PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF UNIVERSITY APPLICANTS` GROUPS

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Abstract

In the article the socializing influence of the teacher-tutor on the applicant's academic group in higher educational institutions is proved. The education and the associated with it social development of the academic group and each applicant in the university are integral attributes of tutorship as a social and professional phenomenon of modern higher education. The purpose of the article is to study the psychological characteristics of academic groups of applicants of higher education as objects of directed socialization. The selection of criteria of educational socialization is implemented. The basic psychological features of the academic groups' development as a collective subject of educational activity on scientific methods are considered. Scientifically substantiated values of applicants' group life are embedded in the methods themselves: focus on people, responsibility, initiative (methodics of diagnostics the level of development of social activity of the individual and collective by O. Vlasova) and group orientation according to the questionnaire "Pulsar" by L. Pochebut (the qualities of the group subject: preparedness, orientation, organization, activity, cohesion, integrativity, reference and the overall level of group development). The classification of levels of collective formation by O. Vlasova is presented in the categorical plane of objectively confirmed models of collective development and is therefore the most favourable for describing the social maturity of the group educational subject. According to the indicators of group cohesion of applicants, the average score of their learning and the level of development of the group subject, the typology of academic groups of higher education applicants was created. The result of empirical research of groups of applicants on the criterion of combining indicators of their social development as a collective subject of educational activity and applicant learning success was the derivation of empirical typology of effective and ineffective tutors (total four types: effective, pseudo-effective, formally effective and ineffective).

Keywords: educational socialization, academic group of applicants of higher education, tutorship of applicants, teacher-tutor.

Introduction

Modern society makes urgent demands on institution of higher education. The new socially necessary personal qualities of applicants develop in the process of acquiring higher education. The education and the associated with it social development of the academic group and each applicant in the university are integral attributes of tutorship as a social and professional phenomenon of modern higher education. The problems of group development were considered in the scientific works of many famous psychologists and educationists (O. Vlasova, O. Kirichuk, A. Makarenko, A. Petrovsky, L. Pochebut, L. Umansky).

In our last scientific researches we have defined that there is the need to take into account the indicators of university applicants` group development during the process of

planning the educational activities by higher education teachers and, particularly, teacher-tutors, in order to ensure the effectiveness of educational socialization (Chuhaieva, 2017).

The purpose of the article is to study the psychological characteristics of academic groups of applicants of higher education as objects of directed socialization.

Theoretical background

The main purpose of the teacher-tutor is to optimize the processes of team building of academic groups. The collective, as the highest level of group development of the educational community, provides the most productive social and psychological conditions for the educational development of its members, which is shown primarily in the full acceptance of the applicants` social role by its participants, the consequences of which are the high academic performance of each of them.

Thus, we determined the criteria for educational socialization: the cohesion of a group of applicants and the grade point average of learning in it. The acceptance of the social role by applicants is to assimilate social norms and values. The success of education is the reflection of applicants' mastery of social norms in higher education. In turn, the cohesion of a group of applicants according to a "strong" sociometric criterion means that applicants choose their colleagues in the group based on the value of learning, and thus show unity of opinion about the productivity of educational activities of group members. If a group of applicants is united, then its group opinion is united, and for its members the priority of choice is people competent in learning. The applicant receives group support in his quest for successful learning activities. This is the socializing influence of the teacher-tutor.

Methodology

Scientifically substantiated values of applicants' group life are embedded in the methods themselves: focus on people, responsibility, initiative (methodics of diagnostics the level of development of social activity of the individual and collective by O. Vlasova) and group orientation according to the questionnaire "Pulsar" by L. Pochebut. Sociometric method of J. L. Moreno makes it possible to obtain quantitative results of the study: the value of the status of each member of the group, the presence of groups in it, the degree of cohesion or separation, data on tense or conflict dyads, triads, microgroups. Members of the applicant group are invited to answer questions that allow them to show their sympathies and antipathies for each other, for leaders, members of the group that it does not accept. In order to identify the effective socializing interaction between a teacher and a group of applicants, we introduced questions 2 and 4 with options a) and b) into the main database, where applicants had to choose the most and least authoritative among the teachers. According to the research procedure, 5 questions were read and the following instructions were given:

"Write on the sheets under the number 1 the name of the group member you would choose in the first place, under the number 2 - who you would have chosen if there was no first, under the number 3 - who would you have chosen if there were no first and second.

1. Which of your friends from the group did you ask, if necessary, to provide assistance in preparing for the lessons (first, second, third)?

2.a) Which of your teachers did you ask to provide assistance in preparing for the lessons, if necessary (first, second, third)?

2.b) Which of your teachers would you not like to ask, if necessary, to assist you in preparing for the lessons?

3. Whom in your group did you turn to for advice in a difficult life situation?

4.a) Which of your teachers did you turn to for advice in a difficult life situation?

4.b) With whom of the teachers did you not want to consult about anything?

5. Who from the group would you invite to your birthday?" (Chuhaieva, 2017).

Let`s consider the main indicators of the development of the educational group of the university as an object and at the same time a group subject of educational socialization. To do this, we will use the results obtained using the methodics of "Pulsar" by L. Pochebut (Pochebut, 2002), methodics of diagnostics the level of development of social activity of the individual and collective by O. Vlasova (Vlasova, 1989), sociometric test of J. L. Moreno modificated by the author (Chuhaieva, 2017), as well as indicators of applicants learning achievement.

Results

First, we analyze the psychological characteristics of the development of academic groups as a group subject of education, determined by different levels of activity. Assessing the level of development of 27 study groups according to the questionnaire "Pulsar" we note that the method provides a four-level analysis of the progress of 7 qualities of the group subject (preparedness, orientation, organization, activity, cohesion, integrativity, reference) and the overall level of group development (Pochebut, 2002).

According to applicants' assessment of the level of development of their group, half of the groups that participated in the research are at a high level (10-12 points) - 50.82%, which characterizes them as mature, cohesive, efficient and reliable. These groups are led by effective teacher-tutors. In turn, 29.18% of grades are in the range from 7 to 9 points. These groups are quite mature; able to perform collective learning tasks, but their leaders are pseudo-effective teacher-tutors. 15.53% of the results obtained by applicant groups reached the level of 4-6 points - such groups are not mature enough, not always able to effectively carry out the tasks. They are led by formally effective tutors. At the same time, 4.47% of assessments are at a low level (1-3 points). These groups are immature; it is likely that they will not cope with the learning objectives. Their tutors can be considered ineffective.

The classification of levels of collective formation by O. Vlasova is presented in the categorical plane of objectively confirmed models of collective development and is therefore the most favourable for describing the social maturity of the group educational subject (Vlasova, 1989).

The third level of formation of social activity of the collective subject corresponds to the group of the type "collective" (high indicator of value-orientation unity, high score of applicants' learning success - 51%). The second level (high value-orientation unity, low applicant achievement score - 29%) reflects the picture of collective formation, typical for the group "autonomy", which is characterized by fairly high basic indicators of group integration (value-orientation unity, cohesion, group

satisfaction) and only the predominance of applicants` individual responsibility (they are responsible only for themselves) inhibits the further development of this group association on the way to the team, which involves responsible dependence. At the first level are groups in which only the initial unification took place on a collective basis (low value-orientation unity, low applicant achievement score - 15%). Such groups have acquired the status of "primary team", the purpose of which is to progress, as determined by indicators of social orientation of applicants' value orientations, satisfactory assessments of such groups by teachers. However, in general, low indicators of value-orientation unity, responsibility, sociometric cohesion and group assessments of their members allow identifying these groups, in contrast to those previously considered, as groups of "associations" located on the early stages of group development of social and collective activity. Zero level (low value-orientation unity, low applicant achievement score - 5%) unites groups where there are no processes of formation of collective relations of applicants. The specific characteristics of the social-psychological climate in each of the groups of this level allowed defining them according to the criterion of cohesion-disunity on an informal basis to the group of "disintegration".

Such levels of development of the group subject, which is a group of applicants, are indicators of the development of the processes of collective formation. They are directly dependent on the progress of personal mechanisms of social activity of applicants who are part of it (Vlasova, 1989).

Applicants belonging to zero-level groups (5% of the total number of studying groups) are distinguished, in addition to the individual nature of the orientation and somewhat negative attitude towards the educational collective, by the lack of adequate understanding of responsibility; they do not have the attitude to participate in the social life of the group, they show inflated self-esteem and the lowest self-control.

At the first level of formal display of social activity of applicants (15% of the total number of academic groups) the motive of public benefit is already fixed, but it does not find a real embodiment in the social life of the applicant group. This is primarily due to the specific atmosphere that such applicants often create around them in a group. Among them there is an uneven positive assessment of their group and the expectation of a favourable attitude towards themselves. In addition, they are characterized by a weak development of mechanisms of self-esteem and self-control and a focus on diligence in educational affairs.

The second level of demonstrations of social activity (29% of the total number of learning groups) is characterized by a combination of social orientation, positive attitude towards their teaching staff and satisfactory social expectations of applicants. However, the predominance of understanding the responsibility only as accountability to teachers, the presence of inadequate, mostly low self-esteem and average self-control indicators show that the process of intensive formation of personal mechanisms of social activity is only in the initial stages of development and can be successful only based on external control.

Applicants of the third level groups (51% of the total number of study groups) demonstrate the most favourable combination of the basic conditions of formation and

implementation of social activity. In addition to the optimal circumstances of the situation of social development (broad social orientation, positive attitude to their educational collective and a clear attitude to active participation in its public life), these applicants have the most mature personal mechanisms in the form of adequate understanding of responsibility and self-control, mostly objective nature of self-assessment.

At the next stage of the research, we analyzed the above 27 groups of applicants by sociometric method and the results on the effectiveness of the educational process. According to the indicator of "group cohesion", we have identified two levels: high (0.20-0.28 points), which is represented by 80% of applicant groups and low (0.10-0.15 points) - respectively 20% of applicant groups. This distribution is quite convenient when considering the social and psychological characteristics of applicant groups. In the process of studying applicant groups on the indicator "grade point average of learning" in the group we identified two levels: high (3.8-4.3 points), which are 65% of applicant groups and low (3.5-3.7 points) - respectively 35% of groups.

Discussion

Thus, taking into account the indicators of group cohesion of applicants, the average score of their learning and the level of development of the group subject, we were able to create a typology of academic groups of applicants.

The results obtained during the study of indicators of development of the group subject are shown in table 1.

We have considered the main characteristics of four groups of applicants by methodics of diagnostics the level of development of social activity of the individual and the team by O. Vlasova, as well as "Pulsar" by L. Pochebut. We have noted that the empirical distribution in all groups is equal to normal.

Table 1

**Relationship between the type of applicants' group
and the type of its teacher-tutor**

Group	Type of teacher-tutor	Level of development of group subject by O. Vlasova	Cohesion of applicants' group according to a "strong" sociometric criterion	Grade point average of learning in group	Type of applicants' group by A. Petrovsky
1	effective	III	high	high	collective
2	pseudo-effective	II	high	low	corporation
3	formally effective	I	low	high	association
4	ineffective	0	low	low	diffuse group

In the group of the first type, which we designate in our research as the "collective" of applicants, we observe the following picture: the focus on people (x average = 1,87), systematic responsibility (x average = 1,92) and constant initiative (x average = 1,88).

According to the method of "Pulsar" by L. Pochebut all indicators of the first group of applicants are at a high level (10-12 points):

• preparedness for the activity - according to the group, all its members have deep professional knowledge, are able to successfully apply them in practice, are interested in improving their skills; each applicant has a high reputation in the group; the group achieves high results in training;

• orientation - a group of applicants has a clear, common goal for all, which is perceived and understood by everyone as their own; the group is based on long traditions, developing mutually acceptable norms of behaviour, common values; it highly values integrity, honesty, disinterestedness;

• organization - the group is able to independently manage their work and leisure; relations are built on the principles of cooperation, mutual assistance and friendliness; applicants always jointly and amicably decide how to organize their work more effectively; the group has authoritative individuals who are able to take on the role of organizer of the educational process;

• activity - all members of the group are energetic, interested in effective work, respond quickly if it is necessary to do something useful for everyone; all applicants take an active part in the discussion of common tasks, tend to cooperate and help each other;

• cohesion - the group has a fair treatment of all its members, the inexperienced are always supported and protected; the group is friendly to newcomers, helping them to adapt to new conditions; all members of the group work closely with each other, actively share knowledge and tools necessary for work; there is a great desire to work together in the group;

• integrativity - all members of the group take an active part in the process of making decisions that determine its further activities; at the same time everyone's opinion is carefully listened to, his/her interests are taken into account, and as a result the coordinated decision is made;

• reference - all members of the group are set up for each other; the group develops mutual assistance, mutual trust, mutual understanding; group members are the close friends who deeply sympathize to each other; the achievements and failures of the group are experienced by each participant as their own; the successes (or failures) of individual members of the group cause the sincere participation of others; criticism is expressed with good intentions; the group is dominated by a cheerful tone of relationships, optimism in the mood, applicants have a sense of pride for their group.

In the second group, which we named in accordance with the classification of A.V. Petrovsky applicant`s "corporation", we noted the focus on people (x average = 1,77), lack of responsibility (x average = 0,22) and constant initiative (x average = 1,64).

As for the results of applicants of the questionnaire "Pulsar" by L. Pochebut, here we see the following picture:

• preparedness for the activity - below average (4-6 points): the group also has insufficiently qualified applicants, whose activities harm its professional authority;

• orientation - above average (7-9 points): the applicant group faces a common task; each applicant tries to satisfy his interests within its solution; mutually acceptable norms of behaviour are developed in the group;

• organization - above average (7-9 points): the group tries to organize their work independently and it does not always work out effectively; relations are built on the principles of cooperation, mutual assistance and friendliness; applicants always jointly and amicably decide how to organize their studies more effectively;

• activity - above average (7-9 points): most members of the group are energetic, interested in effective interaction; when it is necessary to do something useful for all, most take an active part, helping each other;

• cohesion - above average level (7-9 points): most members of the group of applicants try to treat each other fairly, help the inexperienced, support them, orient in new conditions; in severe cases, contacts in the group become especially active, it unites, there is emotional support for each other;

• integrativity - above average (7-9 points): if necessary, to find a solution, all members of the group try to actively participate in the process of its development and adoption; the opinion of the majority of group members is taken into account; it is likely that joint decisions will be made by open universal suffrage;

• reference - above average (7-9 points): there are different people in the group - good and bad, very nice and unattractive; the achievements and failures of the whole group are sincerely experienced by its members; the group is usually dominated by a good, even mood.

According to these indicators, the group is unlikely to be professionally mature.

In the group of "association" we trace the following features: indifference to people (x average = 0,23), periodic responsibility that needs to be controlled (x average = 1,34), and initiative, which is demonstrated from time to time, which in addition with low group cohesion are likely to be individual (x average = 1,15). According to the questionnaire "Pulsar" by L. Pochebut:

• preparedness for the activity - above average (7-9 points): most members of the group have proper training, seek to improve their skills, try to apply their knowledge in practice; the group achieves high results in training;

• orientation - below average (4-6 points): each member of the group has its own individual goals and values, which do not depend on the officially stated common goal; everyone in their behaviour is guided by their own norms and rules, not coordinating them with other members of the group;

• organization - below average (4-6 points): in the group's attempts to organize their work there are many disputes, fuss, time losses; there is no person who would take over the function of the organizer, so usually the official leaders interfere in the process of organization;

• activity - below average (4-6 points): most members of the group are passive, do not participate in the overall work, do not help each other, try to solve their problems individually;

• cohesion - below average (4-6 points): group members are indifferent to each other; the difficulties faced by beginners do not worry them; everyone relies mainly on themselves and solves their problems on their own; in crisis situations in the group there is a mutual alienation;

• integrativity - below average (4-6 points): if it is necessary to make a decision, only a narrow circle of activists participate in the process of its adoption; the opinions and interests of several people are taken into account, not all members of the group; the decision is made in a closed meeting and without the consent of the majority of the group;

• reference - below average (4-6 points): most applicants in the group are unattractive, unsympathetic to each other and only because of educational needs work together; group members are critical of each other.

In our opinion, the fourth group is diffuse. The applicants included in it do not have responsibility (x average = 0,18) and initiative (x average = 0,12), they are negatively focused towards people (x average = -1,52). Since such a group is represented by only 5%, it received the least attention in our research. In addition, according to the method of "Pulsar" by L. Pochebut in the fourth group, we have obtained the following indicators: preparedness, cohesion, reference - below the average (4-6 points) level; in turn, orientation, organization, activity, integrativity are at a low level (1-3 points).

Given that the level of development of the group subject sample of applicant groups is typologically heterogeneous, at the next stage of the study we ranked the sample data on the indicators of "the group cohesion" by sociometric method and "the grade point average of learning" by the educational process. Such indicators, in our opinion, are the most objective criteria for dividing teachers-tutors of the studied academic groups into effective and ineffective. The results of this ranking are presented in table 1.

Thus, we can define the presence of four types of teachers-tutors, which differ in terms of efficiency - inefficiency of their socializing activities:

1. Teachers-tutors in whose groups there is a high level of cohesion and a high grade point average of learning. The first group of teachers consists of 21 people (51% of respondents). According to the logic of our research, they, as tutors, are the most effective.

2. Teachers who have a high cohesion of the group and a low grade point average of learning. This group of teachers consists of 12 people (29% of respondents). We consider them formally ineffective and informally effective or pseudo-effective tutors.

3. Tutors in groups with low cohesion and high grade point average of learning. This group consists of 6 people (15% of respondents). In our understanding, they are formally effective teachers-tutors.

4. Teachers who have low group cohesion and low grade point average of learning. The fourth group of teachers has 2 people (5% of respondents). We assume that they, as tutors, are the least effective.

Conclusion

The result of empirical research of groups of applicants on the criterion of combining indicators of their social development as a collective subject of educational activity and applicant learning success was the derivation of empirical typology of effective and ineffective tutors (total four types: effective, pseudo-effective, formally effective and ineffective).

Prospects for the study are considered in the further refinement of the typology of teacher-tutors on the criterion of the effectiveness of their socializing activities and its application in the analysis of the educational work of university teachers.

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