

Social And Communicative Adaptation Of International Students At Russia Universities: Problems, Peculiarities And Characteristic

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Abstract: The topicality of this article is because more and more modern universities are interested in internationalization, as they seek to gain recognition at the international level. In addition, more and more future students from different countries have the opportunity to choose universities and countries in which they want to get education. At the same time, the attraction of international students to universities is connected with the problem of their adaptation to the new conditions, and this is a rather important task facing Russian universities. The purpose of the study is to study the peculiarities of foreign students' adaptation in the socio-cultural space of Russian education; to identify problems faced by students in the process of studying in Russian universities. Research methods: as a research method, we used questionnaire survey as a method that allow quick and efficient exploration of features and problems arising in the course of international students' adaptation. Research results: the article deals with social and communicative adaptation of international students studying in Russian universities. The peculiarities of adaptation process in Russian universities in the representation of international students are described. The novelty and originality of the study lies in the fact that the main factors affecting the way of choice of international students' adaptation are considered. It has been determined that adaptation of international students to the educational environment of a Russian university is a multidimensional and lengthy process that covers all spheres of their lives. It is revealed that the most difficult aspects of adaptation for foreign students are adaptation to new climate conditions and time; to new sociocultural environment; to new educational system; to new language of communication; to international character of groups. For the first time, it was determined that the main problem identified by the international students surveyed were problems related to the language and living conditions in the hostel. It was found that the standard of living in the dormitories was satisfactory for most international students, but often did not meet their expectations. It is shown that students from neighboring countries adapt faster than other international students. It has been determined that the majority of international students who came to Russia for higher education do speak Russian, which allows them to become more involved in the host society more quickly. It was revealed that after graduating from the Russian university, international students want to go back to their home to get a job there. It has been determined that for successful adaptation of international students at the Russian university the following is necessary: to create councils of international students that will help them in solving important issues; to duplicate important information in dormitories and study buildings in foreign languages; to support the formation of student communities (groups of interests or

according to needs) so that international students have the opportunity to interact with other international students, discuss emerging problems, find support, study Russian; maintain a high level of motivation to study, as well as receive a variety of information about life and study at the university; it is necessary to develop a system of coaching and mentoring, taking an active part in forming a community of international students. The practical significance of the data obtained in this work lies in their use in social psychology, ethnic psychology, pedagogy, age psychology, sociology and for further theoretical development of this issue.

Keywords: *student youth, international students, adaptation, university.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The problem of adaptation is one of the most complex interdisciplinary problems covering different spheres of human activity: psychological and pedagogical, social, cultural, linguistic and so on [1, 2, 3, 4].

Modern scientific literature provides a wide range of interpretations of the term *adaptation*. There are increasing contradictions between the needs of members of society, their desire for growth and self-fulfillment, and the difficulties encountered by the state in being able to meet these needs [5]. Complex mechanisms of adaptation in the social sphere, where an important aspect of personality socialization is adaptation: the reason for the internalization of social norms, values, attitudes of a specific collective or group (socialization function). Adaptive action is a two-way process. The social environment is constantly influenced by the worldview, cultural and spiritual components. A complex of psychophysiological, educational and cognitive, socio-cultural and everyday factors determines the peculiarities of adaptation of foreign students. The structure of relations of all components of education plays an important role in adaptation. Adaptation of students from other countries requires special organization, consistency and purposefulness [6].

In modern society, changes have covered all spheres of social and economic life, particularly the social structure, material and spiritual culture, and society as a whole. Transformation process was the result of interaction of a large number of social subjects, individuals, organizations, groups, the set of which can be considered as a macro subject of society transformation [7]. In order to understand the processes of social life as a self-organizing system, it is important to analyze the peculiarities of a person's social adaptation during long-term social transformations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The process of international students' adaptation is carried out throughout the period of study at the university, but it is particularly difficult in the first year, i.e. at the preparatory faculty. Therefore, research on the process of adaptation, organization of its success contributes to the faster integration of international students into the student environment, facilitates the process of their learning and education [8, 9, 10, 11, 12].

Every international student who comes to Russian universities to study at a university has a different worldview, which has been shaped by the culture of the country where he/she was born and grew up. When future students or freshmen enter another country, they immediately encounter a different culture, other forms of communication, other language forms and an unusual national, cultural and social environment to which they will have to adapt for successful further socialization [13, 14, 15,

16].

The difficulties in adapting international students to the environment and to university education require comprehensive psychological and pedagogical diagnostic work and theoretical research. It is necessary to study the different aspects of students' adaptation to the new linguistic, cultural and social environment, as well as to completely new language forms and conditions, sometimes quite difficult to assimilate [17, 18, 19, 20].

Adaptation is the process of adapting to new conditions, and given the different levels of conditions, different mentality of countries, it is not easy to adapt. It takes time and a conscious, moral perception of this or that society to fully adjust to a new country [21, 22, 23, 24]. The process of adaptation is common and natural for any person who finds himself in an unfamiliar environment, but everyone sees different ways of adapting to new conditions. It is appropriate to start with the fact that when a person gets into an unusual environment, he may panic a feeling of discomfort, fear, alienation. It should be noted that all freshmen go through adaptation to the new conditions of higher education, but the period of adaptation, the complexity of the course of this process is different. Not all factors influencing a student's personality at a higher education institution contribute to his/her successful adaptation.

The period of student youth is a special stage in human development characterized by peculiar conditions of life, everyday life, work, study, communication, special social behavior and psychology. Therefore, problems in the adaptation of students to new life circumstances arise because of the world-view and cultural positions of international students, which may highlight contradictions in the views, intellectual or creative features, cause some restrictions or barriers in the interaction, which in turn may lead to some slippage of the organizational or psychological order (contradictions arise also because of unusual for former students features of the new system of education, a new team, new conditions: changes in working hours, everyday life, recreation and etc.).

Communication in society takes a fundamental place and is one of the most important components of a successful and self-sufficient person. Since science knows the term sociocultural adaptation, the concept of linguistic adaptation also deserves the right to exist and to have a proper place among sociological and psychological terminology (moreover, these two terminological messages are interconnected and integral). Thus, language adaptation should be understood as a process of accumulation of active and passive vocabulary, taking into account the dialectical peculiarities of the foreigner's region of residence, ensuring the transmission of information for the realization of successful verbal communication [25]. One of the factors for adaptation in a foreign country is knowledge of the language spoken by its inhabitants.

Thus, adaptation by scientists is seen as a capacity for adaptability. It provides such psychological and physiological personal qualities that allow mastering professional activity with the least expenditure of time and effort, tune in to the performance of duties, and gain sensitivity to collective goals, the ability to enter into the system of professional, social and interpersonal relations.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire method was chosen for the study, which is more preferable for studying the adaptation process of international students. The choice of the method is dictated by its universality;

the questionnaire survey allows collecting a large amount of data in a short period.

The participants of the survey are students from different countries and for further work and convenience by this criterion, we can distinguish the following groups of international students: students from the CIS countries, Asian and African countries, Arab countries and Latin American countries. The selection of students from these countries is conditioned by their relevance. The sample consisted of 150 students studying at Russian universities.

Among the students who took part in the survey, 30% were girls and 70% were boys aged 18 to 25. The percentage distribution by country is as follows: CIS students (32%), Asian students (21%), African students (27%), Latin American students (19%) and Arab students (1%).

The main objectives of the study were: to identify the countries that represent international students; to describe the level of Russian language proficiency among international students; to find out which students and from which countries more difficultly adapt in the first month of residence in Russia; to identify the most difficult moments in the learning process; to describe the process of adaptation of international students to the student residence.

The questionnaire contained twenty-five questions on the peculiarities of adaptation in the Russian university.

The pilot survey revealed that the overwhelming majority of respondents speak Russian (98%), as at the time of the survey they had already graduated from the pre-university training faculty, and some had completed Russian language courses in other Russian cities. Only 29% of the students have an excellent command of Russian, mainly students from neighboring countries, 65% reply that they speak Russian at a conversational level, the remaining 6% have to learn it further.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The information obtained from the survey of international students is particularly valuable as it helps to identify problems encountered by international students when they come to a foreign country for higher education and to draw conclusions about the degree of their adaptation. Based on the survey results, a portrait of international students studying at Russian universities was drawn up. Typically, young people who come to Russia speak Russian in one way or another (98%), English (69%), as in many countries it is studied in schools in addition to their native language, French is spoken by some students in Africa (21%) and Spanish by students from Latin America (19%). Of all international students surveyed one in three showed excellent Russian language skills. As a rule, students show this result from neighboring countries. Nearly 65% of international students answered that they speak Russian on a spoken level. In the first month of residence in Russia, students from Africa (16%) and students from Asia (10%) had the hardest time getting used to a different climate and weather, students from Latin America (30%) and the Arab countries (21%) - language barrier, while students from the CIS countries had the biggest difficulties with the lack of friends and parents (21%) and with getting used to life in student dormitories (41%).

The majority of students like to study (81%), they study with interest, this is indicated by the survey results, the rest of the international students participating in the survey found it difficult to answer, but no one chose the option - *doesn't like to study*. A significant proportion of those surveyed (83%) find it difficult to study at Russian universities, but there are no major difficulties, 15% said it is

difficult for them to study, and only 2% of international students said it is easy for them to study.

The most difficult in the learning process for international students are lectures (58%), which once again confirms the language barrier. Every third student has shown that it is more difficult to prepare for exams or credits. When asked about the relationship with the faculty and students of the university, more than half of them - 61% said that they sometimes had difficulties, 37% had no problems communicating with the faculty and students, and only 2% of students answered that they constantly had difficulties. Those students who answered that they were constantly or sometimes having difficulties cited language barriers (61%), psychological barriers (31%), and cultural barriers (24%) as the most important ones.

Next, a question was proposed that made it possible to determine the peculiarities of relations between international students and university professors. In the educational process, 85% of respondents did not have any conflict situations, 13% found it difficult to answer and 2% said that they had a conflict. It was found out that mainly students and professors have friendly relations, which promote cooperation. International students answered the open-ended question about difficulties in adapting to Russian universities in different ways. However, about 61% of respondents called language the main problem. One of the research questions was related to successful adaptation in a foreign country, namely, what is necessary for successful adaptation of international students. Almost one in three of international students (39%) believe that successful adaptation requires a variety of work, including joint work with other students (and with international students, in particular). The priority for international students is joint activities with Russian students, active extra-curricular activities, as well as various activities related to the culture of the country they live in, which will introduce them to customs, traditions and cultural peculiarities. International students believe that their adaptation will be more successful if they take part in these activities. 89% of those surveyed agreed with this view. This may also indicate that these activities are both attractive and cognitive for international students at the same time.

The place of residence of the respondents is mainly a student dormitory, 93% responded. Of all those living in hostels, only 20% are satisfied with everything, most of 58% like to live in a hostel, but there are problems and 22% of students do not like to live in a hostel, but because of the average standard of living they have no choice. Less than half of 49% of the respondents rated the quality of living conditions as satisfactory and desired them to be better.

The most positive moment in the life of the dormitory students call the relationship with neighbors 61%, they also like the behavior of students living in the dormitory 31% and conditions in the room 13%, and the most negative in the life of the dormitory, according to students, are the sanitary conditions in the toilet 64% and conditions in the kitchen 32%.

According to the survey, international students most often are in shopping centers (92%), another most visited place is the cinema, as 78% of students said, then followed restaurants and cafes (37%), and closed the list - night clubs (20%). When asked if they visit national cultural centers, 78% of international students said that they did or sometimes did, and the remaining 22% did not. The questionnaire also covered the topic of traditions: according to the results of the survey, only one third of international students did not observe traditions at all, most of the respondents try to observe their traditions or observe them constantly, citing mainly religious traditions or national holidays of their country as examples. After graduation, one in three of students wants to get a job in their country, one in five wants to move to another country, and one in four wants to get a job in Russia.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The process of studying at a higher education institution is a special stage of a young man's life activity connected with gaining professional experience and mastering the basics of professional activity. Entering into professional activity demands from the young man not only persistent efforts directed on mastering means of professional activity, but also reconstruction of self-consciousness and consciousness as a whole.

During their higher education, young persons, and especially if they come from another country, may face various problems related to adaptation: to new conditions, adult life and customs of another country. Solving these problems requires both internal self-organization and assistance from the university, teachers, classmates, curators and other subjects on whom the success of the adaptation process depends.

Modern demographic processes in Russia and the level of development of educational institutions allow us to state that attracting international students for higher education in Russia is one of the means to overcome a possible crisis. Industries and conditions for international students should be sufficiently competitive to provide favorable conditions for international students to study on the one hand, and on the other - to be reasonably adequate in terms of price, because most of those who go to study in Russia are young people from countries with lower levels of economic development. The necessary condition for the representatives from different countries of the world to assimilate knowledge from general scientific disciplines is to take into account the mentality, psychological state and other features of their national consciousness, because the typical difficulties, except for subject, language, methodical, organizational, are psychological. The account, forecasting and designing of the specified problems allows objectively to formulate, vary educational purposes and to develop strategy of their decision.

Insufficient attention to the problems of international students may become one of the reasons for the growth of social tension, manifestation of xenophobia, as well as dissemination of ideas of national hatred. Therefore, it is important to work in this direction both at the legislative and public level, and at the level of each particular university.

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