

Development of psychological readiness of the high school students to enter higher educational institutions

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Abstract. The research of the psychological readiness development of high school pupils to enter higher education institutions and to pass an external independent assessment based on the implementation of the author's program "Successful entrant" has been revealed in the article. The analysis of psychological literature on this issue has been made. The problem of professional self-determination of high school pupils, their psychological readiness for admission and its structure represented by emotional, motivational and volitional components have been considered. With the help of empirical research, the increase of levels of identified components and psychological readiness in general have been found out.

Key words: Psychological Readiness · Admission to HEI · Entrant · Emotional Component · Motivational Component · Vocational Orientation

1. Introduction

The urgency of the research topic is connected with the fact at the present stage of the education system reforming in order to solve a number of practical problems, it is important to answer the two interrelated questions: first, how successfully a modern secondary school fulfills its developing function and, second, the extent to which high school students are ready to enter and study in the higher education institutions in a personal plan.

The problem of psychological readiness of the high school students to university entrance is closely related to the professional self-determination of the personality, which is considered and highlighted on the basis of theoretical positions of K.Abulkhanova-Slavska, I. Bulakh, D. Leontiev, S. Maksymenko and other scientists on the psychological future of the personality projecting oneself into the distant and near temporal future and zones of immediate development as a special and real sociopsychological space for predicting the formation of a person in childhood. Besides, in the psychological science, there are a number of approaches to highlighting in the structure of senior students' readiness for professional self-determination of individual components and indicators: in the study of I. Bushai the cognitive, emotional-evaluative and behavioral components are

identified; V. Semychenko's structural construction of personality readiness for professional activity is represented by the operational, functional and personal readiness; in the "one's self-concept" developed by R. Burns, the self-esteem and professional aspirations characterize a person's self-consciousness, his motivational and cognitive component, which represent the dynamic, evaluative and emotional nature of the person's ideas about himself and induce the individual to certain behavior (Bulakh, 2003; Burns, 1986; Leontiev, 2001; Maksymenko, 2002).

But in the psychological and pedagogical literature the issues of social and psychological readiness to university studies, which is developed through the implementation of specially designed development programs, have not been sufficiently studied. The objective of this article is to investigate the development of students' psychological readiness to enter the higher education institutions, which is represented by emotional, motivational and volitional components.

2. Methodology

To achieve the set goal, the following methods have been used during the diagnostic procedure: questionnaire "Self-assessment of psychological readiness for independent assessment" (modification of the methodology of Yu. Chybysova), which allows to assess the readiness for independent assessment by high school pupils; the questionnaire "Motivation for success" of T. Ehlers, which is aimed to study the motivation for success; the questionnaire "The ability to self-management" of N. Peysakhov, which allows to learn about the ability to manage themselves in different situations; "Test to determine the stress resistance of personality" of N. Kirshov, which allows to reveal features of neuro-psychic stability; methods of mathematical-statistical data processing: finding of percent values. During the formation experiment, the author's program "Successful entrant" has been used. It has been implemented at Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University during 2018-2019, where 120 high school pupils have been involved. Program volume is 24 hours (12 lessons).

3. Results

The current state of higher education is characterized by significant heterogeneity in the level of applicants training, caused by psychological, social, demographic and other changes that are taking place in society. These phenomena have a negative impact on the organization and management of the educational process in the higher education institutions, creating a set of problems related to the quality of education. The situation is greatly exacerbated by the desire to get higher education by different social groups and by the rapid changes in the society itself.

The existing system of assessments of applicants' readiness for education under the chosen specialty allows to determine only their knowledge and skills at the time of entering the higher education institutions (mainly on the basis of EIT). It does not sufficiently assess the individual components of the applicant, such as motivation to master a particular specialty, his intellectual and creative abilities, features of cognitive processes etc (Melnychuk, 2017). According to V. Gladkyhk and M. Yemets readiness is formed under the influence of orientation, which, in turn, creates a kind of subject "setting" for future activity (Gladkikh, 2011).

In this regard, readiness to enter the higher education institutions can be seen as a complex integrative quality of personality, representing the dynamic state of the individual, possessing theoretical and psychological readiness for higher education, formed by a professional orientation and ability to adapt to new learning environment. Psychological readiness is a mental state characterized by the mobilization of the subject's resources for the prompt or long-term accomplishment of a specific activity or task.

The dynamic structure of the state of psychological readiness to enter the higher education institutions is a holistic formation that includes a number of components, the main of which are: motivational components – the need to successfully accomplish the task, the interest in the activity, the desire to succeed; cognitive components – understanding of responsibilities, work task, evaluation of its importance for achieving the end results of the activity and for oneself (in terms of prestige, status); emotional components – a sense of professional and social responsibility, confidence in success; willful components – self-management and mobilization of forces, focus on the task, distraction from interfering influences, overcoming doubts, fear; communicative components – the willingness and ability to easily establish and maintain positive contacts in communication and interaction with others.

In our study we used the structure of psychological readiness: conative, motivational and emotional components. The conative component is self-control, self-possession, the ability to control one's emotions. The motivational component is the need to succeed. The emotional component includes stress resistance, the ability to manage one's behavior and self-confidence.

The students of the 11th forms of Uman secondary schools took part in the research. The total number of students involved in the experiment is 120. There were two groups: the control group (80 people) and the experimental group (40 people). The participants ranged in age from 17 to 18 years, a gender aspect wasn't taken into consideration.

We conducted a pilot study using the author's questionnaire, which revealed the importance of psychological training for students. The students are interested in the successful pass of the EIT, in obtaining high results, and this, in their opinion, will be promoted not only by subject knowledge, but also by some personal characteristics (self-confidence, ability to manage their emotions, behavior, cope with anxiety, fear, and excitement). On the basis of the obtained data, we came to the conclusion that students have to identify the level of formation of the psychological readiness components for EIT pass.

For the achievement of the set tasks we performed the following psycho-diagnostic methods: the questionnaire "Self-assessment of psychological readiness for EIT" (modification of the method of M.Yu. Chybysova), the questionnaire "Motivation for success" of T. Ehlers, the questionnaire "The ability to self-government" of N.M. Peisakhov, "Test for the stress resistance determination" of N.V. Kirshov.

At the ascertaining stage of the experiment we conducted a study of the level of the psychological readiness development of graduates to pass the EIT through its structural components. According to the empirical study results, the most developed component is conative (27% – high level of formation; 33% – average level of formation; 40% – low

level of formation), and the following components were the least developed: emotional (8% – high level of formation; 42% – average, 50% – low) motivational (17% – high level of formation; 48% – average; 35% – low). According to the empirical study, a high level of the psychological readiness development of graduates to the EIT had 17% of graduates, the average level – 41% of high school students, low – 42% of the experiment participants. Thus, the results of the ascertaining stage of the study showed that 78% of high school students need psychological support to develop psychological readiness for passing the EIT.

The purpose of the formative stage is the approbation of the program “Successful Applicant Studios” at Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, which aims at improving the level of psychological competence for graduates of the EIT, ensuring professional orientation and creating favorable conditions for comprehensive personal development of high school students. The program includes 12 sessions: “Acquaintance. What is Psychology: Myths and Reality”, “Learning to Manage Emotions”, “Conflicts and Ways to Overcome It”, “Regulation of Emotional Condition”, “Positive Thinking. Good Mood Components”, “Me and my Self-Esteem”, “Positive Motivation Development”, “How to Achieve a Goal or when Dreams Come True”, “Time management”, “Leadership Skills Development “I will succeed. I am a Leader!””, “Visualization of your Dreams (“Collage of your Dreams””, “Motivational Training “Find your Way”, “Diagnosis of Professional Tendencies and Interests”. Classes are aimed at: promoting mental health; professional self-determination and self-realization of personality; understanding how to deal with conflicts properly; understanding how to control their emotions; learn to rationally allocate your time; acquire the skills to be successful; make a conscious choice about your future profession.

Let us consider the changes that occur in the formation of formal experiments regarding the components of psychological readiness according to the questionnaire “Self-assessment of psychological readiness for EIT”.

Levels		Low				Average				High			
		before		after		before		after		before		after	
Components		CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG
Procedural readiness		5	-	-	-	35	30	40	25	60	70	60	75
Psychological readiness	organization and control	20	20	10	10	40	30	30	20	40	50	50	70
	Anxiety	10	10	20	55	40	45	35	25	50	45	45	20

As it can be seen from the table 1, behavioral component most (procedural readiness) is the best formed by the high school students before and after the experiment, as EIT has been a prerequisite for admission to a higher education institution since 2008 and this procedure is clear and accessible to all.

By the comparative analysis of the EG and CG psychological readiness indices during the forming experiment the dynamics towards the EG indices increase was revealed, which manifests itself in the ability to self-organization and control, as well as reducing anxiety. This indicates that psychological preparation is also very important for the students.

To study the motivational component, we conducted a “Motivation for Success” questionnaire by T. Ehlers

Motivation level	Before		After	
	CG	EG	CG	EG
Low	35	35	35	15
Average	50	45	45	40
High	15	20	20	45

According to the results of the conducted diagnostics to the forming experiment it should be said that in both EG and KG the average level of motivation for success (45% and 50%) is dominant, and in both groups the percentage of low motivation level (35%) is high. The conducted comparison of all the indices of levels of motivation for success allowed to draw a conclusion that the differences in the levels of motivation to the success of EG and CG before the experiment are insignificant.

The analysis of the results of the forming stage showed that the indices in the EG significantly increased compared to CG, 45% of students seek to achieve something constructive, positive. The activity of their personality is based on the hope for success and the need for success. A person motivated for success aims for it and usually works hard to succeed.

Thus, the experience gained by EG students during the program is an important factor in the development and formation of motivation.

To study the conative component, we used the questionnaire “Ability to self-government” by N.M. Peisakhov.

Development levels	Before		After	
	CG	EG	CG	EG
low	40	40	30	20
average	30	35	40	35
high	30	25	30	45

The obtained results showed that changes in the number of students with different levels of self-government development are observed in the EG. The decrease in the number of EG students, who are characterized by the “low” and “average” levels of development of the ability to self-government as well as the increase in the number of

students who are characterized by the “high” level of development of this quality confirm the effectiveness of the developed program.

Based on the results obtained, we concluded that there are differences in the level of development among high school students of such units of the process of self-management activities as: 1) “analysis of contradictions”, “planning” and “quality assessment criteria”, 2) “forecasting”, “planning” and “quality assessment criteria”, 3) “target setting”, “planning” and “quality assessment criteria”, 4) “planning”, “self-control” and “correction”, 5) “quality assessment criteria”, “decision making”, “self-control” and “correction”.

To study the emotional component, we conducted a questionnaire “Test for the determination of the stress resistance of the personality” by N.V. Kirshov.

Stress Resistance Level	Before		After	
	CG	EG	CG	EG
low	55	45	45	20
average	40	45	45	55
high	5	10	10	25

Analyzing the results of the repeated diagnosis, significant changes can be seen in the results obtained before and after the programs in the EG. After the program, 25% of EG students have high levels of stress resistance. This indicates that students have a stable harmonious state, always and everywhere, cope with stress, consider a strong shock to be a life lesson, are able to manifest their strengths and quickly restore their mental state. 55% of students have an average level of stress resistance, which indicates that the high school students have internal protection and they easily remove the nervous excitations, but not completely, they are characterized by the ability to relax in any environment. But only 20% of students have low levels of stress resistance, they are not able to make the right decision in the strong nervous excitement, thus it is necessary to change their lifestyle dramatically. The program developed by us confirms the necessity of conducting such form of work with the students.

In order to identify the impact of the implemented program, which is aimed at increasing the level of graduates’ psychological competence for EIT, the significance of differences in indices of psychological readiness components was analyzed.

Compon ents	Levels											
	High				Average				Low			
	CG		EG		CG		EG		CG		EG	
	befo re	aft er	befo re	aft er	befo re	aft er	befo re	aft er	befo re	aft er	befo re	aft er
Motivatio- nal	15	20	20	45	50	45	45	40	35	35	35	15
Conative	30	30	25	45	30	40	35	35	40	30	40	20
Emotional	5	10	10	25	40	45	45	55	55	45	45	20
Psycholo-	17	20	18	38	40	43	42	43	43	37	40	19

gical readiness												
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As it can be seen from the table, the psychological readiness of students in the experimental group increased by 20% compared to 3% in the CG. The data analysis proves the effectiveness of the implementation of the program “Successful Applicant Studies”.

4. Conclusions

As a result of the formation stage of the experiment, significant changes in the psychological readiness increase took place on the basis of the program implementation. Therefore, the psychological program is effective for the students of the 11th forms. In order for the high school students to feel confident during EIT passing, they need not only a bundle of knowledge, but also special psychological training. The program proved to be effective in increasing the level of motivation for success of the students, in the formation of stress resistance and skills of conscious self-regulation of their mental states, mastering methods of relieving psychological stress through relaxation exercises; self-government.

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