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YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN VARIOUS FORMS OF SOCIAL ACTIVITY MANIFESTATION

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Abstract

Activity is the most important resource for the development of both the individual and society. Due to their social status and age characteristics, youth is a group whose activity is increasing. However, what kind of vector this activity will take (antisocial or prosocial) depends on a number of objective and subjective factors, tools for involving young people in society. We conducted an online survey among the youth of the Chelyabinsk region in order to understand the involvement of youth in various communities (media communities, formal, informal associations, self-government bodies) acting as agents of involving youth in social activity. We chose a number of constructive forms of youth participation and examined them in order of increasing share of proactivity (participation in youth projects, participation in solving community problems, discussing current problems and youth programs, disease prevention, implementing our own social projects), we studied how much they are in demand by youth with taking into account gender and place of residence. The results of the study show that more than two-thirds of young people turn to online media communities and only about a third to formal youth associations. Young people often display forms of social activity (participation in youth projects) and are less involved in forms related to proactivity, while rural youth are more often included in the manifestation of both active and proactive forms. The study has a number of limitations; it is necessary to correlate the obtained data with the data based on other research methods.

Keywords: Proactivity, social activity, youth communities

1. Introduction

As the research results (Ingellis & Leone, 2017) show, the active participation of youth in society (in the family, school, and associations) has a positive effect on self-efficacy and the ability to solve current problems. Social activity ensures the realization of the potential of a young person and is an important factor in his personal, social and professional development.

At the same time, researchers note an insufficient level of youth social activity in different countries of the world. Sokhadze (2017) believes that the level of social activity in Russian society as a whole is low, while youth activity, although insufficient, is still higher. Indeed, researchers have noted a lack of practices of manifestation of social activity in Russian society (Stradze, 2013). Young people in the face of uncertainty have not so much to broadcast existing practices as to be included in the design of new practices. This actualizes the appeal to proactive forms of youth participation in society.

Conductors of youth activity are social networks and media (Krolo & Puzek, 2014), youth communities (Hampden-Thompson et al., 2015), youth involvement in assessing youth participation (Richards-Schuster & Elliott, 2019) and others. The role of youth communities as agents of constructive social activity of youth is growing, the task is to provide them with a vector of prosociality and proactivity in the selection and translation of forms of youth participation.

2. Problem Statement

Despite numerous studies of social activity, correlation of their results makes it difficult for different researchers to determine the content of this concept. The key characteristic of activity is self-determination, as the ability to self-stimulate and self-propel. Based on this criterion, the dichotomy "reactivity – activity" is distinguished. Reactivity means the movement in response to external stimulation. Activity suggests that the subject himself is the author of the concept, plan and its implementation (Kharlanova, 2014). Social activity manifests itself in social activity consciously and is directed towards the transformation of oneself and the surrounding world.

Researchers are increasingly turning to the concept of "proactivity", considering it as a factor in the self-efficacy and effectiveness of an organization in conditions of uncertainty (Fidan & Balchi, 2016), future-oriented actions aimed at change (Cangiano et al., 2019). If activity is manifested in the solution of urgent problems at present, as an answer to an existing challenge, then proactivity includes taking responsibility for oneself and one's future and forecasting and building activity aimed at solving strategic problems.

Today, the focus is on the forms of manifestation of social activity. Forms of proactivity are not given enough attention. The question arises: what forms of constructive social activity are demanded by youth and in the interaction with which youth communities is it included.

3. Research Questions

A study of youth communities as agents of inclusion of youth in society is devoted to a number of studies (Boulianne & Theocharis, 2020; Garcia-Galera et al., 2014; Krolo & Puzek, 2014; Puigcercos et

al., 2019). Their results indicate that there is a connection between the entry of young people into specific youth communities and involvement in various forms of youth participation. What youth communities are most in demand by modern Russian youth, taking into account factors of gender and place of residence?

Comparative studies of the value orientations of young people reveal differences depending on gender characteristics and place of residence (Chernikova et al., 2019), but do not reveal the features of inclusion in youth communities and manifestations of proactivity. There is a need to study how young people demand different forms of social activity (active and proactive), taking into account gender and place of residence.

4.   Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the demand for youth tools to engage in society and involvement in the implementation of various forms of activity (from activity to proactivity), taking into account gender and place of residence.

Research Objectives:

1. To identify the involvement of young people (of different gender and places of residence) in youth communities and media interaction.

2. To establish the involvement of youth in various forms of manifestation of activity and proactivity.

5.   Research Methods

As part of a study in the Chelyabinsk region, 498 young people aged 14 to 30 years old were interviewed (girls – 375 (75.3 %) boys – 123 (24.7 %), residents of the metropolis – 381 (76.5 %), residents of rural areas – 117 (23.5 %)). The questionnaire included 70 statements and provided five possible answers (1. I completely disagree; 2. I rather disagree; 3. I find it difficult to answer; 4. I rather agree; 5. I completely agree).

The data on the inclusion of youth in various forms of manifestation of social activity were examined using the following example:

1) forms of social activity (participation in youth projects, participation in solving social problems);

2) transitional forms from activity to proactivity: participation in the discussion of youth projects and programs; participation in the discussion of youth issues on official websites;

3) forms of proactivity: disease prevention, implementation of one's own social project.

6.   Findings

The data on the demand for various tools for involving young people in society (Table 1) showed that 70.3 % of respondents follow bloggers or communities on social networks (the sum of the choice of answers "rather agree" – 19.5 %; "completely agree" – 50.8 %).

49.2 % of respondents were included in the work of self-government bodies (the sum of the election of answers "rather agree" – 15.5 %; "completely agree" – 33.7 %). Girls more often take part in self-government bodies (V = 0.147; p = 0.03) than boys.

30.2 % of respondents ("rather agree" – 8.8 %; and "completely agree" – 21.5 %) are members of one of the formal youth associations with legal registration, more often the youth of rural settlements (V = 0.179; p = 0.003) than cities.

29.95 % of respondents were included in the work of youth councils ("rather agree" – 9.4 %; "strongly agree" – 15.5 %), more often young residents of rural settlements (V = 0.2; p = 0.001) than urban residents.

The results of the study confirm that virtual youth communities become an agent for inclusion of youth in participation in society (Puigcercos et al., 2019), strengthen the social participation of youth (Garcia-Galera et al., 2014). The data are consistent with a study (Krolo & Puzek, 2014) that revealed a permanent link between the use of social networks on the Internet and the number of members in non-governmental organizations and civic engagement.

The result of a study (Boulianne & Theocharis, 2020), which established that media resources act as an instrument of participation, but causal relationships can be different, seems to be significant (some young people are involved in social activities through the Internet, and some, on the contrary, carry out activities in youth associations is included in media interaction).

As research shows (Hampden-Thompson et al., 2015) different youth communities have their own ways of participating; therefore, it is important to purposefully help young people learn practical navigation skills in youth communities.

Table 1. Demand for youth instruments of youth participation

Availability degree	sex		Cramér's V	p-value	place of residence		Cramér's V	p-value
	female	male			city	village		
	n=375	n=123			n=381	n=117		
I am a member of one of the formal (legal registration. Legal status) youth associations								
Completely does not agree	46.9 %	53.7 %			50.1 %	43.6 %		
Does not agree rather	8.8 %	7.3 %			8.7 %	7.7 %		
Find it difficult to answer	13.6 %	9.8 %	0.068	0.683	13.6 %	9.4 %	0.179	0.003
Agree rather	9.1 %	8.1 %			10.0 %	5.1 %		
Completely agree	21.6 %	21.1 %			17.6 %	34.2 %		
I participate in the work of self-government bodies								
Completely does not agree	27.5 %	42.3 %			32.3 %	27.4 %		
Does not agree rather	7.7 %	4.9 %			7.1 %	6.8 %		
Find it difficult to answer	12.5 %	13.0 %	0.147	0.03	13.4 %	10.3 %	0.081	0.512
Agree rather	16.8 %	11.4 %			15.5 %	15.4 %		
Completely agree	35.5 %	28.5 %			31.8 %	40.2 %		
I participate in the work of the youth council								
Completely does not agree	45.9 %	59.3 %			52.5 %	38.5 %		
Does not agree rather	11.2 %	7.3 %			10.2 %	10.3 %		
Find it difficult to answer	17.1 %	11.4 %	0.136	0.056	16.8 %	12.0 %	0.2	0.001
Agree rather	10.7 %	5.7 %			8.7 %	12.0 %		
Completely agree	15.2 %	16.3 %			11.8 %	27.4 %		

I follow specific bloggers or communities on social media								
Completely does not agree	10.1 %	13.8 %			9.4 %	16.2 %		
Does not agree rather	8.8 %	10.6 %			9.4 %	8.5 %		
Find it difficult to answer	8.5 %	12.2 %	0.09	0.404	9.4 %	9.4 %	0.117	0.147
Agree rather	19.7 %	18.7 %			18.4 %	23.1 %		
Completely agree	52.8 %	44.7 %			53.3 %	42.7 %		

The data obtained on the inclusion of youth in various forms of manifestation of social activity are presented in table 2.

Table 2. Youth involvement in various forms of manifestation of social activity and proactivity

Availability degree	**sex**		**Cramér's V**	**p-value**	**place of residence**		**Cramér's V**	**p-value**
	female	**male**			**city**	**village**		
	n=375	**n=123**			**n=381**	**n=117**		
I take part in solving of society problems								
Completely does not agree	21.9 %	24.4 %			24.9 %	14.5 %		
Does not agree rather	16.0 %	13.0 %			16.0 %	12.8 %		
Find it difficult to answer	29.9 %	21.1 %	0.106	0.229	29.1 %	23.1 %	0.19	0.001
Agree rather	18.1 %	23.6 %			17.8 %	24.8 %		
Completely agree	14.1 %	17.9 %			12.1 %	24.8 %		
I have experience in youth projects								
Completely does not agree	21.6 %	27.6 %			24.9 %	17.1 %		
Does not agree rather	8.5 %	10.6 %			8.9 %	9.4 %		
Find it difficult to answer	12.8 %	11.4 %	0.075	0.595	14.4 %	6.0 %	0.161	0.012
Agree rather	19.5 %	17.1 %			18.6 %	19.7 %		
Completely agree	37.6 %	33.3 %			33.1 %	47.9 %		
I have experience in developing and implementing my own social project								
Completely does not agree	39.5 %	36.6 %			42.3 %	27.4 %		
Does not agree rather	11.2 %	14.6 %			12.6 %	10.3 %		
Find it difficult to answer	14.4 %	14.6 %	0.049	0.881	15.2 %	12.0 %	0.187	0.002
Agree rather	10.7 %	9.8 %			9.4 %	13.7 %		
Completely agree	24.3 %	24.4 %			20.5 %	36.8 %		
I am engaged in the prevention of various diseases								
Completely does not agree	9.9 %	20.3 %			13.4 %	9.4 %		
Does not agree rather	19.5 %	16.3 %			18.6 %	18.8 %		
Find it difficult to answer	31.2 %	26.8 %	0.138	0.05	31.0 %	27.4 %	0.087	0.437
Agree rather	28.0 %	25.2 %			26.8 %	29.1 %		
Completely agree	11.5 %	11.4 %			10.2 %	15.4 %		
I participate in the discussion of pressing youth issues on the official websites of the government or government organizations								
Completely does not agree	46.7 %	52.0 %			53.0 %	31.6 %		
Does not agree rather	18.9 %	13.0 %			16.8 %	19.7 %		
Find it difficult to answer	18.1 %	16.3 %	0.097	0.323	17.8 %	17.1 %	0.24	0.001
Agree rather	6.7 %	10.6 %			5.5 %	14.5 %		
Completely agree	9.6 %	8.1 %			6.8 %	17.1 %		
I myself participated in the discussion of projects and programs for young people								
Completely does not agree	37.9 %	45.5 %	0.071	0.643	42.3 %	31.6 %	0.226	0.001
Does not agree rather	13.9 %	11.4 %			14.7 %	8.5 %		

Find it difficult to answer	16.8 %	16.3 %	18.1 %	12.0 %
Agree rather	14.9 %	12.2 %	12.9 %	18.8 %
Completely agree	16.5 %	14.6 %	12.1 %	29.1 %

55.4 % of respondents have experience in participating in the implementation of youth projects ("rather agree" – 18.9 %; "completely agree" – 36.5 %), more often rural youth (V = 0.161; p = 0.012) than the youth of the city. 34.6 % of respondents ("rather agree" – 19.5 %; "completely agree" – 15.1 %), and more often rural youth (V = 0.19; p = 0.001) than the city youth take part in solving social problems.

30.4 % of respondents ("rather agree" – 14.3 %; "strongly agree" – 16.1 %), more often rural youth (V = 0.23; p = 0.0001) than the city youth participate in the discussion of youth projects and programs. 16.8 % of those polled ("rather agree" – 7.6 %; "strongly agree" – 9.2 %), more often rural youth (V = 0.2; p = 0.0001) than urban participated in the discussion of youth problems on official websites.

38.7 % of respondents carry out disease prevention ("rather agree" – 27.3 %; "strongly agree" – 11.4 %), more often girls (V = 0.138; p = 0.05) than boys. 34.7 % of respondents have experience in implementing their own social project ("rather agree" – 10.3 %; "completely agree" – 24.3 %), more often rural youth (V = 0.187; p = 0.002) than the youth of the city.

As the results show, young people are more involved in such a form of activity as a youth project, which is consistent with the data of a number of studies (Ivanova & Pastukhova, 2018; Torres-Harding et al., 2018). Forms associated with the manifestation of proactivity less encompass youth. Young people are not so widely involved in the discussion of urgent problems, programs, projects involving adults, which is an alarming trend. As the results of the study (Zeldin et al., 2014) show, it is the partnership of youth and adults (the voice of youth and the supportive attitude of adults) that are the most productive form of youth participation.

The greater involvement of rural youth in the manifestation of activity and proactivity is of particular interest. Probably, this can be associated with a greater orientation of young people in small settlements to prosocial values (Chernikova et al., 2019). According to the study (Grant & Rothbard, 2013), pro-social values in a situation of uncertainty contribute to the manifestation of proactivity.

7. Conclusion

The study showed that youth is involved in different youth communities, more in network media communities than in formal associations. It is urgent to appeal to media communities as an instrument for involving youth in active participation in society, and to support media interaction between formal youth associations, as actors in constructive forms of youth participation.

Mostly young people respond to the urgent tasks of the present, are socially active and less oriented towards proactivity.

The results of the study are of interest to specialists involved in youth and educational work.

We emphasize that the study has several limitations. A survey via the Internet did not allow regulating the volume of the compared groups; as a result, groups were formed that differed greatly in the number of respondents. This could lead to a distortion of the research results. The study also reflects only

the subjective opinion of young people and requires correlation of the obtained data with other research methods.

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