

## VISION OF THE FUTURE AND VALUES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Baburkin S.A., Talanov S.L., Lymarev A.V.

*Yaroslavl State Pedagogical University, Yaroslavl,*

*e-mail: baburkin@mail.ru, talanov\_sergei@mail.ru, avlymarev@gmail.com*

---

The authors observe the features of ideas about the future and life values of a number of students of the Central Federal District universities. It was found out that a significant part of the students have positive, but fragmented ideas about their future. In addition, most of the students are inherent in crisis of personal and group identity, that means they do not know what they want and do not structure their lives. When projecting their future students are mostly standing on the paternalistic positions. Sex differences are revealed. In particular, it is noted that values such as family, health, love are more common for girls. The values of young men are associated with well-paid job and career. On the other hand, some similarities in the life values of young people are indicated, such as education and material well-being. The career and job are terminal values for the boys, and, at the same time, are instrumental values for girls. Authors made the conclusion that the acceleration of the social process involves the students in assimilating new values, and it requires developing new methods of influence on the person and applying new technologies in the learning process. Accordingly, it is important to create new educational programs, textbooks and methodological researches.

---

**Keywords:** students, university, values, interests, needs, terminal and instrumental values

To improve the competitiveness of our country in the modern world it is necessary to strengthen the training of bachelors and masters in Russian universities. The modernization of the economy and the future of our state is up to students who are currently studying. Their knowledge, skills and abilities received within the period of study will effect on how seriously they will concern to their future profession, family and country. Even now, it is important to carry out systematical sociological studies aimed at exploring students' ideas about their future. In addition, it is necessary to analyze their values, interests, and needs already formed. Not by chance, M. Porter noted that "the potential of the country's wealth is unlimited, since it is determined not so much by the presence of material resources, but by the new ideas and values" [6].

### Empirical base of research

A survey of students of the following universities has been held:

– Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation (RANEPA, Orlov branch).

– Yaroslavl State Pedagogical University named after K.D. Ushinsky (YSPU).

– Rybinsk State Aviation Technological University (RSATU).

Quota sampling  $n = 336$ . Quota variables: university, sex, family structure. The sampling is balanced by sex – 184 male and 152 female. Sampling error is 5,8%, that is in the normal range, and the confidence interval or the probability of sampling error determination is 94,2%.

Secondary data analysis is based on:

– Materials of the Russian Federal Service of State Statistics;

– Results of sociological surveys conducted by VTsIOM (The All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center), Public Opinion Foundation (FOM), the Institute of Sociology RAS (Russian Academy of Sciences).

### Materials and methods of research

When interpreting the survey data, the authors relied on futurological approach (D. Bell, A. Toffler), post-materialist values concept (R. Inglehart), postmodern approach (M. Foucault, P. Bourdieu), phenomenological concept (E. Goffman, A. Schütz), One-Dimensional Man theory (H. Marcuse), social constructionism approach (P. Berger, T. Luckmann), liquid modernity conception (Z. Bauman).

### Authors' hypothesis

In the context of postmodernism students have changed the content of their values and the mechanism of their development. The part of young people, which is successfully adapting to new permanent challenges, threats, risks, is the one, whose values contribute to accelerated self-development, i.e., those who inherent such values as rationality, assertiveness, persistence in achieving goals.

### Results of research and their discussion

As noted by Stephen Lyng, modern society is "walking along the edge", i.e., it generates risks [4]. Accordingly, the person needs to be able to properly assess and take risks in order to be able to adapt successfully. To do so universities should generate the appropriate skills among the students within their working programs. First, students should have the skills of their future projection in the short, medium and long term.

The first set of questions, the answers to which we need to analyze is "For how long in advance you can plan your future?" And "For how long are you able to imagine your

future clearly?”. The respondents’ answers to the first question are distributed as follows: for many years (over 10 years) – the future can be planned by 6% of the surveyed students; for the next 5 years – the future can be planned by 8% of respondents; for a period of next one or two years – the future can be planned by the majority of respondents – 40; 36% of respondents can not imagine what will happen even in the next few months, while the remaining respondents (10%) have found it difficult to answer this question.

The respondents’ answers to a question about the clear image of their future are distributed as follows: the own future can be seen clearly for no more than one day – 7% of respondents; it can be projected for the coming weeks – 11; 24% of the students clearly imagine their future for the coming months; a bit more, 37% of the students can clearly imagine their future; for the next 3–5 years – 8%; and for 6–10 years – 6; 10% of respondents have found this question difficult to answer; option “for more than 10 years” has not been chosen by anyone.

Thus, it can be stated that today’s university students do not build long-term plans for the future and cannot clearly imagine it for such a long time.

The next question is aimed at identifying whether respondents plan their life in general in advance, forecast it, or live it as they live. 22% of the respondents generally do not build plans for the future; 10% of the surveyed students believe that their lives can be hardly changed; 37% claim to know what will happen with them in the next two or three years, but not more; 23% of respondents believe that their life can change significantly after a few years; 8% have found the question difficult to answer. On this basis, we can say that in general, students have some ideas about their future life, but not for a long term ahead, these ideas are not very stable and certain, that, in fact, confirms the results of the questions analyzed above.

The next question, the answer to which we have to analyze, is aimed at trying to figure out what percentage of the surveyed students wish to work in the specialty after graduation.

Slightly less than half of the surveyed students – 47% – said that by the end of their studying they plan to continue their education as masters’ degree or to obtain their second higher education. 32% indicated that their professional activities will not be associated with the knowledge gained at the university, and only 21% of respondents said they plan to get a job in their specialty.

Another set of questions is devoted to clarify the areas of life, to achieve success in which the students are going to focus all their efforts

in the coming years; respondents have been asked to choose up to three answers from a list.

Most of the surveyed students – 79% – are ready to concentrate all their efforts in the study; professional skills will play an important role in the future for 24% of respondents; 35% of students are going to devote their efforts in the coming years to the creating and strengthening the family or to the education of children, if there are any already; 14% of respondents in the future will focus their attention on the creative, social and political activities; spiritual self-improvement will be an important part of life in the future for 29% of students; physical and health self-improvements have been chosen by 24% of students; leisure, vacations, traveling and entertainment will be an important part of life for 27% of respondents; and 33% of the participants of the research will be deeply in their professional career.

Based on this, we can say that education, professional career and family are the main priorities for the closest students’ future.

The next question was aimed at trying to figure out what are the goals of the respondents and their families when the conversation goes about the lifestyle, and the answers to this question are as follows: the goal for 9% of the respondents and their families is the bar “to survive, albeit at a primitive level of existence”; the majority – 53% of respondents want to live simply not worse than the majority of families in their city/area; 25% of the surveyed students want to live better than the rest of the families in the city/area; the goal for 8% of respondents is the same level of life as the one for an average family in Western Europe; and only 5% are aimed at a life that is better than the level of the average Western European family. Thus, most of the students and their families do not set themselves ambitious goals; they just want to live not worse, than the people that surround them.

The next set of studied questions is aimed at getting to know, if the respondents plan to change their place of residence. Most of them – 59% prefer to stay in the city in which they live now, 12% of the surveyed young people would like to move to another city in Russia, 7% are going to move to another country, and 22% have found it difficult to answer this question.

As it is known, the basic values are formed in humans by the age of 18–20 [2].

Therefore, we further studied the hierarchy of values of students, using the classical Rokeach’s methodology [5].

“Health”, “interesting job” and “love” prevail in the hierarchy of terminal values. The young men put “job” on the first place, for girls

it is "love". "Wealthy life" is an important value, both for girls and for boys, and this trend does not depend on the age of respondents, nor from the university or from the city in which it is located.

What disturbs is that "having good and true friends" takes only the 14<sup>th</sup> position in the hierarchy of terminal values. Not by chance, that Alvin Toffler wrote that the relationship between people become short-term, modern society creates a personality similar to disposable objects [7].

"Education" and the "joy of life" prevail in the hierarchy of instrumental values.

The obtained data confirms the opinion of the American sociologist Ronald Inglehart about the displacement of the gravity center in favor of a "post-materialistic values": self-development, quality of life, health [3].

Unfortunately such instrumental value, as "efficiency in the affairs" takes only the 17<sup>th</sup> place in the hierarchy.

It is not by chance that a number of scientists have noted that a significant part of the primary economic socialization of students is limited; as a result, most students are not adapted to life in the rapidly changing social reality [8].

For this reason, further we have studied the respondents' opinion about the quality, knowledge and skills, which are necessary for modern man to adapt successfully to a rapidly changing social reality. It was found out that only 13% indicated that "prudence" (ability to adequately assess the risks) is important for a modern man. A significant part of respondents (52%) believes that it is mostly important to be "sociable" and to have "the ability to acquire useful contacts". Even worse with such an ability as a "long-term planning". Only 11% believe that it is important for the modern man. 12% indicate that it is important to be able to implement the "short-term planning". Characteristically, that such important qualities of the person as "rationalism", "assertiveness", "perseverance in achieving objectives" are identified by those students who have an idea about their long-term forecasting, and an action plan for the future. Noteworthy is the fact that the total share of such respondents in the overall mass of students (6%) is insignificant.

### Conclusion

Thus, the research shows that most of the modern university students do not build long-term plans for the future and can not imagine it clearly in the long term perspective. In general, students have the fragmentary ideas about their future life. Most of the respondents do not have the skills of forecasting for the short, medium and especially long term. 85% of respondents are satisfied with life in general. 77%

of respondents believe that the improvement of life in the region depends on the regional and municipal authorities. 89% of respondents rely on support from the state, which, in their opinion, should create all the conditions for a decent quality and standard of living. The young men main values are associated with well-paid job and career. The values of young men are associated with well-paid job and career. On the other hand, some similarities in the life values of young people are indicated, such as education and material well-being. The career and job are terminal values for the boys, and, at the same time, instrumental values for girls. Major part of the surveyed students is confident in their closest future (up to 1 year), but, unfortunately, does not believe in its long-term future (over 5 years). Moreover, they do not have the certain level of knowledge, abilities and skills, which is necessary for the successful adaptation to the new rapidly changing environment.

As noted by the Spanish sociologist Izaskun Artegui, modern youth is getting mature in the period of the "second modernity" and a variety of identities [1]. It is no coincidence that most of the surveyed are inherent in crisis of personal and group identity, that means they do not know what they want and do not structure their lives. Moreover, they do not have clear goals, values, interests, and they even do not try to form them in an active way.

The acceleration of the social process involves the students in assimilating new values, and it requires developing new methods of influence on the person and applying new technologies in the learning process. Accordingly, it is important to create new educational programs, textbooks and methodological researches.

### References

1. Artegui I. Exploring the New Generation: the Role of the Past and the Future in the Formation of Identity // XVIII ISA Word Congress of Sociology. Facing an Unequal World: Challenges for Global Sociology. – Yokohama, Japan, 2014. – P. 45.
2. Inglehart R.F. The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics. – N.J: Princeton University Press, 1977.
3. Inglehart R. Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society. – Princeton, 1990.
4. Lyng S. Edgework: the sociology of Risk-Taking. – New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2005.
5. Rokeach M. The Nature of Human Values. – NY: The Free Press, 1973.
6. Porter M. Installations, features, beliefs and microeconomics of prosperity. The culture matters. How features promote social progress / Pod red. L. Harrisona, S. Huntingtona (L. Harrison, S. Huntington (eds.) Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress. – NY: Basic Books, 2000). – M.: Moscow school political investigated, 2002. – P. 66.
7. Toffler E. Shock budushego. – M., 2002. – P. 112.
8. Talanov S.L., Kudashov V.N. Osobennosti ekonomicheskoy sotsializatsii studentov vuzov // Alma mater. Vestnik vysshey shkoly. – 2016. – № 6. – P. 34–39.