

**Sociocultural and psychological problems of foreign students of Russian universities  
in the process of adaptation**

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**Abstract.** In this article, the authors tried to determine the role of sociocultural and psychological adaptation in the educational process of foreign students in Russian universities. The main stages of adaptation are highlighted and the problems arising at each stage are identified. The factors that have a significant impact on the academic performance of foreign students are considered.

**Keywords:** sociocultural adaptation, psychological adaptation, international education, training of foreign students, interaction, educational migration, educational process, interpersonal communication.

In recent decades, Russia has become part of a single global educational and cultural world. The expansion of individual freedoms and opportunities gives a person the right to form personal social and professional choice based on internal needs and personal interests.

The relevance of this topic is due to the growth of educational migration and the related problem of adaptation of foreign students to the new socio-cultural environment.

The purpose of this article was to study the factors that influence the adaptation process of foreign students in a Russian university.

The work used methods of analysis and synthesis, structural and functional, and to obtain empirical data - interviewing and questioning. In the course of the work, the factors influencing the adaptation process of foreign students in a Russian educational institution were identified. First of all, these are individual psychological qualities of a person, personal sympathies and antipathies of students, as well as religious, political, social, ethnopsychological and spiritual characteristics. As a result of the study, the authors came to the conclusion that it is necessary to develop adaptation programs and introduce them into the educational process, taking into account the identified problems.

The development of the modern world involves the expansion of the boundaries of interaction between different countries and cultures. This process covers various areas of social life of all world states, including the sphere of education. Modern changes in geopolitics and cultural and social sphere of Russia have had a great impact on educational (training) migration. Thousands of young people come to the Russian Federation annually to gain knowledge in our country. Medical, engineering and economic, pharmaceutical and technological specialties are very popular among foreign students. [9, p.124]

In connection with the increase in educational migration, the interest of scientists in the study of problems arising among foreign students has increased. Authors such as M. Belsky, S.V. Berezin, S. Bonner, V.V. Gritsenko, N.M. Lebedeva, K. Oberg, A.V. Perevedentsev, V. Petersen, E.E. Written, E. Ravenstein, L.L. Rybakovsky, V. Linneweber and others, investigate the socio-psychological problems of modern educational migration. Despite a considerable amount of work in this area, the problems associated with educational migration have not yet been fully studied.

The main task facing foreign students coming from another country to Russia today is to get an education. A student temporarily studying in another state is like a "visitor" who, after receiving an education at a university, returns to his home country, where he implements the accumulated baggage of knowledge and experience. Researchers note that it is these foreign "visitors" who experience great difficulties in the process of adaptation: since the time of their stay in a foreign country is limited by the period of study, they cannot fully assimilate the values and norms of the culture of the host state [4, p. 84]. At the same time, "the process of socio-psychological adaptation cannot be separated from the development of the personality, its formation. On the contrary, it is closely connected with the harmonious development of individuality" [3, p.220].

During their studies, foreigners form a variety of social ties and interactions with a new society. Their nature, as a rule, affects not only the speed and success of adaptation, but also the

effectiveness of a foreign student's study and the level of knowledge and skills acquired by him [5, p. 154].

At present, young people from different countries arrive in the Republic of Adygea for the preparatory faculty. They want not only to study Russian, but also to further get an education at the Maikop State Technological University. In the process of adapting to a new environment, foreign students have many problems, both psychological and related to educational activities, gaining knowledge.

The "Big Psychological Dictionary" defines social adaptation, firstly, as the process of active adaptation of an individual to environmental conditions, and, secondly, as a person's state, reflecting his ability to perform specific biosocial functions. These include an adequate perception of the surrounding realities and one's own organism, as well as an adequate system of relations and interaction with others [2, p.19-20].

Based on this, we can say that social adaptation is a complex process of interaction between a person and the environment, (first of all, the social environment), the results of which can be different:

- the actual adaptation of a person to the social environment of life, which allows him to function more or less successfully as an individual and participant in various social situations;
- active assertion of a person in a social environment, which allows him not only to function successfully, but also to develop personally in communication and activity;
- conflict interaction between a person and the environment, leading to disadaptation: functional disorders, loss of internal personal activity, high mental tension, etc. [1, p. 344-345].

After arriving in another state, everyone is in a state of stress caused by "culture shock" [11, p.178]. Students need not only to adapt to a different climate, food, unusual living conditions, lack of family and friends, but also to a new status, unusual traditions, cultural rules, values and norms adopted in a foreign country. That is why one of the most important tasks of the university is the adaptation of foreign students to the new educational and cultural environment.

The need to take into account ethnopsychological characteristics in working with foreign students from different regions is beyond doubt. Recently, the number of students from neighboring countries (Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan), African countries (Chad, Algeria), the Middle East (Syria, Palestine), South Asia (Nepal), Latin America (Brazil.), etc. has increased.

In order to find out the range of problems faced by foreign students in the Republic of Adygea during adaptation, the authors conducted a socio-psychological pilot study using the method of interviewing and questioning. The sample included foreign citizens studying at different faculties and specialties of the Maikop State Technological University. In total, the study involved about 100 students, as well as teachers who work with them.

In the course of the work, it turned out that the process of adaptation to studies at the university is difficult for many students. Thus, 78% of the respondents noted the problems of the language and cultural barriers that arise during social contacts with the local population. For 65% of respondents, adaptive difficulties are caused by the new climate and the lack of familiar products. And 53% of the respondents pointed to the discrepancy between the style of dress adopted in their homeland and manners of behavior in public places.

Active interpersonal communication, new communication links can exacerbate the prejudice against foreign citizens on the part of the local population. That is why it is required to find out under what conditions interethnic interaction can contribute to the most comfortable communication and reduce the likelihood of conflicts.

As a result of the research carried out among students, to the question of the questionnaire: "What difficulties do you face in communicating with fellow students?" - it was found that

- 79% of the respondents indicated that they did not experience difficulties in communication.

- None of the respondents faced prejudice from others,

- 15% - noted that communication develops in different ways and 6% - students do not communicate.

At the same time, to the question - "Who is the easiest for you to establish contact with?"

- 48% indicated that it is easier for them to establish contact with Russian students, and 52% - it is easier for them to have contacts with foreign students from other countries.

The composition of students in terms of their intellectual level is rather heterogeneous. Students from Central Asia (Tajikistan, Turkmenistan) mostly have a not very high level of general education, in connection with which they feel insecure and therefore attach great importance to a comfortable psychological environment in the classroom, appreciate the teacher's desire to help. This stimulates them, emotionally supports them, and contributes to an effective result.

What difficulties do students face directly in the learning process?

As a rule, all lectures cause feelings of frustration, tension and panic, because the student does not have time to assimilate scientific information transmitted at a fast pace in a foreign

language. The fear of making a mistake, the fear of ridicule from fellow students lead to the body's natural defensive reactions to stress: anxiety, confusion, doubts, worries, introversion. The implementation of lecture notes is accompanied by the fear of the teacher to discover a lack of understanding of the material and helplessness in a competent and clear presentation of their ideas in writing.

At the same time, reading does not cause any particular difficulties for foreign students, however, the analysis of the text, the implementation of various tasks on its content create certain difficulties and therefore lead to apathy, boredom, discipline violations and, ultimately, reluctance to fulfill the teacher's requirements. No less difficulties are caused by oral questioning on the topic studied. Doubts about the correctness of the answers, the lack of vocabulary in the presentation of the learned material, the fear of making a mistake - all this causes a state of prolonged stress.

To the question of the questionnaire "Is it easy for you to tell educational information?" students responded as follows:

- 24% have difficulty in presenting educational material.
- 3% students cannot answer in front of the audience,
- and 12% are able to answer only to a teacher without a group.

However, the majority - 58%, can quite easily present the studied material. This is confirmed by the teachers working in these groups.

At the same time, only 10% assess their knowledge of the Russian language as good. A 90% majority indicated that they do not speak Russian poorly, although they occasionally experience difficulties.

Students experience academic failure and stressful situations in different ways. To the question "How do you react to failure?"

- 54% respondents answered that they experience failures inside themselves, trying not to show emotions;
- 20% are very emotional, can show violent reactions;
- 26% try to calmly solve the problem, without showing emotions, know how to manage them.

However, the lives of young people are not limited to their studies. With whom do the guys from other countries spend their free time?

Free time from study 58% of respondents prefer to spend with their compatriots, 27% - vacation with friends from other countries, and only 15% spend leisure time with Russian students.

But the life of young people is not limited only to their studies. «Who do you spend your free time with?»

- 58 % of respondents prefer to spend their free time with their compatriots,
- 27% - relax with friends from other countries,
- and only 15% - spend leisure time with Russian students.

It should be noted that young people who come to study are characterized by some ethnocentrism. It is especially noted in girls. They come to Russia less than guys, they are more shy, so most of their free time is spent at home (at the place of residence).

Respondents' answers to the question: "With whom is it easier for you to build personal relationships?" Were as follows:

- 47% of the respondents are ready to build their personal relationships only with their compatriots;
- 38% appreciate representatives of the opposite sex from Russia (mostly men)
- and 15% of the respondents are ready to build relationships with representatives from other countries.

In the process of studying the issue of adaptation of foreign students of the Maikop State Technological University, it was found that a number of factors affect the socio-psychological interaction of representatives of various ethnocultural groups. These are, first of all, individual psychological qualities and personal sympathies-antipathies of students, as well as religious, political, social, ethnopsychological and spiritual characteristics of the host society.

Stereotypes and mental attitudes, as well as a small life and communicative experience of foreign youth, have no less influence. That is why further study and specification of all of the above factors is required.

As a result of the analysis, it can be stated that the system of training foreign students needs to be further improved. It can be recommended to develop for foreign students of the first year of study exemplary adaptation programs of a socio-psychological, communicative orientation that can help harmoniously adapt and successfully interact with the local society.

Also, an effective and successful way to implement adaptation programs will be the development and implementation of psychological trainings in the educational process, which will include blocks aimed at a successful process of adaptation to the situation.

Knowledge of the psychological characteristics and mental attitudes of students allows the teacher to navigate in various situations of communication, prevent misunderstandings and enrich the range of pedagogical interaction.

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