

**MSC 2020****International Scientific and Practical Conference «MAN. SOCIETY.  
COMMUNICATION»****SAVING HUMAN CAPITAL IN A DIGITAL EPOCH**

Yelena Yevstifeeva (a), Eleonora Maikova (b), Svetlana Filippchenkova (c)\*

\*Corresponding author

(a) Tver State Technical University, Tver, Russian Federation, pif1997@mail.ru

(b) Tver State Technical University, Tver, Russian Federation, maykova@yandex.ru

(c) Tver State Technical University, Tver, Russian Federation, sfilippchenkova@mail.ru

**Abstract**

Human capital, ensuring the well-being and quality of life of the population, is insufficiently used and capitalized in Russia. It is partially due to the fact that the Russian higher education system focuses on economic growth instead of human and personal development. The identification of socio-humanitarian sources of human capital accumulation – personal potential, professional ethos, generating, firstly, the quality of life phenomenon as the psychological well-being of students, seems to be one of the relevant solutions of the problem. The project offers a navigational understanding of human capital for aggregating the “basket” of its accumulation sources. This understanding will be used for developing a model of quality of life management related to the health of Russian youth. It will expand the interpretation of the quality of life and include in its analysis such human capital accumulation sources as autonomy (self-organization), responsibility, reflexivity, meaningful life orientations, professional identity, tolerance for uncertainty, communicative abilities. The reflection of personal, cognitive-reflective, and professional-value positions in improving the quality of life implicit for students as the achievement of psychological well-being, expanding human capabilities and social mobility in higher education practice allows identifying socio-humanitarian sources in human capital development. Such model partially serves to overcome methodological uncertainty in the development of the “human capital”, “personal potential”, “professional ethos”, and “health-related quality of life” concepts.

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*Keywords:* Human capital, professional ethos, quality of life

## 1. Introduction

In Russia, human capital, which ensures the well-being and quality of life (hereinafter QOL) of the population, is insufficiently used and capitalized. This is partially due to the fact that the Russian higher education system focuses on economic growth instead of human and personal development. We identify human capital as a personified cognitive resource, active independence, which entails subjective-personal, psychological well-being, that is a QOL descriptor (Bloom, 2020; Ebrahimian & Wachter, 2020; Kasaeva & Esankulova, 2020). In digital civilization, the main risk-generating factor in the development of human capital is ultrafast life, the turbojet transformation of the world, information oversaturation, unstable social and personal existence of a human, the rapid replacement of the biological principle of life with the artificial one (Kravchenko, 2017; Volodin et al., 2017).

Failure to understand that digital technologies are only tools for the development of human capital as a complex of intellectual and cognitive abilities, as well as the sum of knowledge, life experience and activity of the person, the absolutization of the modern technology role affects the boundaries of human capital recognition. We distinguish human capital in the projection of its socio-humanitarian sources. Therefore, the identification of the key components of human capital - personal potential, professional ethos, generating, first of all, the phenomenon of “quality of life” as the subjective, psychological well-being of students, seems to be one of the relevant solutions for the problem of minimizing the risks of losing human capital in the digital world.

## 2. Problem Statement

Recently, the topic of human capital has been actualized and problematized in Russian socio-humanitarian discourse. It has been calculated that the wealth of any country up to seventy percent depends on human capital. Despite this, human capital plays a much smaller role in the socio-economic, technological, and innovative development of Russia. Being a highly educated, but not a rich country, which is confirmed statistically, Russia occupies a low position in the ranking of human capital building. Having a significant amount of human potential (4th position among other countries), Russia uses actual professional, competence skills in labor activity insufficiently (42nd position), and by the indicator of “availability” of qualified personnel, it went down to 89th position.

It is known that the fundamental component of human capital is education, higher education. Among the reasons for the underestimation and lack of demand for the human capital is the focus of Russian higher education on economic goals, economic growth instead of human development, which includes self-education, health, QOL (Memisevic & Djordjevic, 2019; Vogt & Andreck, 2020). A radical turn in understanding human capital as a combination of only general and specific human capital to the personal social mobility, personal potential aimed at professional ethos and high QOL indicators seems to be a development trend of higher education in Russia.

The given study offers a navigational understanding of human capital in the optics of disclosing its socio-humanitarian sources. By human capital we mean a system of individual abilities, accumulated knowledge, life experience, an active position and independence in decision-making, which initiates the construction of personal and social well-being with the QOL as its registered indicator. We single out the

following sources of human capital accumulation: personal potential, professional ethos, generating, first of all, the phenomenon of QOL as psychological well-being.

The concept of “personal potential” includes interdependent personal identifiers - autonomy, responsibility, developed reflexive activity, which together prepare a person for self-management and active independence. In the broad sense, the phenomena of life and health, self-reproduction, self-organization, self-determination are congruent to personal autonomy. Personal autonomy is commensurate with freedom, responsibility, self-development, self-determined action, reflective attitude. We define an individual’s responsibility as the ability and competence of an individual to selectively and consciously control, design, and generate personal activities (Osin & Leontiev, 2019). Responsibility speaks about an internal act of freedom and disposition towards the world. In the self-identity of a person, the constellation of autonomy, responsibility, value guidelines allows a person to remain holistic and self-confident in any uncertain situation (Kornilova, 2016). The specific personal and cognitive ability, understood as reflexivity, is crucial for the identification of personal potential (Lepsky, 2016). It generically affects any human action, the cognitive and behavioral potential of a human. A human can be considered a reflexive system, in which indicators of high reflexivity help to independently, responsibly, meaningfully manage oneself in the context of improving QOL (Chernova & Garaganov, 2017; Nikonov, 2016; Pevnev, 2019). By ethos, we mean the image or symbolic objectification of life, habit, quality of life. Ethos, being a mental representation of existence, a model or imperative principle, performs the functions of regulation, control, management, design, and inspiration of social group life. As an experience product of value basket, ethos is selectively updated to make decisions in non-linear situations of moral choice.

Quality of life is a synergistic indicator of the process of developing personal potential and professional ethos (Karpov, 2020). In digital civilization, QOL descriptors are changing. In a broad sense, QOL is the variable that indicates social preferences, mood, and expectations of a person and is associated with individual-personality mental and behavioral characteristics (Vitko & Lebedeva, 2019). The narrow meaning of the QOL concept is commensurate with indicators of the human health “state” (Friedman & Rizzolo, 2018; Simplican et al., 2015). It is identified as objective and subjective (psychological) well-being. Such contentment reflects individual value-semantic orientations and expectations (Diener, et al., 2017; Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015; Mogilner et al., 2018). We take into account QOL in its interdisciplinary meaning, as a humanistic concept that combines an objective and subjective expression of a person’s state, testifying to a person’s subjective, psychological well-being given the inconsistency, “opacity” of the content of “quality of life” concept, the existing objective and subjective approaches to its explanation as a way of life, satisfaction with life, as the degree of compliance of actual parameters and living conditions with human expectations, as a standard of living, as an axiological satisfaction with life. Under the health-related model of managing QOL, we mean the psychometric and sociological tools for describing, explaining and generalizing the empirical data obtained from students as a result of the study of personal potential and professional ethos. The health-related QOL management model allows seeing the personal and socio-psychological efforts of a young person on the way to increase it. It is aimed at the idea of measuring QOL in the projection of the navigational understanding of human capital, assessing QOL determined by the boundaries of personal potential and the facets of professional ethos.

### **3. Research Questions**

The key scientific idea of our research project is to develop a socio-psychological model for managing QOL related to the health of students. The growth, deepening and use of interdisciplinary sociological and psychological knowledge about the socio-humanitarian sources of human capital accumulation, QOL, and health of Russian young people in practice of higher education accompany the development of the model. It is constructed using sociological and psychological predictors of personality potential, professional ethos, and QOL associated with health as their synergistic indicator. QOL conveys a state of subjective well-being or a holistic experience of satisfaction initiated by personal, cognitive, professional experience. The subjective component of QOL directly depends on the formation of the main components of personal potential, the manifestation of professional ethos indicators among students.

Today, the research on health-related QOL is aimed at deeper and more accurate measurement of the subjective (personal and psychological) expectations, personal desires and needs. A comprehensive assessment of the QOL related to health, an in-depth study of its subjective assessment should include such components as autonomy (self-organization), responsibility, reflexivity, meaningful life orientations, professional identity, tolerance for uncertainty, and communication skills.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to identify the socio-humanitarian sources of human capital accumulation of Russian students as key components of personal potential, descriptors of professional ethos and indicators of QOL related to health, which will allow seeing the socio-humanitarian reserves in the development of human capital in higher education.

The following sequence of actions is identified as a way of solving this problem:

1. To measure the main components of personal potential (autonomy, responsibility, reflexivity, life-meaning orientations) of students preparing them for active independence and making them “agents”.
2. To describe the professional ethos of young people with the explication of professional identity, tolerance to uncertainty, communicative abilities that initiate self-control, openness to professional and social experience, stimulate the ability to interact with a constantly changing environment and be self-organized and “self-employed” in it.
3. To identify those components of personal potential and professional ethos that affect QOL manifested as psychological well-being and its assessment.
4. To develop a model of QOL management related to health of young people in educational practice for determining the role of socio-humanitarian sources of human capital accumulation.
5. To test comprehensive psycho-diagnostic and sociological tools for assessing and managing health-related QOL; to make a training program for the development of communicative abilities and reflectivity of students and a questionnaire for a sociological survey of Russian students on self-assessment of psychological and social well-being and QOL.
6. To implement the project results in educational practice in order to validate psychological diagnostic tools for assessing personal potential and professional ethos of Russian young people, potentiating the QOL as psychological well-being.

## 5. Research Methods

The methodological basis of our project is post-non-classical scientific rationality, an interdisciplinary approach, the concept of human capital and improving the QOL of the Russian population. The project carries out a theoretical and applied research on the QOL related to the health of Russian young people, its personal potential, and professional ethos. A comprehensive sociological and psychological interdisciplinary research is being conducted in the years 2020-2022 with the participation of 1500 Russian students (Moscow, Tver, Sochi). The base of empirical research is the sociological laboratory and the laboratory of psycho-diagnostics of Tver State Technical University.

Psycho-diagnostic research tools include the authors' original questionnaire on self-assessment of psychological, social well-being and health-related QOL from a sociological survey of Russian students, the SF-36 method (health-related QOL), as well as a set of universal psycho-diagnostic techniques, including a technique for diagnosing the level of reflexivity to measure reflexive potential, a questionnaire on the level of subjective control to identify internality/responsibility, a technique for diagnosing communicative and organizational inclinations KOS-2 to analyze the communicative potential of students, a technique for diagnosing the status of professional identity to study professional ethos of students, a technique for diagnosing tolerance to uncertainty to explicate the cognitive ability to accept situations of uncertainty, a diagnostic technique for personal decision-making factors LFR-25 to analyze the level of rationality and risk appetite, a reflective self-confidence questionnaire and a diagnostic technique on students' meaningful life orientations.

## 6. Findings

The expected research result is the theoretical justification of the explanatory capabilities of the model of QOL management related to health of Russian students. The health-related QOL management model serves the purpose of finding socio-humanitarian sources of human capital accumulation in Russia; it is being developed as part of a model of human capital development in a digital world based on the choice of comprehensive sociological and psychological diagnostic that would be optimal for university students taking into account their individual psychological characteristics, professional and value orientations. The model is "tailored" to the study of personified variables of the QOL and health of students and involves the use of the latest psycho-diagnostic and sociological tools used in higher education.

## 7. Conclusion

The implementation of the interdisciplinary sociological and psychological principle in improving the students' QOL, identifying problem areas in revealing the personal potential and boundaries of professional ethos of students, working over a training program for developing communication skills and reflectivity in the digital world and its implementation in higher education practice are seen as an innovative model for opening up social and humanitarian roots of the human capital accumulation among young people and therefore represents a social problem which is far from being solved.

This model is aimed at explaining mutually changing descriptors of personal potential, professional ethos, and QOL related to youth health, which allows expanding a narrow interpretation of QOL, to include in QOL analytics such human capital accumulation sources as autonomy (self-organization), responsibility, reflexivity, meaningful life orientations, professional identity, tolerance to uncertainty, communication skills. Our model reveals the possibilities of using the latest psycho-diagnostic techniques to assess the QOL and health of Russian students, their use in the education system, moreover, it allows designing and testing the training algorithm for improving QOL.

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