

Socio-psychological factors of students' adherence to various forms of social activity

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Abstract. Social activity is the most important sphere of students' socialization. In the process of inclusion into various forms of social activity they learn a new experience of interaction with other people, attitudes and values that are the most important ones for their social self-realization. The purpose of the present study is to investigate social and psychological factors of students adherence to various forms of social activity. 215 students of both genders aged $M=20.2$; $SD=2.4$ (42 % male) took part in the study. In order to evaluate socio-demographic indicators, we have developed a questionnaire; to study adherence to a certain form of social activity, conditions and effects of personal socialization, as well as the acceptable role in activity, we used series of 5-point scales. The intensity / diversity of social activity is associated with socio-demographic (gender, age) and socio-psychological (socialization conditions and beliefs in the possibility of free participation in social life) factors. The degree of involvement of students in civil forms of social activity is very low; the highest degree of manifestation can be observed in leisure and Internet-network forms of social activity. The most preferred roles (voluntary and involuntary participation, organization and initiative) are associated with socialization effects.

1 Introduction

Psychology of education views students' social activity as an important part of their socialization and vocational training. Social activity is defined as a special case of social subjects' initiative impact on the surrounding social environment. Social activity of individuals and groups does not involve participation in public life, however, it primarily involves implementation of initiative-based, creative attitude to their social life spheres, as well as to oneself as a subject of social life [1].

Investigations of students' social activity deal with various problem areas of sociology, psychology and pedagogy. From the point of view of pedagogy, this is a phenomenon social and academic adaptations are based on, which is inclusion into academic process; due to social activity students form important general cultural competences [2]. From the point of view of psychology, social activity is a part of busy lifestyle, it is a type of behaviour with social origins and goals, which is initiative-based and can be transformed

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into social reality, including both personality and group, which results in the emergence of a new quality of both [3].

At the same time, researchers point out that only a small fraction of students are involved in formalized (institutional) forms of activity. The most significant among these organizations are trade unions, volunteer organizations, as well as organizations that solve the tasks related to personal growth, physical improvement, and religious organizations [4]. However, such organizations are generally unpopular among students. According to A.I. Balog, about 32% of students participate in social organizations' activities, while 56% are active in virtual networks [5].

Recent studies of students' social activity deal with issues related to its value determination [6], semantic content [7], study of volitional qualities as predictors of commitment to various forms of activity [8], a lot of attention has been paid to students' online network activity [9], researchers studied regulatory and philosophical factors of students' social activity [10], socio-psychological (motivational, value, etc.) factors; specific forms of volunteer [11], online network [12-13], civil [14], political [15], leisure [16] activity have been disclosed.

As a result of these and other studies, we can observe the most urgent problem related to students' multiple activity, which results in dispersion of resources, competencies and potential achievements. Another important issue deals with social determination of students' activity, i.e. how and due to what actualization of a particular form of activity occurs, and finally, what functional role students prefer in relation to a particular form of activity. Earlier, we have discovered that certain forms of social activity can be interrelated due to internal motives for their implementation, as well as commitment to a certain source of information about social life in the country [1].

The purpose of the study is to investigate socio-psychological factors of students' adherence to various forms of social activity. We suppose that there are specific factors of general (frontal) social activity as well as separate forms of students' activity.

2 Methods

215 students from provincial regions of Russia took part in the study, mean age $M=20.2$; $SD=2.4$ (42 % male). They filled out questionnaires and did the surveys. Socio-demographic parameters of the participants, i.e. gender, age, income, marital status, education, place of residence, have been defined. In order to evaluate socialization effects and conditions we used the 5-point Likert scales. For example: "Try to evaluate to what extent your country gives you an opportunity to participate in social life, manifest social activity in various fields (be a member of political parties, vote in elections, go to rallies, attend trainings/sports clubs, attend church services, etc.?" To study adherence to a certain type of activity we used the following scales (scale dimension - 5 points in accordance with the Likert scale): (General social activity (GSA), Altruistic activity (AA), Leisure activity (LA); Socio-political activity (SPA); Internet network activity (INA); Civil Activity (CA); Socio-economic activity (SEA); Educational and developmental activity (EDA); Spiritual activity (SA); Religious activity (RA); Protest activity (PA); Radical Protest Activity (RPA); Subcultural activity (SA). The scales were developed (Shamionov R.M., Grigoryeva M.V., Zagranichny F.I., Bocharova E.E., Arendachuk I.V., Usova N.V., Sharov A.A.) based on the studies regarding representations of social activity [1, 17, 18].

All scales have undergone reliability check: α Cronbach = 0.68-0.74; χ^2 Friedman = 1206.1, with $p < 0.001$).

3 Results and discussion

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics as predictors of students' social activity

	Beta	t	Value	ΔR^2
General Activity				
Age	-0.22	-3.83	0	4
Sex	-0.16	-2.80	0.005	2
F=9.56, p<0.01 R ² =0.06				
EI	0.17	2.97	0.003	8
PI	0.19	3.59	0	6
PA	0,17	2.99	0.003	3
RI	0.13	2.25	0.025	1
F=16.74, p<0.01 R ² =0.18				

Note. EI - adherence to an ethnic group, PI - attitude towards personal participation in the country's social life, PA parents' participation in social life, RI - strength of religious beliefs.

As we can see from Table 1, as a result of regression analysis, two main socio-demographic characteristics were identified as predictors of overall social activity, i.e. gender and age, which indicates their weak (only 6% of the dependent variable variations) conditioning of students' adherence to social activity. This means that a higher level of adherence to social activity is demonstrated by female students and junior students. During the next step of analysis, we introduced scales reflecting the nature of students' socialization. Among these characteristics (as their importance decreases), the most significant predictors of social activity are adherence to an ethnic group, attitude towards personal participation in the country's social life, parents' participation in social life, and strength of religious beliefs. From these data we can observe that adherence to ethnic and religious feelings gives the effect of more active participation in social life in its various forms. On the other hand, the experience of parents' participation in social life, as well as the students' own belief that they have a personal opportunity to participate in the social life of the country, form a strong foundation for this adherence. This means that the results of early socialization for students' broad (in several areas at once) social activity are important, because, on the one hand, there are connections with ethical community and / or denomination, and on the other hand, there are connections with a family, which promote understanding of attitudes towards manifestations of social activity. At the same time, neither the level of family well-being, nor the number of friends, or parenting strategy in the family are associated with general activity.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics and correlations between social activity and role position

	M	SD	PII	PO	PY	PBY
GSA	2.23	0.55	.40**	.41**	.46**	-.08
AA	2.42	1.21	.28**	.34**	.32**	-.10
LA	3.98	1.03	.22**	.13	.27**	-.02
PA	1.76	0.97	.12	.25**	.20**	.00
IA	3.14	1.30	.18**	.03	.15*	-.01
SA	1.82	1.06	.17*	.24**	.28**	-.05

SEA	2.63	1.32	.25**	.36**	.29**	-.06
EDA	2.68	1.29	.30**	.34**	.41**	-.11
SA	2.59	1.30	.29**	.15*	.24**	.07
RA	1.49	0.88	.18**	.23**	.24**	-.17*
PrA	1.45	0.87	.17*	.13	.17*	-.01
RPA	1.33	0.76	.04	.08	.08	.06
SA	1.50	1.02	.14*	.12	.03	-.07
RI	2.61	1.10	1.00	.58**	.54**	-.19**
RO	2.39	1.20	.58**	1.00	.54**	-.15*
RP	3.25	1.12	.54**	.54**	1.00	-.02
RFP	2.61	1.23	-.19**	-.15*	-.02	1.00

Note. GSA - General social activity, AA - Altruistic activity, LA - Leisure activity; PA - Political activity; IA - Internet network activity; CA - Civil Activity; SEA - Socio-economic activity; EDA - Educational and developmental activity; SA - Spiritual activity; RA - Religious activity; PrA - Protest activity; RPA - Radical Protest Activity; SA - Subcultural activity; RI – Initiative role; RO - Role of activity organization; RP - Role of participation; RFP - Role of forced participation.

Let us take a look at research results related to adherence to certain forms of social activity (Table 2). The most manifested ones are leisure and Internet-network forms of activity, which are followed by educational-developmental, socio-economic, spiritual and altruistic forms of activity.

This data testifies in favor of the fact that students' activity, conditioned by the very fact of their inclusion in educational activities, is not limited to this. In the process of studying at an institution of higher education, they are involved in various student organizations (volunteer, leisure, etc.). Therefore, the degree of manifestation of altruistic and leisure activities is easily explained. At the same time, modern students have already become subjects of economic activity. Obviously, this places socio-economic form of activity among the priority ones. Finally, many students are in search of means for self-realization. Therefore, spiritual activity, presupposing their search for ways of best self-realization, conceptual markers, and knowledge, is in high demand.

It should be noted that there is a wide range of indicators of adherence to Internet-network, socio-economic, educational-developmental, and spiritual activity. This indicates not only heterogeneity of the estimates, but also the extreme forms of activity manifestation. There are individuals among students with very high and very low levels of adherence to these types of activities. At the same time, the most preferred leisure form of activity is distributed more uniformly, which indicates a general tendency among students to engage in leisure activities.

Socio-political and civil, protest and subcultural forms of activity do not attract students much. This data is consistent with studies that show low levels of civil [6] and political [19] activity among Russian students.

Let us turn to data reflecting role preferences regarding students' social activity. As we can see from Table 2, the most preferred role is that of participation. However, the role of forced participation in other forms of activity initiated by other people, is also quite well manifested. The least manifested role is the role of activity organization.

The initiative role and participation are characteristic of any form of students' social activity (Table 2). The organizing role is associated with all forms of activity, except for spiritual, Internet-network, protest, radical protest and subcultural forms of activity. Forced

participation is not associated with these types of activity, except for religious activity (negative connection, indicating completely voluntary adoption of religious norms). This data testifies in favor of the fact that commitment to various forms of social activity among students is associated with their active role, initiative, but not always with the organizing role. This means that certain forms of activity (for example, Internet-network and spiritual, are perceived by them as a situation that has arisen and they are not inclined to cooperate with others to implement it. An important circumstance in the latter case is the fact that a sense of uncertainty is closely connected with students' Internet-network activity ($r = 0.177$, $p < 0.01$). This means that a strong sense of uncertainty is an important factor of immersion in this type of activity, which may be associated with search for affiliation and stability, which can be relied upon.

As we can see from pair correlation analysis results, adherence to a certain role in social activity is associated with some personal socialization effects. Thus, forced participation is negatively associated with religious commitment ($r = -0.151$; $p < 0.01$) and the belief that there is an opportunity to participate in the country's social life ($r = -0.178$; $p < 0.01$). Participation in various forms of social activity organized by others or institutionally organized is positively associated with ethnic identity ($r = 0.139$; $p < 0.05$) and the conviction that there is an opportunity to participate in the country's social life ($r = 0.189$; $p < 0.01$). From this data it follows that the most manifested role (or participation) is associated with adherence to an ethnic group and the conviction that there is an opportunity for free participation in social life. Such a belief undermines the role of "forced participation". In other words, young men and women, who are convinced that there is an opportunity of free participation in the country's social life, will not, contrary to their desire, take part in forms of social activity organized institutionally or by other students. Deep religious faith contributes to this as well.

4 Conclusions

1. General versatile social activity of students, which presupposes adherence to several forms of activity in various spheres and various levels of participation, is associated with socio-demographic and socio-psychological factors. The degree of activity is related to students' socialization effects, i.e. experience of their parents' participation in social life and their own belief that a student has the personal opportunity to participate in the social life of his/her country, adherence to an ethnic group and religion.

2. Leisure and Internet-network forms of activity are the most significantly manifested ones within the structure of students' social activity. Students are significantly involved into educational-developmental, spiritual, socio-economic, and altruistic practices.

3. The most common role within social activity is the role of a participant, while the role of an organizer is less acceptable. Role preference is associated socialization effects. The role of forced participation is negatively associated with religious commitment and the belief that there is an opportunity to participate in the country's social life; the role of voluntary participation is positively associated with ethnic identity and the belief that there is an opportunity to participate in the country's social life.

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