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Adaptational Potential And Subjective Well-Being Of Comprehensive School Graduates And First Year Students Of Higher Educational Institutions

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1. Introduction

The issue of adaptation of pupils during the transition period from one educational stage to another is touched upon in a large number of studies. However, the majority of scientific works is devoted to adaptation of pupils (at
the beginning of training and further during various stages of school education).

Thus, these investigations study adaptation of pupils in the course of his/her interaction with the educational environment at different educational levels (Grigorieva, 2010), during the critical periods of development in the educational environment (Litvinenko, 2009), and various factors of adaptation as well (Shin, Ryan, 2012; Grigorieva, 2010; Wouters, Germeijis, Colpin, Verschueren, 2011). Adaptation of students, as a rule, is viewed separately from school adaptation. Thus, scientists paid their attention to adaptation of first-year students and those who are continuing to study at universities (Aspelmeier, Love, McGill, et al., 2012), the difficulties experienced by students during the first year of training (Mescheryakov, & Sobolev, 2010), gender differences in correlations of social and academic, psychological and academic adaptation of students (Yau, Sun, & Fong Cheng, 2012), and a number of other issues.

Meanwhile, there are investigations of a correlation of adaptation in school and university students. Thus, in the research by S. Wouters, V. Germeijis, H. Colpin, K. Verschueren (2011) it was shown that school academic self-assessment has considerable impact on academic adaptation of students in higher education institutions.

Adaptation potential of a personality presupposes the existence of phenomena, which have to activate its psychological resources in order to adapt to changing circumstances and therefore, to provide rapid inclusion into activities and relations. Let us note that an important value for adaptation is a personality's attitude to the adaptation sphere, which primarily influences its style – be it an active or a passive one (Dombrovskis, Guseva, & Murasovs, 2011; Shamionov, 2012).

In relation to graduates of schools the question of adaptation readiness is especially important in connection to their preparation for examinations, professional self-determination, which becomes complicated under a number of objective circumstances (including expectation of possible quick (in the course of few days) change of major, higher education institution, which substantially increase strain). Thus, in different studies growth of strain of school graduates is directly or indirectly indicated. Thus, M.V. Grigoryeva (2010) noted the growth of the number of pupils having emotional problems by the point of time when they go to the 9th-11th grade, and at the same time a relative decrease in their social and psychological problems; N.V. Litvinenko (2009) noted increase of uneasiness in their assessment of opportunities and abilities. It is quite obvious that emotional problems of school graduates in many respects correspond to difficulties of self-determination and are supported by rather intensive work load (additional preparation for examinations, psychological pressure from the outside).

Studying personal adaptation in terms of age inevitably raises the question regarding features of this process and specifics in three main dimensions: adaptational experience, flexibility, and sensitivity to changes (Shamionov, 2012). At the expense of social and age changes, these subsystems can compensate each other to a certain extent and thus create preconditions for preservation of adaptational readiness for a long time.

Investigation of the problem of structurization of adaptational readiness of the youth needs to be conducted in the context of the existing social and age-related reality and those social and psychological factors, which act as the foundation for inclusion into adaptational process. Besides, it is necessary to take into consideration that in some cases we can be faced with refusal of a personality to be included into adaptation process in the new (for him/her) reality, which can be connected to socialization process preservation and blocking of a number of actualization requirements at the expense of their restriction. At that, the disadaptation does not act as a mechanism of involvement of activity structures aimed at inclusion into the new reality.

Adaptational potential of a personality under conditions of stability (high school students) and objective difficulties (first-year university students) can be linked to characteristics of satisfaction with life, social and academic activity. Therefore, it is necessary to study if there is a link between parameters of adaptation and satisfaction with life in pupils in transition situations from one educational stage on another.

2. Methodology of Research

2.1. General background of research

Hypothesis.
If in a situation of transition from one educational stage to another there is a decrease in internal regulation of behavior and subjective well-being, the probability of disadaptational disturbances increases.
The paradigm of the study. This study is conducted on the basis of methodology of system and diachronic approach in psychology. According to the purpose and the main approach, the study is realized with use of comparison method and correlation analysis.

2.2. Participants

School students (graduates) N=85 (M=16.5; SD=0.86) (43% young men) and first-year students of university N=90 (M=17.4; SD=0.85) (42% young men) took part in study.

2.3. Instruments

The techniques.

The participants were offered to fill out the Multilevel personal inventory "MPI Adaptability" by A.G. Maklakov and S.V. Chermyanin (Rajgorodskij, 1998), Inventory called "Factors of Satisfaction with Life" (Balatsky, 2005).

MPI (165 points) contains 7 scales: Behavioural regulation (97 points), Communicative potential (32 points), Moral normalization (24 points), Integrated scale called "Personal adaptation potential" (inverse scales), Asthenic reactions and conditions (43 points), Psychotic reactions and conditions (34 points), Integrative assessment "Disadaptational disturbances" (direct scales). The scale for lies (14 points) is an additional one. Every statement is estimated at 1 point according to the keys.

FSL (12 scales of satisfaction): Personal and family security, Material welfare, Family well-being, Achievement of goals, Creative self-realization, Existence of the good, Fruitful leisure, Good climate and good weather, Decent social status, Existence of effective informal social contacts, Social stability, Confidence in the future, Comfortable habitat, Good health. Points are estimated according to the following scheme: 1-completely dissatisfied, 2-dissatisfied rather than satisfied, 3-average, 4-satisfied rather than dissatisfied, 5-quite satisfied.

In order to study the degree and satisfaction with activity, as well as characteristics of self-determination, we developed an original questionnaire. We measured self-assessment of readiness for changes in life, ability to independently obtain information for preparation for studies, acceptance of full responsibility for oneself, one’s life, and well-being (it was offered to estimate statements according to the scale: 1 point – absolutely not ready, 5 points – completely ready). Social and demographic indicators were measured as well.

2.4. Data analysis

We used Student’s t-test and Pearson’s correlation analysis. All statistical analyses were conducted with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 17.0)

3. Research results

As we can see from the table 1, distinctions of components of adaptation in group of school students are expressed to a greater extent. Thus, girls differ by lower level of behavioural regulation, adequacy of a self-assessment, higher tendency to psychological failures. Indicators of moral normalization also differ in favor of lower level among the girls, which indicates problematical character of assessment of one’s place and a role in the peer group, qualitative components of socialization of a personality. Correlation of integrated indicators of adaptation potential allows to point out that as a whole adaptational readiness of young men is higher and belongs to the level of satisfactory adaptation; as far as girls are concerned, we can see the reduced adaptation readiness that allows to predict difficulties in the course of adaptation to a situation, and its change. Despite the fact that there are no objective conditions for adaptation disturbances at the beginning of studies in the 11th grade for school pupils, girls are characterized by higher emotional psychological tensions at a rather high level of uneasiness and low tolerance to adverse factors of educational activity in both samples of school pupils.
Judging by results measurement of adaptation of school students and first-year university students, it is possible to draw a conclusion about reduced adaptation by university students (student’s t-criterion testifies in favor of difference of mean values of males).

According to results of the correlation analysis, the adaptation potential of the personality is connected with satisfaction with achievements, climatic conditions, habitat, social contacts, social status, family well-being, health, emotional well-being. No statistical communication has been recorded between psycho-physiological level of adaptation and satisfaction with life. We can conclude from data follows that adaptation opportunities of pupils increase if they are satisfied with the main spheres of life. The results of correlation analysis can be seen in Table 2.

Self-assessment of the general readiness for changes in life (Mf=18.9; Mm=21.3 at t=2.59, p<.01), and readiness to get information for preparation for studies independently (to Mf=3.85; Mm=4.4 at t=2.26, p<.01) and acceptance of full responsibility for oneself, one’s life, and well-being (Mf=3.8; Mm=4.4 at t=1.96, p<.05) in girls is positively lower. Probably, uncertainty about one’s future is connected with a low self-assessment of one’s subjectivity, as well as the existing adaptational disturbances in girls, which acts as a factor of their low adaptation readiness.
4. Discussion

Judging by the presented results, it is possible to draw a conclusion about lower adaptation readiness and disadaptational violations in girls. It is obviously connected with their low subjective well-being (at the level of cognitive and emotional components). The results of the correlation analysis of the sample testify about the existence of such connection.

However, satisfaction in the basic spheres of life and emotional well-being do not affect disadaptation.

Many authors note the ambiguity of communication of indicators of personal well-being and psychological adaptation (Argyle, 2001; Grigoryeva, 2008; Diener & Gohm, 2000; Rean, Kudashev & Baranov, 2002; Shamionov, 2013). It is obvious that life satisfaction is possible under conditions of disadaptation of a person. (Shamionov, 2004). Therefore, it is necessary to carry out analysis of the relationship between indicators of personal well-being and adaptational potential, taking into account topical needs of the person (Litvinenko, 2009; Shin & Ryan, 2012). The need in the achievement of social status dissatisfaction with which is connected with disadaptation is applied to our study.

Inevitably the study of adaptation of the person raises a question about the features and specificity of this process in the three main dimensions: adaptation experience, flexibility and sensitivity to change. Due to the social and age-related changes, these subsystems can compensate each other, to a certain extent, and through that create, for a long time, preconditions for saving adaptation readiness. Satisfaction of basic needs in one’s life and emotional well-being contribute to the increase of adaptive capacity and successful adaptation under conditions of changes of the educational environment (Shamionov, 2012).

Unlike school students, first-year university students are in an objective situation of need of adaptation to new conditions of activity. It demands activation of adaptation processes and resources. They raise self-assessment of readiness for daily routine change, lack of external control, independent knowledge acquisition and acceptance of responsibility for oneself and one’s life (in female students, unlike schoolgirls self-assessment of readiness for daily routine change to $t=2.23$, $p<.01$) is considerably closer to responsibility for acceptance on itself ($t=2.1$, $p<.05$). However, as appears from the research results, that students are characterized by the expressed indicators of disadaptational disturbances. Student’s $T$-criterion testifies in favor of similarity of mean values for all characteristics. Let us also note that parameters for male students are closer to the increase of tension and low behavioural regulation and are characterized by decrease in adaptational potential. Thus, indicators of a moral normalization in girls substantially increase and enter into the average zone of the norm.

5. Conclusion

Judging by the obtained research results, it is possible to make a number of conclusions.

There is a direct statistically significant link between adaptational potential and characteristics of life satisfaction.

Adaptation readiness of young men at the final stage of school training is higher, than that of girls and is connected with higher readiness for changes in life, which are perceived by them as benefits.

Higher adaptational readiness of school students (young men) has no essential impact on the intensity of their adaptation at the initial stage of training in higher education institution.

Adaptation of first-year students of higher education institution is complicated due to lower level of behavioral regulation together with the activity environment (psychological stability, self-assessment, social approval).

Disadaptational violations of eleventh-graders are mainly linked to expectation of the future events connected with certification and self-determination, rather than objective difficulties of the present and problematical character of interpersonal relations and their assessment. Ability to adapt in first-year university students is connected to readiness for changes.

References

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