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THE PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ADAPTATION OF UKRAINIAN STUDENTS ABROAD

The problems of social and psychological adaptation of Ukrainian students abroad have been studied by O. Arefiev, L. Beztelesna, O. Biliavska, A. Girnyk, K. Gavrylova, O. Grinkevich, N. Krylova, L. Semif, H. Smoliychuk, M. Vitkovska, T. Iudina, L. Zhurakovska ets.

Objective: To analyze the features of socio-psychological adaptation of Ukrainian students during their studies abroad.

Methods: The investigation was done on the sample of 92 Ukrainian students who studied abroad (France, Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic) using structured interviews and content analysis of relevant Internet resources based on the J. Barry model of adaptation strategies (acculturation).

Results:

1. The basic reasons for higher education abroad were shown to include higher quality of education, better training conditions, career prospects, foreign languages environment, etc. It is noteworthy that 69% of the respondents intended to stay abroad for permanent residence, which was a serious problem. 32% of respondents suggest that the quality of the higher education at home is very low, but they would like to come back after the acquisition of the European diploma.

2. Factor analysis identified the following main issues of Ukrainian students' adaptation abroad: social-psychological – 39%; socio-cultural – 33%; educational – 18%.

3. The adaptation problems were lighter in neighboring countries (Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic) than in France ($p < 0.01$).

4. There were age, gender and family differences in the adaptation of Ukrainian students abroad ($p < 0.01$).

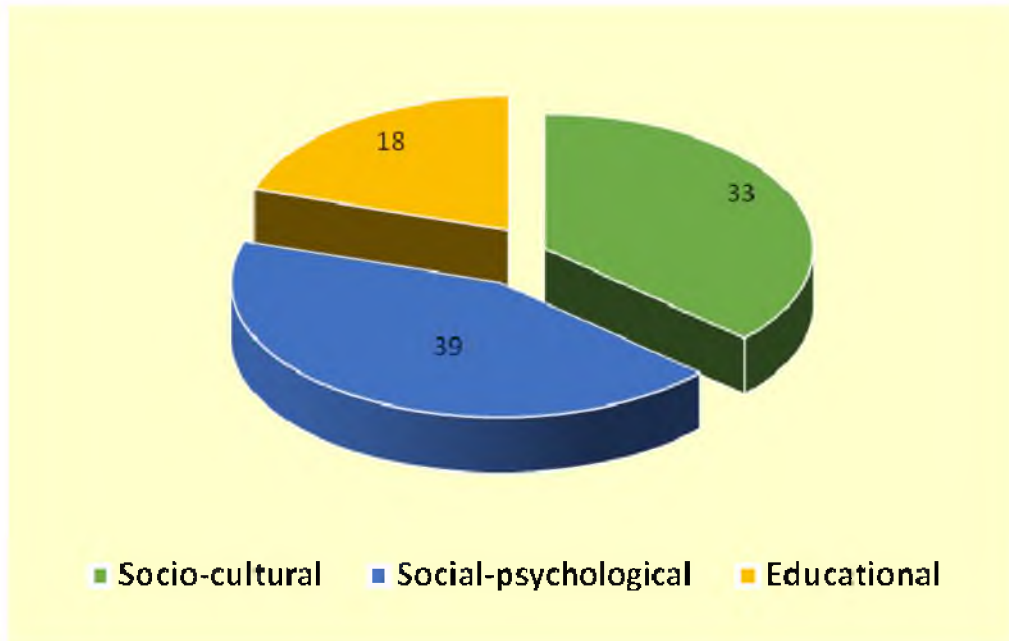


Fig. 1. The main issues of Ukrainian students' adaptation abroad (% of the total number of respondents)

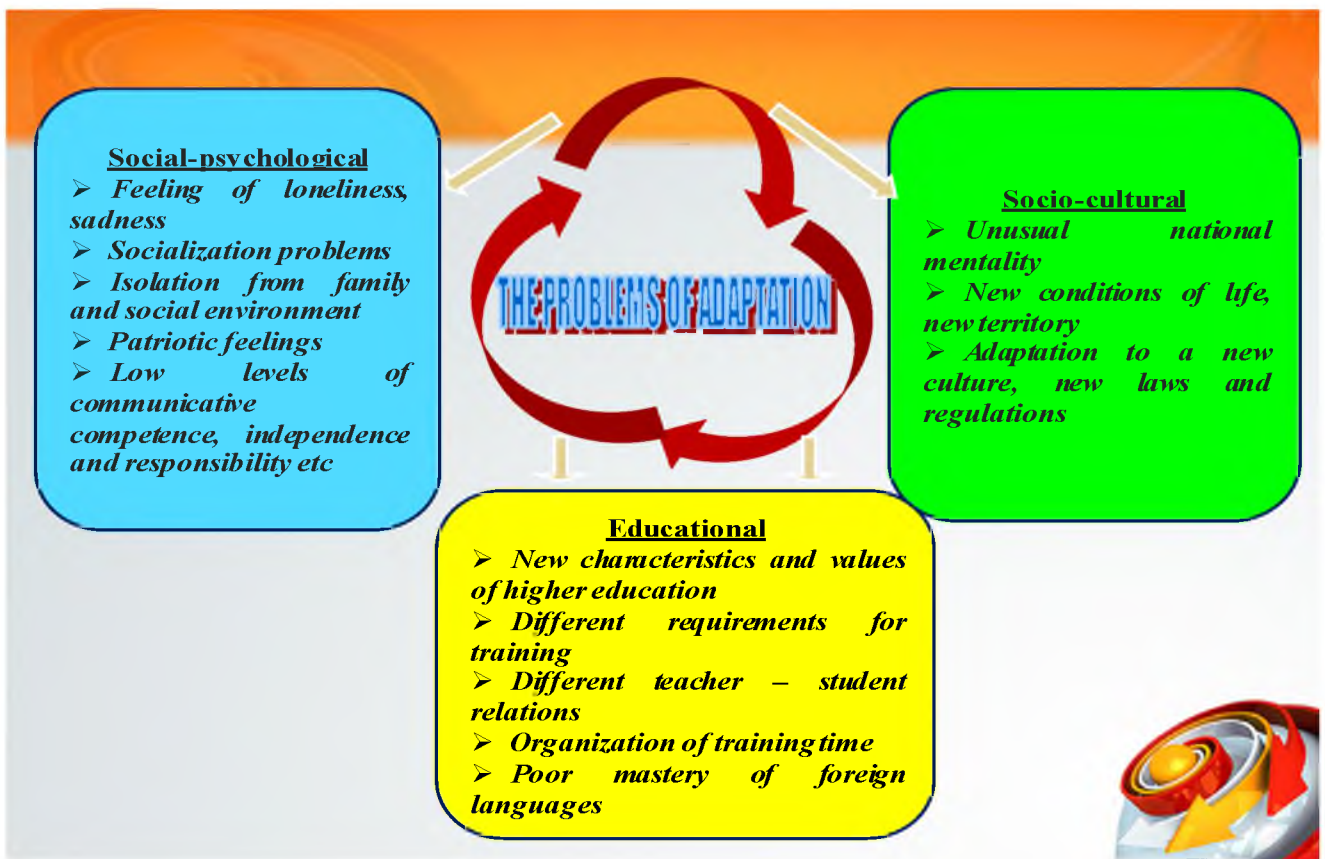


Fig. 2. The factor analysis of the social and psychological adaptation

The obtained results allow us to suggest that the main dimensions of the social-psychological adaptation of Ukrainian students are:

1. Will to integrate into the culture of the receiving country and the educational environment of the university.
2. The acceleration of the adaptation, which depends on:
 - the students' wishes after the graduation by considering their national identity;
 - the individual world perception, mentality and psychological state;
 - the familiarization with the norms of the international community and the development of personal behavior;
 - the formation of the sustainable, positive attitude to the future profession, the acquisition of the necessary linguistic skills, the feeling of the academic equality.
3. The active help with the adaptation by receiving countries. The main agents that support Ukrainian students abroad are:
 - local diasporas;
 - already graduated students;
 - psychologists at the University;
 - special departments within the universities which manage international students, various student associations etc.
4. The organization of various activities within the universities:
 - language courses, discussion clubs, parties;
 - tutors that accompany students and help them to become familiar with a town, education system;
 - different exchange programs such as Erasmus Mundus or Fulbright foundation.
5. Membership in student associations within the faculty and active participation in cultural activities.

Conclusion. The investigation results can be helpful in easing foreign students' psychological adaptation. The follow-up investigation may focus on students' adaptation psychological factors.

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