THE ROLE OF SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SKILL OF THE FIRST YEAR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THEIR ADAPTATION PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

Student life begins with the first year. And therefore successful, effective, optimal adaptation of first-year students to life and study at the university is the key to the further development of each student as a person, citizen, future specialist. This determines both research and practical interest in studying the diverse and contradictory problems of first-year students' adaptation. The aim of this research is to identify the difficulties and characteristics of first-year students' adaptation to studying at a university. The sample is represented by students studying in the field of "Psychology" at Baku State University, aged 17 to 19 years. The participants of the study were 50 first-year students. The survey material that consists of 38 items was used as the basis for diagnostics: a method for identifying typical difficulties (psychical, psychological, academic, family related and peer relationship problems) of first-year students. The total score was between 1-25; 12 ± 5.8 (skewness 0.3; kurtosis -0.26). It is necessary to set goals for students so that they have a clear idea of what is expected of them. At the beginning of the year, the university sets clear goals, responsibilities, students, rules for passing tests and exams. Goals are set high, but achievable. It is necessary to support and praise students' achievements, and when giving negative feedback, it is important to describe the erroneous actions, and not to evaluate the student's personality.

Keywords: Student personality, adaptation, the first year students, interpersonal relationship, peer relation, academic condition.

LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the general theoretical problems of higher education is the problem of students' adaptation to the conditions of study at the university, the difficulties of the first year of study. Adaptation in this context is defined as a multifaceted process of activating the social and biological reserves of young people who are in the stage of development and formation, and in this regard requiring increased attention from the teacher to first-year students, the need for their psychological and pedagogical support in the conditions of higher education.

To identify the features of adaptation of first-year students, it is advisable to clarify the understanding of the term in psychological and pedagogical science.

Adaptation is a set of psychological and physiological reactions of the body that underlie its adaptation to the surrounding conditions, aimed at maintaining the relative constancy of its internal environment, in which social interaction of the individual, social group and social environment occurs. Grishanov A.K., Tsurkan V.D. believe that the adaptation of students is the process of bringing the main parameters of their social and personal characteristics into compliance, into a state of dynamic equilibrium with the new conditions of the university environment as an external factor in relation to students. Siomichev A.V. considers adaptation

to be overcoming the difficulties of entering a new social environment, establishing intra-group relations, and adapting to new forms of learning (Dedlovskaya et.al.2017).

Researchers distinguish three forms of adaptation of first-year students to the conditions of the university:

1) formal adaptation, concerning the cognitive and informational adaptation of students to the new environment, to the structure of higher education, to the content of education in it, its requirements, to their responsibilities;

2) social adaptation, i.e. the process of internal integration (unification) of groups of first-year students and the integration of these same groups with the student environment as a whole;

3) didactic adaptation, concerning the preparation of students for new forms and methods of educational work in higher education (Yejova, 2022).

It follows that adaptation is a process of human interaction with the environment, as a result of which he develops models and strategies of behavior adequate to the changing conditions in this environment.

Adaptation for a first-year student is a productive way out of an adaptive situation, when the individual correlates his own capabilities and the difficulties that have arisen.

External factors include the adaptation of the individual to objective problem situations, and internal factors are aimed at resolving internal conflicts and individual problems.
These factors are conventionally divided into three blocks:

- sociological (age, social background, type of pre-university education of the student),

- pedagogical (organization of the environment, material and technical base of the institution, level of pedagogical skills of the teaching staff),

- psychological block, which contains individual psychological and socio-psychological factors (intelligence, focus, motivation, personal adaptive potential).

It is during the process of studying at a university that the primary "mastery" of a profession takes place, the life and worldview position of a young person is determined, individual methods of activity, forms of behavior and communication are studied. At the same time, one of the leading problems is the construction of such a system of the educational process that would optimally take into account the features and patterns of not only the personal development of a student, but also his professional development as a specialist (Shmelova, 2016).

According to the literature and policy papers it can be mentioned that, special demands are placed on the educational process of higher education during the adaptation period, where, as our study has shown, at the beginning of training, a contradiction arises between the new needs that first-year students have, the need to solve new problems and the level of their existing capabilities, their previously established ways of thinking and behavior. In addition to all the psychological and pedagogical difficulties that young men and women experience, there are also those that are caused by today's difficult social situation, against the background of which the development of the young generation is taking place. In such conditions, the task of psychological assistance to a first-year student is to develop the ability to determine the goals of his life, to master practically useful planning skills, to correlate the future (Castro et.al, 2023).

Education process in a higher educational institution is a complex, multifaceted process that places high demands on the health, plasticity and flexibility of mental and physiological processes of young people. All teachers of a higher educational institution must be sensitive to

the anxious state of students (especially first-year students) due to changed conditions (Schonoret R., 2017). Constant mental and emotional stress, as well as violation of work, rest, and nutrition regimes often lead to a breakdown in the adaptation process and the development of a number of diseases. The period of acute adaptation of students to changed conditions falls on the 1st and 2nd years. New students are faced with new forms and methods of teaching, learning not by quarters but by semesters, new emotional experiences, meet new teachers, classmates and fellow students. That is, they change not only the regime of work, rest, sleep and nutrition, but also their social circle, build new interpersonal relationships, with teachers and their classmates (Reinert, 2019). New environment, new routine, new relationships, new social role, new level of relationships with parents and other relationships – all these variables influence students' ability to adapt.

Aim of the study: The purpose of this study is to identify the difficulties and characteristics of first-year students' adaptation to studying at a university. The sample is represented by students studying in the field of "Psychology" at Baku State University, aged 17 to 19 years.

The following survey that consists of 38 items was used as the basis for diagnostics: a method for identifying typical difficulties of first-year students.

The survey questions divided 5main parts:
- Psychical problems (6 questions);
- Psychological problems (11 items);
- University academic difficulties (9 items);
- Difficulties related to family factor (7items);
- Peer relationship difficulties (5 items).

Results: The survey was realized in the first month of the fall term, September and October at Baku State University in 2024. Participants' survey results were described in the following tables:

Table 1.The statistics of the survey results

		Psychical	psychological	university	family	peer
N	Valid	50	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,04	2,92	4,30	2,34	2,98
Median		3,00	4,50	4,00	1,00	1,00
Mode		2	2	4	2	0
Std. Deviation		1,511	0,165	1,657	0,222	0,220
Skewness		0,003	0,409	-,642	0,982	1,092
Std. Error of Skewness		0,337	0,337	0,337	0,337	0,337
Kurtosis		-,368	-,526	0,490	1,361	0,013
Std. Error of Kurtosis		0,662	0,662	0,662	0,662	0,662
Minimum		0	0	0	0	0
Maximum		6	7	7	5	4

Physical problems described some of their problems related to eating, sleeping, appearance, sensation problems. The results fluctuated 0-6; mean was 3,04±1,5.

Psychological problems related to anxiety, coping skills and abilities, self-esteem and other issues were described from 7th till 17th items. The students results were between 0-7; 4,5±0,165.

The next problems related to academic conditions, course schedule, teachers' approach were the special factors that influenced students' adaptation, and learning activity. Their results were between 0-7; mean was 4±1,6.

Family problems, parents pressure to them, and financial difficulties of their parents, siblings' interpersonal relationship, and family's expectation affected the students' mental health and their self-esteem. They estimated that factor from 0 till 5; 2,4±0,22.

Peer relationship and difficulties at university, student groups' atmosphere was the last group of the questions. The mean of the result was 2,9±0,22 (min.0; max.4).

The total score was between 12±5.8 (skewness 0.3; kurtosis -0.26). the minimum score was 1, while the maximum was 25 score.
Their answers were described in the following chart with the percentage.

Table 2. Percentage distribution indicators
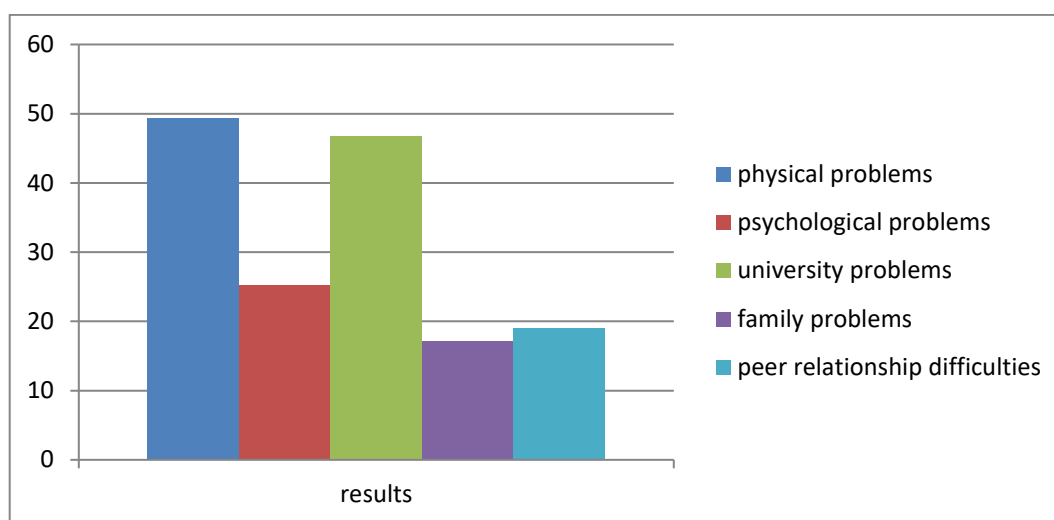
The correlations factor among these items were positive significant statistically results. Based on these figure it can be highlighted that each of the problems related to each others. In this case the interrelated difficulties affect student' learning process, peer relationship, academic results, and also prevent them future success (p<0.005). The correlation figures were described in the following table:

Table 3. Correlation among the factors

		psychological	university	medical	family	peer
psychological	Pearson Correlation	1	,314*	,600**	,612**	,749**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,026	,000	,000	,000
	N	50	50	50	50	50

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

CONCLUSION

Thus, it is obvious that one of the possible ways to ensure the success of the adaptation process is to solve the problems of the efficiency and quality of the educational process during the adaptation period of first-year students.

However, the educational process alone, even at the highest level of its organization, does not adequately ensure the adaptation of students to the specific conditions of higher education. In this regard, it is appropriate to talk about a set of factors that ensure the adaptation process of first-year students:

- high-quality and clearly thought-out organization of first-year students' educational activities;

- the efficiency of the educational department and the curatorial corps of the higher educational institution;

- participation of student self-government bodies in the adaptation process of first-year students;

- the availability of psychological support for first-year students during the adaptation period (psychological service, scientific problem laboratory of psychological and pedagogical research);

- involving first-year students in extracurricular activities (scientific and sports work, artistic creativity, tutoring movement, etc.)

In fact, if we want to help a student integrate into a new academic community, then this assistance should be provided by all departments of the university in a comprehensive manner: educational, scientific, social. It is in this comprehensive influence that it is possible to achieve positive changes in professional (educational), social, interpersonal and personal adaptation.

When entering a higher education institution, former schoolchildren find themselves in a new and unfamiliar educational environment. The majority of those who enter experience serious difficulties at the initial stage of their studies. Especially students who arrived from other settlements of the region and the country.

The difficulties that arise have a negative impact on the success of mastering educational programs, interaction with other students and teachers, and this, in turn, causes unpleasant feelings from studying at a higher education institution.

Without targeted work on the socialization and adaptation of students experiencing difficulties, it is impossible to overcome these difficulties. They will accumulate, which will lead to various negative consequences (psychological breakdowns, leaving a higher education institution, lack of interest in studying).

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Each of the student signed the consent form.

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