant impact on their educational and leisure activities, but not on socially active practices. Accordingly, it is possible to increase the level of social activity of modern youth by organizing a common information environment in which there will be news about upcoming events.

Almost all students-activists (93%) expect that in their future professional activities they will benefit from the skills and connections that they have developed during the period of their social activity.

Discussion

When forming any indicator, there are various means by which this result is achieved. The means of forming social activity of students are the certain types of activities that ensure the transformation of social reality with the subsequent formation of social activity of the individual. The analysis of scientific literature allowed us to identify the main means of forming students' social activity: professionally productive activity, creative and educational-professional activity.

The main problems, according to the students of higher educational institutions, are: the lack of direct access to information about various areas of social activity for most students. Students of higher educational institutions explain this situation by the underdevelopment of information networks (the lack of a common information space), although in the digital age this fact should not be a significant obstacle. As a result, students who want to prove themselves

do not know where they can apply their social activity. The interviewed students note the lack of accessibility of young people to social activity.

Professionally productive activity of students' social activity influences the socialization of a person in professional activity, setting long-term goals, understanding the importance of social activity at the life stage, developing communicative qualities. There is a creative approach to solving both professional tasks and tasks of everyday life. The knowledge, skills, abilities formed during the educational process act as a factor of success in the activity, which is determined not by one quality of personality, but by their totality. Educational-professional activity is a special form of educational activity, the result of which is manifested in the formation of professional knowledge, skills and abilities, as well as the development of personal qualities of the future professional and his professional abilities. This type of means of forming students' social activity affects the desire to become independent (social motives expand) and it is a means of realizing their life plans, in which social activity is an expression of the students' motives to satisfy their needs and the phenomena of the surrounding reality.

Conclusions

In the modern digital society, the education system is penetrated with a variety of information flows that reflect the previous social experience, on the one hand, as well as new external and internal interactions, on the other hand.

The practice of social activity, according to many researchers, can contribute to the development of various personality traits. To promote the formation of skills to work with different groups of people, to develop communication skills, to develop creative abilities. Various practices of social activity help to develop personal qualities, the ability to communicate in different role positions and to use self-control in communication. In addition, the practice of social activity can contribute to the development of skills of adaptation to various kinds of social, economic, political changes and conditions of the social environment.

Students also note a decrease in the desire to participate in various kinds of practices of social activity.

The reasons for the decrease in the social activity of students, from their point of view, are the following: as a rule, there are no prospects for personal and professional growth; the difficulty of obtaining new skills that can be applied already at the exit into adulthood; the proposed and performed activities are monotonous and uninteresting; the results of the student's work are not visible.

Students of higher educational institutions explain this situation of a decrease in the practices of participation in the events due to the lack of a common information space. It seems to many interviewed students that the social network is poorly involved in their life concerning social activity. Students stated that they believe that virtual social networks have a significant impact on their educational and leisure activities, but not on socially active practices. From the point of view of the students, it is possible to increase the level of social activity of modern youth by organizing a common information environment in which there will be news about upcoming events.

In the opinion of the interviewed students, specialists engaged in the practices of social activity should have a number of professional competencies.

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