

RPTSS 2018
International Conference on Research Paradigms
Transformation in Social Sciences

**PSYCHOLOGICAL FEATURES OF COMPETITIVENESS OF
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

A. Zakharova (a)*, T.Talanova (b), G.Dulina (c), V.Semenov (d), I.Getskina (e),
N.Semenova (f)

*Corresponding author

- (a) Chuvash State University named after Ulyanov I.N., Moskovsky Avenue, 15, Cheboksary, Russia,
zaharova_an@mail.ru
(b) Chuvash State University named after Ulyanov I.N., Moskovsky Avenue, 15, Cheboksary, Russia,
tamaragoncharova@mail.ru
(c) Chuvash State University named after Ulyanov I.N., Moskovsky Avenue, 15, Cheboksary, Russia,
(d) Chuvash State University named after Ulyanov I.N., Moskovsky Avenue, 15, Cheboksary, Russia
(e) Chuvash State University named after Ulyanov I.N., Moskovsky Avenue, 15, Cheboksary, Russia
(f) Chuvash State University named after Ulyanov I.N., Moskovsky Avenue, 15, Cheboksary, Russia

Abstract

In modern economic conditions, there are changes in requirements for the goals and content of university education. An important task of education at this stage is the formation of a student's personal competitiveness, the preparation of competitive graduates who are able to adapt to the labor market, who possess not only professional competences but also relevant personal, professional and moral qualities.

The article analyses the research devoted to the psychological aspects of the competitiveness of the individual. The results of an empirical study of the relationship between self-esteem of personal competitiveness (according to the methodology of N. P. Fetiskin) and a wide range of psychological features of personality (according to the methodology of Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire, 16PF. Form C), social-psychological attitudes of the person in the motivational and need sphere (methodology by O. F. Potemkina). The study revealed significant correlation between personal competitiveness and such personal factors as factor E: "subordination - dominance", factor F: "restraint - expressiveness, factor G: "low normative behavior - high normative behavior", factor N: "straightforwardness - diplomacy" and such attitudes as orientation to work, result, money, freedom.

Students with high personal competitiveness are independent, persevering and assertive. Their communication process is emotional and dynamic. They are able to show diplomacy, emotional restraint and insight in communication, to find a way out of difficult situations. The results of this research have been applied in the system of psychological support training of specialists and higher education.

© 2018 Published by Future Academy www.FutureAcademy.org.UK

Keywords: Personal competitiveness, university students, the system of higher education, socio-psychological attitudes.



1. Introduction

Russia is striving to create an efficient economic system that has led to a change in the requirements for the goals and content of university education, the training of competitive graduates who are able to adapt to the job market, who possess not only professional competencies, but also relevant personal, professional and moral qualities in the current economic and socio-cultural situation. A significant task of modern education is the formation of the student's personal competitiveness. A scientific search for the ways of the development of a student's personal competitiveness in the educational sphere is required to fulfil this task successfully.

Development of personal and professional competitiveness of students in the process of studying at university, improvement of personal and professional potential of students are an important mission of modern educational institutions in the system of higher education.

Various aspects of studying the competitiveness of the individual are reflected in the scientific works of such researchers as H.I. Ansoff, B. Tesser, S. Bern, A. Weissmann, M. Woodcock, M. Meskon, T. Santalainen.

Psychology is one of the leading sciences to ensure the competitiveness of both the individual and the country as a whole according to Zhuravleva and Ushakov (2008).

Shmelyov (2014a, 2014b) highly appreciates the role and place of the concept of "competition" in the psychological and interdisciplinary contexts based on the results of theoretical, methodological and psycholinguistic research. He considers the concept of "competition" as one of the basic categories of psychology and other humanities, along with the concepts of "activity", "communication" and "conflict". The introduction of the concepts "competition" and "competitive environment" into psychological practice is considered as the actual way of enrichment and analytical development of the categorical apparatus of the general psychological theory of activity, explained by the significant role of explicit or implicit competition in most types of human activity and animal behaviour.

The research of the concept of "competitiveness of the individual" was studied by Andreev (2006), Dejneka (2011), (Zhuravlev & Ushakov, 2008), Mitina (2002), Terelyanskaya and Kurysheva, (2012), Reznik & Sochilova (2010), Shapovalov (2003) and others.

There are two main tendencies that characterize modern studies of competitiveness - attention to non-material factors of competitiveness (knowledge, information) and allocation of the humanitarian component of competitiveness (human capital, efficiency of economic communication, trust, justice) according to the researcher of economic psychology O.S. Deineka (Dejneka, 2011).

Competitiveness is understood as an integral property associated with a set of personal qualities that determine the effectiveness of the performance of professional activities in the psychological concept of professional-personal development (Mitina, 2002).

Competitiveness of the individual is the social ability of the individual that allows him to be in demand in various spheres of activity (public, personal, professional) on the basis of his psychophysiological and personal qualities and the ability to present them in conditions of limited demand (Terelyanskaya Kurysheva, 2012).

Bogoyavlenskaya and Klyueva (2012) disclose the concept of a competitive personality through its creative potential. According to these authors, the ability to succeed through one's own initiative, anticipating the requirements of competition, is the basis for the competitiveness of personality.

Levitskaya (2012) considers competitiveness as an integral quality of personality, which is a combination of key competencies, value orientations that allow the personality to function successfully in society. In her view, the core of competitiveness development is self-determination, which reflects the attitude of the individual to the outside world, himself and future professional activity.

Gorshenina (2014), studying the relationship between levels of envy and personal competitiveness, revealed that a competitive personality does not possess the qualities of a high level envy personality, who has the desire to take something away and take possession of other's possessions, provokes an opponent to aggression and discontent.

Zaitseva, Tyupenkova, Lysenko, Khamzin and Romanova (2014) justify that competitiveness is linked with social and professional competence and its personal and professional qualities.

Rakhuba (2017) identifies two groups of qualities that correspond to actions in the activity of a competitive specialist engineer: qualities that ensure adequate interpersonal interaction in a competitive environment (social orientation in activity, ability to act effectively "with respect to others") and qualities that provide personal and professional self-development in a competitive environment (reflexivity, purposefulness, aspiration and ability to self-development, the ability to self-organize activities) in the complex of qualities of a competitive personality of a student at a technical college.

In the study of Efimova, it has been found that students, who are focused on competition, face the future with confidence and optimism, act creatively and are prone to risk. Uncompetitive students try to be simple and modest, do not attract attention to themselves; believe that it is necessary to observe the established rules, even if no one watches them; avoid the possibility of condemnation by the people around them.

"Competitiveness" is a system indicator characterizing a person as a self-developing system. The development of competitiveness as a personal characteristic is not determined by the development of one or several components of its structure, but the development of personality in general. It is important to synthesize many personal qualities in one integral concept of competitiveness (Shapovalov, 2003).

Thus, researchers propose considering personal competitiveness as the integral psychological characteristic and the ability to maximize their own possibilities to realize themselves personally, professionally, socially, morally. The success of professional activity is the significant criteria for competitiveness in the conditions of the acute competitive environment.

Modern society needs competitive specialists that are capable to maintain equal or even higher professional standards than competitors. However, according to researches, many graduates of universities are not ready to work in conditions of uncertain economic reality, experience psychological difficulties in situations of changing the profile of activities, a strategy of enterprise development and technologies. It requires flexibility of thinking in resolving specific situations and predicting their possible consequences (Morova & Talanova, 2015).

A number of studies (Aleksandrov, Zakharova & Nikolaev, 2015) have been devoted to studying the various psychological aspects of the personal competitiveness of students in the system of higher

education in the conditions of the Chuvash Republic. They showed that some of the trainees have socio-psychological personality mindset that can become an obstacle to effective competitive work.

Analysis of research positions shows that in modern scientific papers it is justified that personal competitiveness is an integral characteristic of the individual, which is multilevel, multifactorial in nature. Therefore there is a need for an interdisciplinary, systemic, integrated approach to its study.

Analysis of studies on personal competitiveness reveals the lack of a unified opinion of scientists on the definition of significant structural components, characteristics, factors of competitiveness of the individual.

2. Problem Statement

The analysis of research positions shows that in modern scientific papers, it is justified that personal competitiveness is an integral characteristic of the individual. It is multilevel and multifactorial in nature; therefore, there is a need for an interdisciplinary, systemic, integrated approach to its study.

Analysis of studies on personal competitiveness reveals the lack of a unified opinion of scientists on the definition of significant and structural components, characteristics and factors of competitiveness of the individual. They include a very wide range of diverse qualities: intellectual potential, self-actualization, motivation of achievements, adequate self-esteem, communicability and ability to make responsible decisions, leadership skills, teamwork, high creativity, value-oriented adequacy, readiness for professional self-determination and others. So, the criteria for personal competitiveness include qualifications, professional competence, a level of knowledge obtained, motivation, culture, behavioral characteristics. The structural components of the competitiveness of the individual are diligence, competence, adequate self-esteem, rationalism, activity and others.

The existence of various methodological approaches to the formation of the competitiveness of the graduate of the university in the conditions of the educational sphere is also revealed at the present time. They are axiological, acmeological, culturological, personality-oriented, systemic, activity-based and competence-based.

The identification and definition of these psychological features will give psychological support and the development of personal competitiveness in the conditions of the educational sphere of the higher education system.

3. Research Questions

How do students evaluate their competitiveness? How confident are students in their abilities? Is personal competitiveness interrelated to highly developed communicative skills? Is the self-assessment of personal competitiveness and social courage in communication interconnected? Which psychological features of personality determine the personal competitiveness of the future specialist?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study to analyse psychological features of the competitiveness of university students.

The following tasks were solved:

- 1) to study the self-assessment of the personal competitiveness of university students;
- 2) to investigate the psychological characteristics of the personality of the students of the university;
- 3) to study the socio-psychological attitudes of the individual in the motivationally-demanding sphere of students;
- 4) to identify the relationship between personal competitiveness and the psychological characteristics of the personality of university students.

Object of study: personal characteristics of competitiveness.

Subject of study: psychological characteristics of competitiveness of the personality of university students.

5. Research Methods

For our analysis, the following psychodiagnostic methods were used:

- 1) Express diagnosis of personal competitiveness (Fetiskin, 2002);
- 2) Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire, 16PF. Form C;
- 3) the methodology for diagnosing the socio-psychological attitudes of the individual in the motivationally-demanding sphere by O. F. Potemkina.

The empirical study was conducted in the Chuvash Republic, Cheboksary.

The study involved 60 students of the Chuvash Republic, Cheboksary. Their average age is 20.7 ± 1.25 .

In the Express diagnostics of personal competitiveness, the personal competitiveness is understood as a form of interpersonal interaction, characterized by the achievement of goals in the confrontation with other individuals or groups pursuing the same goals. It is presented in the form of a bipolar scale that is aimed at determining the current level of basic criteria of competitiveness.

Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire was chosen as it helps to determine a wide range of identifiable characteristics and to study such psychological characteristics of personality of the students as sociability, intelligence, emotional stability, dominance, normative behavior, social courage in communication, impulsivity, responsibility, social courage, gentleness, suspicion, dreaminess, diplomacy, concern, radicalism, independence, etc.

The methodology for diagnosing the socio-psychological attitudes of the individual in the motivationally-demanding sphere is aimed at studying orientation to "process", "result", "altruism", "selfishness", "labour", "freedom", "power", "money".

6. Findings

In the study using the Express diagnostics of personal competitiveness students most often assessed their level of personal competitiveness as average, i.e. 40.0% of students ($n = 24$ people). The level of insignificant predominance of properties that interfered with personal competitiveness, i.e. 43.33 % of students ($n = 26$ people). Only 16.67% of students ($n = 10$ people) have a high level of personal competitiveness.

There are levels with lower rates of personal competitiveness (a pronounced level of predominance of properties that interfered with personal competitiveness, a high level of dominance of properties that

interfered with personal competitiveness) in the test. There were no individuals identified with such levels in the study sample.

The analysis of the interrelationships between the results of the study using Pearson's correlation analysis made it possible to establish that personal competitiveness has a correlation with such personal factors of Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire as:

Factor E: "subordination - dominance" ($r = 0.28$; $p \leq 0.05$); it means that they are aimed at independence, perseverance. They can show obstinacy, assertiveness, propensity to authoritarian behavior.

Factor F: "restraint - expressiveness" ($r = 0.29$; $p \leq 0.05$); it means that their communication process is characterized by emotions and dynamism.

Factor G: "low normative behavior - high normative behavior" ($r = 0.28$; $p \leq 0.05$), which means that they have a developed sense of duty and responsibility, conscious observance of the generally accepted moral rules and norms, perseverance in achieving the goal, business orientation. They are characterized by conscientiousness, responsibility, stability and poise.

Factor N "straightness - diplomacy" ($r = 0.29$; $p \leq 0.05$) means that personal competitiveness as a psychological quality is associated with a certain degree of diplomacy in the process of communication, including business. In subcultural studies, a correlation was found between the high rates of this factor with the ability to survive and certain sophistication.

Personal competitiveness has interrelations with such social and psychological attitudes of the individual as "result orientation" ($r = 0.56$, $p \leq 0.001$), "labour orientation" ($r = 0.31$, $p \leq 0.01$), "freedom orientation" ($r = 0.26$, $p \leq 0.05$), "money orientation" ($r = 0.35$, $p \leq 0.01$).

Thus, the correlation analysis showed that competitive behavior is typical of students with such personality traits as high independence, responsibility, diplomacy and also with a high level of motivational and demanding attitudes toward results, labour, money, and freedom in the majority of cases.

7. Conclusion

The analysis of the level of competitiveness revealed that 56.6% of the students assessed their level of personal competitiveness as high and average. It showed that there is need in psychological support of students' training in the educational sphere of the university to increase personal competitiveness.

Some students point to psychological difficulties that prevent the expression of personal competitiveness. If these personal characteristics do not change in the process of professional, social, personal formation in the course of education in higher education institution, then students may experience serious psychological difficulties when working in a competitive environment that is a characteristic of the current social and economic situation.

Some interrelationships have been obtained that allow us to reveal the psychological features of the competitiveness of university students that are based on the results of the correlation analysis. It has been found that personal competitiveness has the interrelation with such personal factors as factor E: "subordination - dominance", factor F: "restraint – expressiveness", Factor G: "low normative behavior - high normative behavior", Factor N: "straightforwardness - diplomacy". It shows that students with high personal competitiveness are independent, persevering, and assertive; their communication process is

emotional and dynamic. They are able to show diplomacy, emotional restraint and insight in communication, to find a way out of difficult situations.

The competitive behavior of students is based on the motivational attitudes and personality characteristics of students developed in the course of social activity and life, according to the results of the study. Thus, it has been revealed that competitive students are more responsible, they are characterized by high motivation for work, result, money, freedom. It determines their competitiveness in changing social and economic conditions.

The following recommendations were proposed based on the results of the study.

It is necessary to encourage the students' desire to express their own style of behavior, creativity and independence; to change activities; develop different professional skills; develop skills in the system of social and labour relations; to react quickly and adequately to the on-going changes in society; to demonstrate competence in the problems they solve for personal competitiveness development.

To develop students' personal competitiveness, it is important to develop such skills as self-efficacy, skills of self-presentation, self-confidence, communicative abilities. It is possible to use the socio-psychological training of personal competitiveness in the practice of the educational process for it. The purpose of this training is to gain knowledge, skills of self-efficacy and self-presentation. This will help students to achieve success in educational activities, in the process of employment and in future professional activities later.

Cooperation with the employer can be carried out within the framework of social partnership when young professionals move from the process of getting education to a professional activity in the conditions of the modern labour market. Training, development of the educational and material base of the university, presentation of the practice bases, participation of representatives of the employer in joint scientific and training conferences, seminars, integrated sessions, the use of case studies from the organizations and social partners; introductory excursions to enterprises, internships, practices that are aimed at forming the representation of future specialists about their profession, organized joint events with professional groups. All of these can be determined with the employer.

The results of this research have found their application in the system of psychological support of specialist training in the system of higher education.

References

- Aleksandrov, A.Yu. & Zakharova, A.N. (2015). New Challenges in Engineering Education: Personal Advancement for Better Marketability of Future Professionals. *International Conference on Interactive Collaborative Learning (ICL) Proceedings*, 452-454.
- Andreev, V.I. (2006). *Competitology: a training course for creative competitiveness self-development*. Kazan: Center for Innovative Technologies.
- Bogoyavlenskaya, D.B., & Klyueva, O. A. (2012). Discovering the nature of competitive personality. *Psychology in Russia: State of the Art*, 5, 67-80.
- Dejneka, O.S. (2011). Representations about a competitive personality and a competitive country. *Vestnik saint-petersburg university. Series 12: Psychology. Sociology. Pedagogy*, 1, 49-59.
- Fetiskin, N.P. & Kozlov, V.V. (2002). *Socio-psychological diagnosis of development of personality and small groups*. Moscow.
- Gorshenina, N.V. (2014). The relationship between levels of envy and personal competitiveness. *Humanitarian, socio-economic and social sciences*, 10-2, 16-18.

- Levitskaya, I.A. (2012). Future expert's competitiveness as a determinant factor of higher vocational education. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*, 2, 2, 144-148.
- Mitina, L. M. (2002). *Psychology of development of competitive personality*. Voronezh: MODEC.
- Morova, N.S. & Talanova, T.V. (2015). Ethnocultural and social dominants of pedagogical education in conditions of national region. *Review of European Studies*, 7 (8), 182-188.
- Rahuba, L.F. (2017). *Pedagogical conditions for the development of the qualities of the competitive personality of a student at a technical university in the process of studying humanitarian disciplines*. (Author's abstract cand. ped. n.).
- Reznik, S.D. & Sochilova, A.A. (2010). *Fundamentals of personal competitiveness*. Moscow: INFRA-M.
- Shapovalov, V.I. (2003). Forming a competitive personality. *School technology*, 3, 38-44.
- Shmelyov, A.G. (2014a). Competition as a metacategory of modern psychology, Part 1. *Bulletin of South-Urals State University. Series: Psychology*, 7(3), 105–115.
- Shmelyov, A.G. (2014b). Competition as a metacategory of modern psychology, Part 2. *Bulletin of South-Urals State University. Series: Psychology*, 7(4), 197–108.
- Terelyanskaya, I.V. & Kuryshva, I.V. (2012). Psychological approaches to the concept of competitiveness of personality. *The world of science, culture, education*, 2.
- Zaitseva, O. Yu., Tyupenkova, G.E., Lysenko, N. V., Khamzin, L.N., Romanova, M.L. (2014). Modern models of competitive personality. *Scientific notes of the University. P.F. Lesgaft*, 10 (116), 68-72.
- Zhuravlev, A.L & Ushakov, D.V. (2008). Education and competitiveness of the nation: psychological aspects. *Science-Culture-Society*, 3, 99-108.