



## Modern study of student's social adaptation phenomenon in large university educational complexes

Victor V. Ryabov<sup>1</sup>, Vladimir M. Ananishnev<sup>1</sup>, Alexander V. Ivanov<sup>1</sup>,  
Alexander V. Tkachenko<sup>1</sup>, Vladimir I. Merkushin<sup>1</sup>, Anna G. Akhtyan<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Moscow City University, Moscow, RUSSIA

<sup>2</sup> Russian State Social University, Moscow, RUSSIA

\*Corresponding author: [ahtyananna@mail.ru](mailto:ahtyananna@mail.ru)

### Abstract

The relevance of this study is due to the instability in the society, increasing tension in the youth environment, which is in constant change, and increase in the influx of students requiring social support. In this regard, this article is aimed at identifying and revealing the problems of social adaptation of students who are least fit into the social system: students-orphans, disabled and foreign students, nonresidents. The leading approach to the study of this problem is a combination of theoretical methods (analysis and synthesis, generalization and systematization) and empirical methods (research and generalization of pedagogical experience) allowing a complex consideration of the problem of students' social adaptation. The usage of theoretical methods made it possible to describe theoretical approaches in sociological, psychological and pedagogical studies of the social adaptation phenomenon, which is characterized as a person's activity in relation to the social environment and individual's adaptation to the conditions of stay in that society or in the social group that he or she belongs to. The article contains the results of empirical research on the problems of social adaptation of the most socially vulnerable students entering large Russian university educational complexes. The obtained data allows us identifying the main adaptive tasks for students, draw conclusions and develop recommendations for creating social adaptation programs for students. The materials of the article are of practical value for scientists and specialists at the departments of university complexes involved in the social adaptation of students.

**Keywords:** social and professional adaptation, university educational complex, program of social adaptation, educational environment, orphans, disabled, nonresidents, foreigners

Ryabov VV, Ananishnev VM, Ivanov AV, Tkachenko AV, Merkushin VI, Akhtyan AG (2019) Modern study of student's social adaptation phenomenon in large university educational complexes. Eurasia J Biosci 13: 2343-2348.

© 2019 Ryabov et al.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License.

### INTRODUCTION

In a modern metropolis, a university can be formed as an urban educational complex, consisting of educational institutions of various levels: university schools and colleges, institutes and faculties as well as educational institutions that are a part of the university educational district and have partnerships with the university. Teaching units can be located in different city districts that give the university an advantage in recruiting students. However, studying and living on a distributed campus creates problems in communication and social adaptation of students. The problem arises of creating a single educational space, uniting disparate collectives of students and bringing them to life in the university complex. And the transition from one level of education to another from a school or college to a master or post-graduate level causes an additional need for adaptation to the changing educational environment.

The greatest problems with the adaptation appear in orphans, disabled people, as well as nonresident and

foreigners. The development of social adaptation programs for these categories of students is especially relevant in connection with a decrease in the influx of students to the universities in the context of demographic decline. It all demonstrates huge transformations both in social and educational policy, theory and practice (Tarman and Chigisheva 2017). Creating a favorable educational environment can help to attract more students to the university.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In the scientific literature, adaptation is traditionally regarded as a property of any self-regulating system. In the vast majority of sociological, psychological and pedagogical studies, social adaptation is characterized as a person's activity in relation to the social

Received: February 2019

Accepted: September 2019

Printed: December 2019

environment and individual's adaptation to the conditions of staying in that society or in the social group that he/she belongs to. A person is studied not only as an object of influence of social institutions, but also as a subject of active social activity demonstrating his/her functional literacy in various spheres of life (Chigisheva 2018).

Adaptation of the youth to student life is a complex and multifaceted process that requires the involvement of social and biological reserves of the organism that has not been fully formed yet. Adaptation includes the constituent elements of socio-psychological adaptation and contributes to the development of intellectual and personal capabilities of students. In its most common meaning, adaptation is understood as adjustment to a new system of social conditions, new relationships, requirements, types of activity, and mode of life (Olkhovaya et al. 2016, Rudenko et al. 2015, Tsyrenov 2017).

For the scientific understanding of the phenomenon of social adaptation, the category of social interaction is becoming increasingly important. When interacting with various social groups, the individual learns the social roles and values of the social system, objectively contributing to the changes in the system through dissemination of the new ideas and practices. The result is not only the adaptation of the individual to the social conditions, but also the realization of his/her needs and interests (Lobova 2017).

Adaptive activity consists in following certain adaptive strategies. In the relationship between the individual and society, two polar interaction strategies are known: passive and active. Passive strategy means following the rules of behavior approved in the social system. Active strategy is expressed in focusing on changing the system and adapting it to the own needs. It changes both the individual and the social system. People acquire social experience in accordance with their needs and value orientations. All the problems that a person faces throughout his/her life, he/she solves using own inherent personal abilities (Vikhman et al. 2018, p. 615).

With an active adaptation strategy, a person purposefully seeks the optimal way out of a difficult life situation. As a result, he/she gets a new experience. The attempts to avoid problems respectively demonstrate a passive adaptation strategy. Therefore, the advantage of social adaptation for the individual and the social system is the formation of knowledge and skills that allow a person to solve difficult situations, and the system - to maintain its internal regulatory order. This means that it is necessary to purposefully develop the ability of students to choose adaptation strategies that are applicable for meeting basic social needs.

A number of researchers (Glebov 2018, Ovdina et al. 2017, Samsonenko 2017, Tsyrenov 2017) combine adaptability indicators into two large groups: external, or

objective, and internal, or subjective. External indicators reflect the conformity of the individual's behavior to the normative settings of the social system. The result of adaptation in this case can be interpreted as the achievement of external well-being through the prescribed system of behavior. And the internal indicators of adaptability reflect the general mental state, a sense of comfort and satisfaction of a person, the absence of tension and anxiety. The combination of external and internal indicators, personal and social system needs is the main task of the social adaptation process. Therefore, adaptation can be considered successful when its result converges with both objective and subjective indicators.

The effectiveness of the adaptation process is in turn also associated with two groups of factors: external, connected with the environment, and internal, related to the personality of the adaptable. External factors relate to the characteristics of various types of human activity and the specific features of the social system. Internal factors include the age and sex characteristics of a person, motivation and value orientations, which, in particular, were described in multiple research works (Ganin 2017, Khorkhrina et al. 2014, Nigmatullina et al. 2016, Zaitseva et al. 2015, 2016). This group also includes social adaptability as the individual's ability to adapt (Terziev 2019).

Adaptation problems and their pedagogical projection are also a point of study in many research publications (Nilson et al. 2013, Sergeeva 2016).

A systematic review of the phenomenon of the educational environment allows concluding that it occupies one of the leading places in both theory and methodology of higher professional education. Unfortunately, the existing definitions of the concept "educational environment" and the approaches describing its structural components that we can find in modern scientific literature do not fully correspond to its characteristic.

Today educational environment is understood as naturally and artificially created socio-cultural environment of the individual, including the content and various means of education (Lobova 2017). Thus, educational environment ensures the productive activity of students and guides the development of the student's personality by creating favorable conditions for this.

From our view point, the statement by Tkachenko (2018) on the relationship between the conditions of the educational environment and the level of socio-psychological adaptation of students looks also interesting.

## METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The aim of the present study is to determine the theoretical and methodological foundations of the category "social adaptation" in sociological,

psychological and pedagogical studies based on the interdisciplinary approach, as well as to offer the theoretical justification for the development of social adaptation programs for socially vulnerable groups of students within the university educational complex being formed in the modern metropolis.

The following theoretical research objectives were identified:

1. To carry out a theoretical analysis of research on the following issues:

- social adaptation of orphans and disabled people in large university educational complexes;
- social adaptation of nonresident and foreign students at the university.

2. To study the experience of creating integration consultants' services in the rehabilitation centers and present the project of university integration consultants' services in the context of pedagogy.

3. To determine the directions, methods and forms of educational work on the development of social adaptation of students in large university educational complexes.

Taking into account the aim of the study and the objectives, we selected and used a combination of different methods. To analyze existing experience in the field of research, we addressed theoretical methods (analysis and synthesis, generalization and systematization), along with empirical methods (research and generalization of pedagogical experience).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Social Adaptation of Orphans and Disabled People in Large University Educational Complexes

In conditions of social instability and growing social conflicts, the problem of social adaptation of orphans and students with disabilities is of particular relevance. Life in the closed institutions or with occasional home trips contributes to the formation of a dependent position in teenage orphans and people with disabilities. They are used to custody of social services and teachers, and disabled people are also used to parental care. Orphans and people with disabilities are confident in their own helplessness and are not used to making independent decisions.

Samsonenko (2017) argues that the students who graduated from orphanages and disabled people often demonstrate lower levels of decision-making and planning skills than other students. Therefore, they need the organizational, psychological and pedagogical support for better social adaptation from the university. For this purpose, the students and the university complex must jointly solve four main adaptive tasks:

The first task is to identify the individual characteristics of the personality of the orphan student

or a disabled person. For this, it is necessary to diagnose the initial state of his/her level of adaptation and focus on active cognitive activity.

The second task is to make the student aware of the importance of his/her interaction with the society. Due to the health reasons, graduates of orphanages and people with disabilities living in a metropolis may have difficulty coming into contact with other people.

The third task is the development of self-regulation and self-control skills. The students must learn to control their feelings, overcome life obstacles and be responsible for their actions.

The fourth task is to ensure the rights of individuals, since orphans often face violations in this sphere when they receive housing, and people with disabilities - when they find jobs, get medical services, etc.

Ovdina et al. (2017) when studying social and professional adaptation of orphans highlighted the main positions of the analysis: obtaining general and professional education; presence (absence) of family and children; presence (absence) of problems with law, employment; presence (absence) of one's own housing, help from relatives, ability to distribute funds and organize one's free time; maintenance of a healthy lifestyle. Due to the analysis conducted in 2017, the following results were obtained: 100% of graduates received general education (9 grades), 25% graduated from the professional educational organization and received a diploma, 45.4% were currently studying at the professional educational organizations, 31.7% had their own family, 25% had children, 20.4% were employed, 6.8% had criminal record, 27.2% were provided with housing, 75% were receiving help from relatives, 43.1% were able to distribute funds, 54.5% knew how to organize free time, 50% followed a healthy lifestyle (Ovdina et al. 2017, p. 96-103). The obtained analysis data allow us to draw the following conclusions: more attention should be paid to the legal and economic education (the ability to distribute funds, plan a budget, etc.), the formation of healthy lifestyle skills, and the ability to independently organize own free time, and increase the level of motivation for getting professional education.

Considering the fact that institutions of secondary vocational education may be a part of a large university complex, the publication of Samsonenko (2017), where she explores the features for the formation of independence skills in orphans studying in secondary vocational educational institutions of Orenburg, is of particular interest to us. The analysis of the obtained data suggests that the largest percentage among students is characterized by a rather high level of formation of decision-making, planning and design skills (35%, 56% and 40%, respectively). Among the graduates of the orphanage, only 19% of the participants showed a high level of decision-making skills, a high level of planning - 20%, and a high level of design skills

- only 22%. The average skill level does not differ significantly in the number of people in the experimental groups. Students from orphanages dominate in terms of low level of decision-making skills (45%), planning (40%), and design (45%) (compared with other students 30%, 15%, 20%, respectively) (Samsonenko 2017, p. 356-363).

Tsyrenov (2017) identified the most significant areas for increasing the effectiveness of social and professional adaptation of students with disabilities in higher education institutions. The first area is focused on assisting the students with special needs in choosing future professional activities, their professional self-determination before entering a higher education institution. The second one is to provide psychological and pedagogical support and create special conditions for the professional self-development of students with special needs. The third area is based on the creation of a special system for adapting a student with disabilities to the educational process and socio-cultural environment of the educational organization. And the fourth area is inclusive professional education.

### **Social Adaptation of Nonresident and Foreign Students at the University**

Social adaptation of nonresident and foreign students also has its own specifics, which is expressed in the need to address the five main problems of adaptation.

Firstly, it is to develop the ability to navigate in a complex social environment (Samsonenko 2017, p. 99).

Secondly, it is to expand intercultural interaction, which is important since the representatives of different nationalities, speaking different languages and carrying the values of different cultures study at the university of the metropolis (Sosnovskiy et al. 2015, p. 21). In addition to the problem of establishing communication, students belonging to different cultures can cause conflicts within the walls of the university and outside the university campus, which determines the need to develop spiritual guidelines and foster the students' tolerant attitude to each other (Abdina et al. 2015, p. 193). A large city university has every opportunity to carry out such educational work, since it has significant educational resources and experience of barrier-free intercultural communication; mass events are regularly held uniting people of different nationalities when they can jointly demonstrate understanding and respect to ethno cultural features and traditions of different countries and peoples (Zerengok et al. 2018, p. 2). Joint activity of the participants in the educational process accelerates the process of their sociocultural adaptation and makes it less painful (Arkatova et al. 2015, p. 279).

Thirdly, it is the formation of personal qualities that allow students to solve the problems of the changing social system that they live in. The students who come from the provinces immediately feel the lability of the

system and must learn to master new forms of organizing social life (Sergeeva 2016, p. 88).

Fourthly, orientation in the information space expands upon moving to a metropolis and in the conditions of living and studying at the university complex. A student, especially a person from another region or country, is exposed to the information-attacking socio-cultural environment and must learn to choose from it what is more useful to him/her and what does not contradict the norms of the social system.

Fifthly, the development of general cultural and professional competencies allows the student to become competitive in the new social environment. A nonresident or foreign student understands that, as a rule, his/her starting position in his/her career is weaker than that of the students who initially live in the metropolis. The university is obliged to create conditions for the active self-education and self-realization of such students and the disclosure of their creative qualities through the creation of a creative environment - psychological freedom to use creative potential.

Glebov (2018), studying the process of adapting nonresident students in the capital, emphasized that "an important aspect in adapting a person in the society is, on the one hand, community and the individual's attachment to the society, and on the other hand, it is self-identification in the society" (p. 426-427). This aspect is one of the important elements of the integrity and self-identification of a person. At the same time, the changes in the social system, place of residence, work, status in the society, etc. can have a powerful impact on the depth of the identification and adaptation process of a person.

Glebov's (2018) research of identity structure showed that the majority (71.4%) of responses in the sample by nonresident students were associated with the description of the personality and its individual and personal characteristics, which indicates the dominance of the reflexive identity that was characteristic of the students from Moscow, central Russia and Siberia (p. 427). Thus, the proportion of various characteristics reflecting individual and personal characteristics of students in this group was maximally represented. At the same time, for the majority (61.4%) of students from the Volga region and the North Caucasus, a low level of reflection was noted, which indicates the "proximity" of this group of nonresident students.

The evaluation of students from the position "representative of a social group" led to the following results. Professional preferences (for environment and psychology students) were at the first place, family – at the second, and ethnic (national) context – at the third among the students-Muscovite and those from the center of Russia and Siberia. Students from the Volga region and the North Caucasus had the following distribution. The family was put first, then there was a national identity, and professional preferences were put

last. Thus, social identity at the university stage of professionalization demonstrated its ethnic characteristics.

Thus, person's social identity is a dynamic characteristic that acts as a system of key social constructs. The individual forms it in the situation of revising his/her place in the social environment and in the process of social interaction. One of such stages can be the period of entering a university and gaining a profession. Despite a sufficient number of works devoted to the social identity, the issue of studying the social identity of nonresident students is poorly represented.

#### **University Service of Integration Consultants**

The services of personal assistants or integration consultants are created in some rehabilitation centers; such a centralized service can be created at a large university. The scope of its activity may extend to the entire territory of the university complex and include psychological, legal, information and other assistance to all students in need. People with disabilities, orphans and visiting students recognize the special importance of social adaptation and rehabilitation for them; therefore, the service of integration consultants will allow students experiencing difficulties in interacting with the social environment not only to quickly adapt to this environment, but also to restore self-confidence after failures.

Monitoring of the students' needs and the quality of their assistance should be carried out regularly. Only in this way the university management will be able to learn

about the effectiveness and prospects of their business, see the strengths and weaknesses in the work of integration consultants and take measures to eliminate the shortcomings that arise. Such monitoring can be carried out with the help of a sociological service interested in conducting regular research. This service should analyze the materials collected by the consultants working in all branches of the university, and based on the results obtained, give recommendations on solving the identified problems of students' social adaptation.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Thus, the Social Adaptation Program for students-orphans and disabled students in a large university complex should rely on the support in the professional and personal self-determination, development of communication and self-regulation skills and ensuring their rights.

The university complex should support foreign and nonresident students in social orientation, intercultural interaction, social mobility, search for the necessary information and formation of the professional qualities allowing them to compete in different types of activities with the indigenous inhabitants of the metropolis.

The integration consultancy service should also be created at a large university. The scope of its activities may extend to the entire territory of the university complex and include psychological, legal, information and any other necessary assistance.

#### **REFERENCES**

- Abdina AK, Abdildina HS, Gappasova AG, Kakimzhanova MK, Ni DV, Sadykova TM (2015) Foreign students' social adaptation to the education environment of a higher educational institution: by the example of S. Seifullin Kazakh Agro Technical University. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(5): 184-194. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n5p184>
- Arkatova OG, Danakin NS, Shavyrina IV (2015) Enhancing adaptability of foreign students. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(6): 276-281. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n6s7p276>
- Chigisheva O (2018) Functional literacy: Terminological ambiguity in the worldwide educational context. *Astra Salvensis*, 6: 963-970.
- Ganin VV (2017) Coping strategies, mechanisms of psychological defense and self-reliance features are studied in Russian universities abroad. In: *Actual problems of children's life safety and ways to solve them: Materials of the all-Russian scientific and practical conference with international participation*. Moscow: RUDN.
- Glebov VV (2018) Interrelation of social identity and personal and psychological characteristics of nonresident students studying in the metropolis. *The World of Science, Culture and Education*, 2(69): 426-427.
- Khorkhrina ZV, Mashanov AA, Rostovtsev MV (2014) The activity aspects of social adaptation of personality. *Fundamental Research*, 9(5): 1144-1150.
- Lobova AYU (2017) Perception of the educational environment as a condition for the professional development of students of pedagogical specialties. In *On the way to pedagogical science*. Vladimir: VSU.
- Nigmatullina IA, Simonova GI, Agathangelou E (2016) The content of pedagogical support of student's social adaptation. *Mathematics Education*, 11(1): 243-254.

- Nilson C, Fetherston CM, McMurray A, Fetherston T (2013) Creative arts: an essential element in the teacher's toolkit when developing critical thinking in children. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 7: 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2013v38n7.4>
- Olkhovaya TA, Shukhman AE, Nevolina VV, Amirova LA, Zaitseva NA (2016) A synergy-based approach through developing cross-disciplinary module. *Mathematics Education* 11(3): 467-474.
- Ovdina AG, Goltsvardt TV, Serova NA (2017) Social and professional adaptation of orphans: problems and solutions. *Professional Education in Russia and Abroad*, 3(27): 96-103.
- Rudenko L, Zaitseva N, Larionova A, Chudnovskiy A, Vinogradova M (2015) Socio-Economic role of service - Sector small business in sustainable development of the Russian economy. *European Research Studies Journal*, 18(3): 223-238. <https://doi.org/10.35808/ersj/468>
- Samsonenko LS (2017) Support for the social adaptation of orphans and students left without parental care in VET organizations. *Academic Journalism*, 4: 356-363.
- Sergeeva LV (2016) Academic mobility as expansion factor of migratory flows. *Cross-Cultural Studies: Education and Science*, 1: 87-92.
- Sosnovskiy BA, Bitter NV, Shakhovalov NN (2015) Psycho-pedagogical adaptation of foreign students to the educational process in high school. In: *Research Result. Series: Pedagogic and Psychology of Education*, 1(4): 19-22. <https://doi.org/10.18413/2313-8971-2015-1-4-19-22>
- Tarman B, Chigisheva O (2017) Transformation of educational policy, theory and practice in post-soviet social studies education. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, 8(2): I-IV.
- Terziev V (2019) Conceptual framework of social adaptation. In: *Proceeding of INTCESS 2019: 6th International Conference on Education and Social Sciences (4-6 February 2019)*, Dubai, U.A.E., pp. 494-503. <https://doi.org/10.18769/ijasos.531317>
- Tkachenko NN (2018) Socio-psychological adaptation of students in the educational environment of various types. *Azimuth of Scientific Research: Pedagogy and Psychology*, 4(25): 358-360.
- Tsyrenov VT (2017) The essence of the social and professional adaptation process of students with disabilities in the institutions of higher education. *Internet journal "World of Science"*, 5(4). Retrieved on 10 September 2019 from <http://mir-nauki.com/PDF/13PDMN417.pdf>
- Vikhman VV, Romm MV, Vilberger ME (2018) Phenomenon of social adaptation in modern socio-economic changes in society. In: *Advances in Engineering Research: Proceedings of the International Conference "Actual Issues of Mechanical Engineering" (AIME 2018)*, 157: 612-617. <https://doi.org/10.2991/aime-18.2018.117>
- Zaitseva NA, Goncharova IV, Androsenko ME (2016) Necessity of changes in the system of hospitality industry and tourism training in terms of import substitution. *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues*, 6(1): 288-293.
- Zaitseva NA, Larionova AA, Minervin IG, Yakimenko RV, Balitskaya IV (2015) Foresight technologies usage in working out long term. *Forecasts of service and tourism personnel training system development. Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism*, 6(2): 410-417.
- Zerengok D, Guzel P, Ozbey S (2018) The Impact of Leisure Participation on Social Adaptation of International Students. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 6(2): 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.11114/jets.v6i2.2680>