

Features of Formation of Psychological Readiness for Professional Activity of Foreign Students

Irina M. Puchkova^a

^aKazan (Volga region) Federal University, Kazan, RUSSIA

ABSTRACT

The relevance of the studied problem is caused by inclusion of Russia into universal international educational space, by promotion of the Russian educational services to the international market and improvement of professional qualifications for foreign students in the Russian higher education institutions. The purpose of this paper is to features of formation of psychological readiness for professional activity at foreign students for an assessment of a possibility of development of readiness in the course of vocational training. Research methods of this problem are the theoretical analysis of issue-related literature, the methods of psychodiagnostics and statistical processing of research results which allowing to estimate the level of psychological readiness for professional activity at interrelations with motivation of training in higher education institution and students psychological features. The results of research of psychological readiness for professional activity of the Russian students and foreign students, who are studying in the Russian higher education institution, the comparative analysis of components severity of their psychological readiness for professional activity which allows making value of formation reserves of readiness for activity, are promoting to define psychological determinant for the successful future professional activity. This paper shows the possibility of formation of psychological readiness for professional activity development in the course of professional training. Received results might be used at the adaptation process for foreign students in Russian higher education institution, and also to correct the formation mental set for professional activity among students.

KEYWORDS

Professional qualifications, psychological readiness for professional activity, readiness factors, motivation

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 15 September 2015
Revised 10 November 2015
Accepted 22 February 2016

Introduction

Urgency of the problem

The relevance of the studied problem is caused by inclusion of Russia into universal international educational space, by promotion of the Russian educational services to the international market and improvement of

CORRESPONDENCE Irina M. Puchkova ✉ irina_puchkova@mail.ru

© 2016 Puchkova. Open Access terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>) apply. The license permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, on the condition that users give exact credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license, and indicate if they made any changes.

professional qualifications for foreign students in the Russian higher education institutions. Giving the possibility of obtaining a high-qualified education for students from all over the world; Russian universities contribute to the improvement and strengthening relations with foreign countries.

Under modern conditions the tendency to the change of system of high school education, when to replace the information model of training, which aimed at the acquisition of necessary professional knowledge, comes the education that is focused on obtaining qualification and formation of psychological readiness for professional activity, is being noticed. The success of training does not guarantee a full-fledged psychological readiness for professional activity of graduates of higher educational institutions, therefore readiness should be formed.

The issue of psychological readiness for professional activity during the period of professional training in higher school is not sufficiently studied, need to be investigated and structuring the components of psychological readiness for professional activity, the relationship of psychological readiness for professional activity with professional development, psychological readiness for professional activity with the educational success of students in high school. (Inozemtseva, 2002).

The authors of the articles, devoted to the issue of readiness for professional activity, note that relationship with professionalism. Here with it is being understood that to each stage of vocational training there corresponds a certain level of professional development (Semchuk, 2011) It is also important that the effectiveness of training students for future activities is related to both characteristics of the common system of specialists training, as with the study of personality development, evaluation of mental states, as the factors responsible for its success (Bogdan, 2012).

"Psychological readiness for professional activity is a system feature of the educational-professional activity subject, including regulatory, cognitive and communicative characteristics and contribute to the successful mastery of activities" (Puchkova & Popov, 2015).

Formation of psychological readiness for professional activity is closely connected with the student's adaptation process to the conditions of high school education. Specifics of foreign students adaptation in comparison with Russian students includes, according to I. V. Shiryaeva (1980) such socio - psychological factors, such as the assimilation of norms of the international team, to develop their own style of behavior, a positive attitude towards their future profession.

Materials and Methods

In the course of research, the following methods have been used: theoretical – the analysis of scientific literature on the research problem; empirical: polling method, psychodiagnostics; methods of the empirical data statistical analysis (Student-criterion, correlation analysis, divergent analysis).

The students - bachelors 3 courses of the Kazan federal university from Russia and near-abroad countries in number of 56 people have taken part in research.

When carrying out research of readiness for professional activity the following, techniques were applied: technique of "Studying of motivation of

training in higher education institution" T. I. Ilyina, the approved author's questionnaire for an assessment of conditions of development of psychological readiness for professional activity and its components (Puchkova & Petrik, 2015), the reduced variant of a personal questionnaire of R. B. Kettell 13PF, a questionnaire "Mental set for professional activity".

The study was conducted in three stages:

- The first stage – the preparatory stage – the current state of the research problem in psychology was analyzed.

- At the second stage – the main stage – an empirical study of psychological readiness for professional activity components, motivation of training in high school and the psychological characteristics of students was carried out.

- The third stage – the final stage – the systematization and generalization of the research results was carried out; theoretical conclusions were specified.

Results

The organization of research

The purpose of the study was the identification and comparison of factors that determine the mental set to professional activity of foreign and Russian students.

Two mixed selections of young men and girls have been created. The first selection – foreign students, the second selection - the Russian students.

In the course of psychodiagnostics the level of expressiveness of the following indicators was defined: motive "Acquisition of knowledge" (aspiration to acquisition of knowledge, inquisitiveness); motive

"Mastering a profession" (aspiration to seize professional knowledge and to create professionally important qualities); motive "Obtaining the diploma" (aspiration to acquire the diploma at formal assimilation of knowledge, aspiration to search of roundabout ways at examination and pass the test); intellectuality; emotional stability; dominance; standardization of behavior; social courage; emotional sensitivity; suspiciousness; diplomacy; anxiety; a susceptibility to new; independence; self-discipline; intensity; motives of choice of profession; professional intentions; relation to future professional activity; satisfaction with process of training in higher education institution; success of training in higher education institution; assessment of interpersonal interaction in the course of training.

Foreign students' analysis of results from the research data

The analysis of the first selection results from the research data has shown that according to a questionnaire "Psychological readiness for professional activity" it is possible to speak about a tendency to development of high readiness of foreign students to professional activity. This tendency is shown, first of all, in professionally focused motivation, adequacy of an assessment of the professional knowledge and abilities and availability for work by specialty.

The results of the diagnosis of educational activity motivation showed similar intensity of motivation to acquire knowledge and skills development, exceeding the motive graduation, indicating their desire for a profession

According to the results of the author's questionnaire for students it has been revealed, that foreign students seek for development of professional activity; consider that skill to communicate is a quality which has to possess the professional on their specialty first of all (their future activity assumes communication); 30% prepare for future professional activity, developing and systematizing knowledge, which will be necessary for work by profession. To become the good expert, it is necessary to receive professional qualifications in higher education institution, 60% of foreign students have answered. 30% of students consider as the most important values of the chosen profession the atmosphere socially - psychological harmony. 60% of students are completely satisfied with the student's life in general. 40% of foreign students have a vague idea of the individual abilities and think, that only practical activities after the graduation can reveal them.

According to the results of the correlation analysis the following statistically significant interrelations are revealed. Such indicators as "rating scale" and "mastering a profession" have direct link ($p \leq 0.01$): the aspiration to seize a profession promotes formation of an adequate assessment professional skills and abilities. Strong direct link ($p \leq 0.001$) have such an indicators as "mastering a profession" and an indicator "availability for service in the specialty", and also "acquisition of knowledge" and "have availability for service in the specialty". Both when logical since the more the student's professional abilities and skills, the higher the readiness for professional activity; the more active the process of knowledge acquisition in the learning process, the higher the willingness to work on his specialty. Such indicators as "mastering a profession" and "estimated indicator" have weak feedback ($p \leq 0.05$). That is, the more the person seizes knowledge of the profession, the less adequately he estimates the professional activity, reevaluation of the opportunities at the solution of professional tasks is possible.

Russian students' analysis of results from the research data

The analysis of results from the research data of the second selection has shown that according to a questionnaire "Psychological readiness for professional activity" it is possible to speak about the average level of expressiveness of psychological readiness of students for professional activity.

Results of diagnostics from educational activity motivation have shown a big expressiveness of motive knowledge acquisition in comparison with motives of mastering a profession and obtaining the diploma that speaks about their aspiration to education.

By results of the author's questionnaire for students it has been revealed that 30% of the Russian students after the graduation of our institution will try to organize own business (which isn't connected with their profession). While 50% of students are confident in the correctness of choice of profession and good understanding of his future professional activity. 55% of students felt that the specialist should possess, first and foremost, communication skills, and 30% of the students responded that the success of future professional activity identify skills of working with information. 65% of the students well represent working conditions by the chosen profession, 50% of students develop and systematize the knowledge necessary for work in the specialty. 60% of the Russian students

consider that to become the expert, it is necessary to receive professional qualifications in higher education institution.

According to the analysis of correlations we can speak about the following trends: the indicators of "evaluation scale" and "mastery of the profession" have a weak direct relationship ($p \leq 0.05$), that is, the adequate assessment of students' professional knowledge and skills, the stronger their desire to master their profession and increase professional knowledge. Such factors as "knowledge acquisition" and "learning the profession" have a weak direct relationship ($p \leq 0.05$).

A comparative analysis of the results from Russian and foreign students

Comparative analysis of diagnostic results in the two selections was performed by using t-Student criterion. When comparing two selections of Russian and foreign students, according to the method "Studying motivation of study at the University", it was revealed that for the Russian students the knowledge and skills acquisition is more important than the diploma itself. For foreign students, on the background of the desire to acquire professional knowledge, it is also important the acquisition of the diploma.

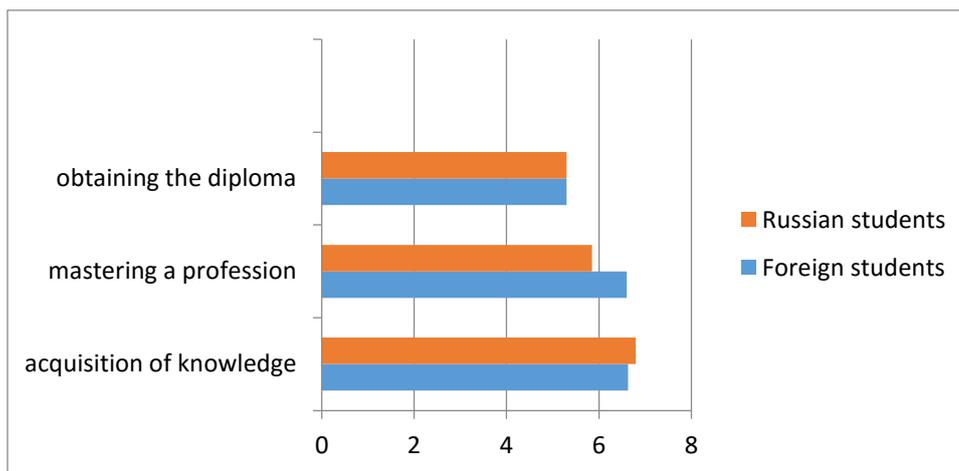


Figure 1. Results of motivation in University studies from foreign and Russian students

In the course of the study using the questionnaire "Psychological readiness for professional activity" revealed statistically significant differences ($p \leq 0.01$) for "motivational" scale, on a scale of "self-regulation" and on a scale of "willingness to work in the specialty".

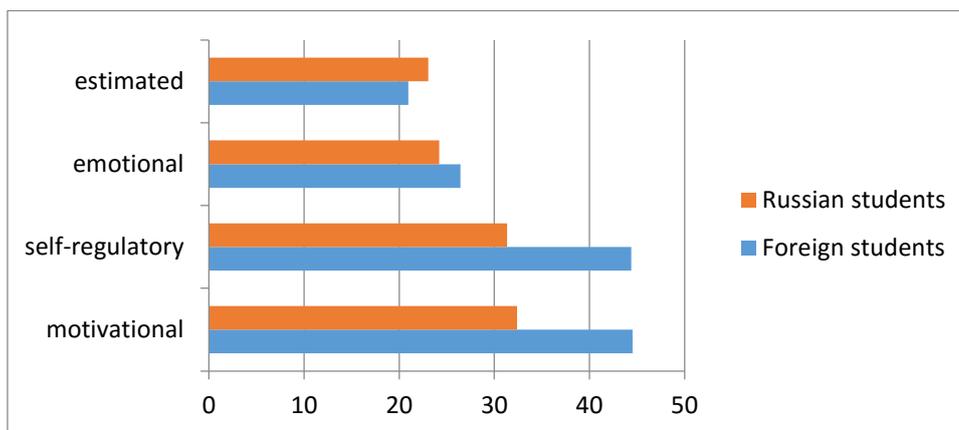


Figure 2. Results of psychological readiness for professional activity components between Russian and foreign students

In the evaluation conditions, professional training, significant differences were not revealed, but there are differences in professional intentions, which is that if foreign students after graduation intend to work in the specialty, the Russian students also expressed that the trend towards the creation of a private business, not associated with the received specialty. For Russian students is important when choosing a career was a job satisfaction personal capabilities, and for international students - improving their status in the eyes of society.

When comparing the results of diagnostics with using personal questionnaire R.B. Cattell, have been revealed statistically significant differences ($p \leq 0,05$) in the level of expression of such factors as emotional stability (foreign students more emotionally unstable than Russian students); independence (for foreign students higher performance); carelessness (index higher for Russian students); independence (higher for foreign students)

Discussions

Considering the problem of readiness, psychologists identify the different forms: mental state (Levitov, 1964; Druzhinin, 2001), vocational training (Platonov, 1984), purposeful expression of personality (Dyachenko & Kandybovich, 1976), a holistic manifestation of personality traits (Derkach & Kuzmina, 1993). At the same time a lot of attention is paid to the definition of its structure.

Analysis of the literature does not provide a clear understanding about the structure of mental set for professional activities. M. I. Dyachenko & L. A. Kandybovich (1976), E. F. Zeer, A. M. Pavlova & N. O. Sadovnikova (2004), L. Yu. Subbotina (2011), Yu. M. Zabrodin (1997) describe the structure of psychological readiness for activity as a whole and its individual components,

Based on the analysis of literature and previously conducted research (Puchkova & Petrik, 2015) there was built a General model of psychological readiness of students for professional activity, including 1. Block professional "Self-concept" includes such characteristics as relevant to the chosen specialty, the idea of future profession and working conditions, self-evaluation of abilities

and activity – significant qualities. 2. Block motivation: motivation for the profession in the learning environment, motivation to succeed, motivation to work in the specialty. 3. Block personal characteristics and qualities: self-esteem, intellectual (all-intellectual ability), emotional (emotional stability, autonomy, discipline, sense of purpose, ability for self-government), communication (sociability), moral and ethical. 4. Unit activity – significant properties and qualities: intellectual (analytic thinking, creative thinking, flexibility of thinking), emotional (the propensity for empathy, psychological stability, initiative, decisiveness), communicative (the tendency to domination, independence from the group, the social boldness). Study the characteristics that determine psychological readiness for activity, allows us not only to estimate its level but also to evaluate the factors of its formation.

In modern science, the concept of "professional readiness" is associated with the professional learning and reflects the process of mastering knowledge, abilities and skills which necessary for professional activities. However, the preparation for professional activity is not limited only in mastery of future professionals in the procedural side of professional activities. We need purposeful activity on formation and development of personal and professionally important qualities that ensure the effectiveness of the selected activities. Therefore, we consider the studying of University students as a holistic educational system, the operation of which involves the creation of conditions for development of personality of future specialist (Subbotina, 2011).

Readiness formation for professional activity is implemented in a holistic educational process of the University aimed at solving problems of professional development of future specialists and reflecting different aspects of professional formation (Kuzmina, 1970).

Factors of personal formation for future professional, on the one hand, advocates the socio-educational work in the University, with other - self-organization, personal educational and developmental space, in which the student acts as the subject of his own professional development, develops and adopts the specificity of future professional activity that generates a creative professional style. At the same time personal characteristics are a source of professional development, valuable, targeted, substantial and procedural characteristics (Mitina, 1997).

The international character of modern higher education system has led to the trend towards international "division of labour" in professional education. It is worth noting, that the training of foreign students differs in important features (for non-native students the language of studying and non-native environment).

Willingness for graduate-student - is an essential prerequisite for the efficiency his activity after graduation. Willingness to help the young specialist to carry out their duties successfully, properly use the knowledge, experience, and maintain self-control to be reconstructed with the appearance of unforeseen obstacles. Willingness - a decisive condition for rapid adaptation to working

conditions, professional development and further training (Grishanov & Tsurcan, 1990).

The complexity of the readiness problem is that the success of the new activities are not guaranteed by a simple transfer of previously developed the qualities and conditions in the new situation. Along with the actualization of the qualities, experience in the new situation there is a process of entering into it. Therefore, an important indicator for students' readiness is both a process of acquisition of professional independence while studying at the university, and the process of adapting them as graduates for a successful career.

Training of foreign students differs in significant features: a new language of learning a new foreign environment. In this regard, the effectiveness of their learning process in Russian universities is directly linked the successful to adaptation in the new environment.

As noted previously, the content of psychological readiness to professional activities during the period of professional training in higher school is not sufficiently studied. A further study of the problem to finding resources in the development of readiness activities to the students in the learning process is required. Due to the fact that the formation of the psychological readiness for professional activity foreign students is associated with adaptation in the new environment, it is necessary to study their psychological characteristics, motivation in conjunction with the generated level of readiness.

Conclusion

Consequently, the analysis of the literature has allowed a theoretical basis to study the formation of psychological readiness for professional work at university students, and as a result of empirical research revealed differences in the level of psychological readiness for professional work and its relation to motivation and psychological characteristics of foreign and Russian students.

Comparative analysis has showed, that foreign students demonstrate self-consistency, responsibility and independence. International students there is a tendency to develop a high level of psychological readiness for professional activities. Despite the psychological difficulties, that involves adaptation and socialization, the subjects have a high level of professional orientation for motivation, the desire to continue to engage in professional activities in the chosen direction. Specificity of training professional competence for foreign students is the relationship of motivation and adaptation in society as a whole. Motivation has a greater influence on the professional readiness of students and their future career.

The results can be used to optimize the process for adaptation of foreign students in a Russian university condition, as well as for the correction of formation of students mental set for professional activities.

Acknowledgement

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes on contributors

Irina M. Puchkova is PhD, Associate Professor of Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, Kazan, Russia.

References

- Bogdan, M. M. (2012) Features of psychological readiness of students for professional activity. *Direct access*: <http://psychology.snauka.ru/2012/09/1031/>
- Derkach, A. A. & Kuzmina, H. B. (1993) *Akmeology: Ways of achievement of tops of professionalism*. Moscow: RAU. 293p.
- Druzhinin, V. D. (2001) *Psychology. The textbook for liberal arts colleges*. St.Petersburg: Piter. 656p.
- Dyachenko, M. I. & Kandybovich, L. A. (1976) *Psychological problems of readiness for activity*. Minsk: BGU publishing house. 176p.
- Grishanov, L. K. & Tsurkan, V. D. (1990) *Sociological problems of adaptation of junior students. Psychology and pedagogical aspects of adaptation of students to educational process in higher education institution*. Chisinau: Prod. "Shtinitsa". 352p.
- Inozemtseva, A. N. (2002) *Influence of professional consciousness of students on formation of psychological readiness for professional activity: PhD Thesis*. Moscow. 225p.
- Kuzmina, N. V. (1970) *Problems of vocational training of experts in higher education institutions*. Leningrad: LIE publishing house. 362p.
- Levitov, N. D. (1964) *About mental conditions of the person*. Moscow: Education. 342p.
- Mitina, L. M. (1997) *Personal and professional development of the person in new social and economic conditions. Psychology questions*, 4, 28-38.
- Platonov, K. K. (1984) *Short dictionary of system of psychological concepts*. Moscow: The higher school. 174p.
- Puchkova, I. M. & Popov, L. M. (2015) *Model psychological readiness of students to professional work: theory and practice. The Social Sciences*, 10(5), 646-650.
- Puchkova, I. M. & Petrik, B. B. (2015) *Diagnostics of psychological readiness of students for professional activity. Uchenye Zapiski Kazanskogo Universiteta. Seriya Gumanitarnye Nauki*, 4, 245-253.
- Semchuk, I. V. (2011) *A problem of readiness for professional activity at a grade level. Almanac of modern science and education*, 11(54), 117-119.
- Subbotina, L. Yu. (2011) *Formation of professional readiness of students for independent activity. Psikhologo – pedagogical sciences: scientific journal*, 4, 295 – 298.
- Shiryaeva, I. V. (1980) *Features of adaptation of foreign students to educational educational process in the Soviet higher education institution*. Leningrad: LIE publishing house. 93p.
- Zabrodin, Yu. M. (1997) *Sketches of the theory of psychological regulation of behavior*. Moscow: Master. 215p.
- Zeer, E. F., Pavlova, A. M. & Sadovnikova, N. O. (2004) *Proforiyentologiya. Theory and practice*. Moscow: Academic project; Yekaterinburg: Research center of problems of quality of training of experts. 274p.