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**MOTIVATION OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN
UNIVERSITY'S INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

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Abstract

The article dwells on motivation of student participation in the process of internationalization of higher education. Nowadays, motivation of university students to develop various academic competences is one of the key issues facing the higher education system. In accordance with tendencies of internationalization of modern world, university's international activities are becoming one of the most important tools for training specialists that are qualified enough for active competition in the global labor market. This article is based on the survey conducted among 244 students from different Russian universities. The results of the survey make it possible to determine which types of international activities of a university are the most popular among students, what factors hinder the participation of students in the international activities of the university and what motives for participation in the international activities of the university dominate in the student environment. Moreover, the results show the correlation between the performance of students, the level of their involvement in the scientific and educational activities of the university and the level of their involvement in international activities. The author sees the roots of insufficient involvement of students in university's international activities in the lack of language and communicative skills needed for effective intercultural dialogue. This assumption is confirmed by the results of the study. The paper stresses the necessity of stimulation of students' personal interest in international activities of a university in accordance with their cognitive, social and pragmatic needs.

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1. Introduction

Researchers agree that motivation of university students to develop general academic competences and special professional skills is one of the key problems facing the higher education system (Kotryakhov et al., 2019). One of the ways to develop these competences and skills is the participation of university students in international activities, which are carried out in accordance with the strategy of internationalization of higher education. Scientists agree that the internationalization of the educational process is the leading trend in the development of a modern university (Crisan-Mitra & Borza, 2015). Modern trends in the internationalization and integration of educational programs set a fundamentally new target for higher education, which is to train specialists who can compete with foreign colleagues in the world labor market and successfully integrate into the process of world globalization which can be considered the highest form of internationalization. There is also a different view on the connection between globalization and internationalization: some scientists do not consider these concepts to be equal or connected, since the main goal of the globalization of education is to create a joint global educational space, which inevitably entails the loss of the identity of educational systems, and the goal of internationalization is to enrich the educational systems of partner countries (Pevzner, Rakhkochkine et al., 2019). As researchers state, “in the globalized environment social groups are closely connected but at the same time they persistently try to preserve and concentrate on their localized identities” (Pevzner et al., 2019, p. 42).

J. Knight, J. Mestenhauser, B. Elingbo (as cited in Altbach, 2012), Liferov (2009) define the internationalization of higher education as a process of international orientation of universities, international education, which presupposes a set of diverse programs and services for students from different countries and the process of integrating the international aspect into the educational, research and other functions of the university. The most generally accepted definition of the process of internationalization was given by Knight (2008): “The process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education” (p. 21). The revised concept of internationalization (Yemini, 2015) has sharpened the focus on the processual aspects and the outcomes of the internationalization (e.g. global citizenship) still regarding the policy dimension.

Harari (1989) identified three main elements of internationalization of higher education: an international component in curricula and programs, the availability of technical cooperation and mutual understanding programs, the international mobility of students and faculty.

The modern practice of Russian universities has significantly expanded the range of directions and forms of international activity. These include: international scientific and practical conferences, double graduation programs, recruiting of foreign students, academic mobility of students and the mobility of educational programs, international strategic partnership of universities, bilingual educational environment and joint distance learning of students of domestic and foreign universities using digital technologies. According to the researchers, changes in the modern global labor market demand professionals who are ready to compete on a global scale: “Global transformation of manufacture and labor markets has made actual the need for competent specialists who are ready for continuous and

constant professional self-perfection” (Wang et al., 2018, p. 960). Knowledge, abilities and skills, the demand for which on the part of the world labor market is growing every year, can be obtained only through active participation in the mentioned-above types of international activities of a university. Researchers agree that these competences cannot be successfully formed in the absence of proper motivation of educational activity (Kalyanova, 2019).

The participation of students in the international activities of the university, of course, contributes to their professional growth and the development of language, cultural, social and special skills, but at the same time, for effective participation in such activities, students, firstly, must have a stable motivation, and second, they must possess a certain range of competencies specific to each type of international activity. So, if a student is willing to take part in an international scientific and practical conference, he or she only needs to possess special knowledge, scientific erudition and have a certain level of language competence, but to participate in academic mobility programs, much deeper socio-cultural knowledge and developed language and communication skills may be required. Consequently, the motivation to participate (or refuse to participate) in various international projects can be determined not only by the main factors that determine the student's involvement in scientific and educational activities, but also by several other reasons related to the knowledge of foreign languages, communication skills and socio-cultural competencies necessary for effective intercultural communication. In this regard, it seems relevant in this study to consider and classify the types of motivation that play a key role in attracting students to the international activities of the university.

2. Problem Statement

The motivation is considered to be a trigger for any academic activity (Zolotukhina et al., 2020). It is well known that a student's motivation is determined by a number of internal and external factors associated with the personality of the student and the content of education, the quality of teaching, the specifics of the information and educational environment, and external relations of the university. From the student's point of view, the international activity of the university is a part of the educational process; therefore, the motivation of the student to participate in various international events is based on the motives that reflect the degree of the student's overall involvement in the educational process. Nevertheless, the international activity of the university has several characteristic features that distinguish it from other forms of activity of a higher educational institution. Researchers identify three types of motivation that stimulate students to participate in the international activities of the university - social, associated with the need for various types of interaction in the global communicative space, cognitive, based on the need to develop and acquire new knowledge, skills and abilities, and pragmatic, associated with the desire to continue education at a foreign university, to be competitive in the world labor markets, to ensure a sustainable career growth (Pevzner et al., 2018).

The problem of motivation for studying at a university is widely covered in domestic and foreign scientific pedagogical and psychological literature (Galkina, 2017; Krylova, 2013; Nukpe, 2012; Watt & Richardson, 2020). However, the specifics of involving students in the international activities of the university in order to develop their professional, linguistic and cultural competencies are not sufficiently

disclosed in modern scientific literature. The practice of universities shows that often students of both linguistic and non-linguistic profiles do not participate in the international activities of the university as actively as in other forms of the educational process and student life. The main barriers to participation in various international events are lack of awareness among students, lack of language knowledge, undeveloped communication skills and lack of experience in communicative intercultural interaction. To overcome these barriers, it is necessary to stimulate students' personal interest in active international communication.

Based on the need to increase students' interest in participating in the international activities of the university and insufficient disclosure of the topic in modern scientific literature, we consider it necessary to analyze the motives of students' participation in the international activities of the university and the ways of entering these activities. In accordance with the scientific problem posed, the author made the assumption that the majority of university students initially have insufficiently stable and formed motivation to participate in international activities due to various obstacles that require determination. To overcome these barriers, it is necessary to identify the dominant types of motives and the main factors that contribute to an increase in students' motivation to participate in the international activities of the university.

3. Research Questions

The subject of this research is the motivation of students to participate in the international activities of the university. To achieve this goal, answers to the following research questions were searched:

- What types of international activities are students most actively involved in?
- What factors hinder the participation of students in the international activities of the university?
- What motives for participation in the international activities of the university dominate in the student environment?
- Is there a correlation between the performance of students, the level of their involvement in the scientific and educational activities of the university and the level of their involvement in international activities?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this work is to determine the dominant types of motivation of students of a higher educational institution to participate in the international activities of the university.

5. Research Methods

Content analysis of scientific literature was used during the research alongside with a questionnaire survey. The study was based on a personality-oriented approach that suggests that the student's personality traits, their value attitudes, cognitive interest, the level of linguistic, intercultural and social competence must be taken into account in the process of attracting students to various types of international activities. From the standpoint of a personality-oriented approach, it is very important to take into account the student's motives to participate in international activities and the ways of forming such motivation during the period of studying at the university. The use of an activity-oriented approach aimed at developing the personality and competencies of a student in the process of activity made it possible to comprehend the ways of attracting students to participate in various types of international activities (academic mobility, joint educational programs and projects, etc.) Based on personality-oriented and activity-oriented approaches, the university should form a favorable informational and educational environment that contributes to the diversified development of the student's personality, taking into account his interests, motives and possible ways to overcome intercultural barriers.

To achieve the objectives of the research, a questionnaire survey was conducted among students of different profiles: Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University, The Bonch-Bruевич Saint-Petersburg State University of Telecommunications, Institution of Professional Education "NOKI named after S. V. Rakhmaninov", St. Petersburg State Transport University and Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration. To conduct the survey, an author's questionnaire "International University Activity: Students' Opinion" was developed. The collection and statistical processing of data was carried out using the Google Forms platform. The author's questionnaire consisted of 11 questions, which can be conditionally divided into 5 groups:

1. General information about the participant of the survey
2. The degree of student involvement in the research and educational process
3. Level of development of language competence
4. The frequency and status of participation in the international activities of the university, the degree of awareness of international events.
5. Motives for student participation in international activities.

244 people took part in the survey.

In addition to the survey method, the study used theoretical methods such as analysis, synthesis, generalization, analysis of original sources.

6. Findings

244 people (current and former students of higher educational institutions of Russia) took part in the survey. Of the total number of respondents, 164 people (67.21%) were students of the Novgorod State University named after Yaroslav the Wise, 36 people (14.75%) - the Novgorod branch of the RANEPA, 24 people (9.83%) were students of The Bonch-Bruевич Saint-Petersburg State University of Telecommunications, 20 people (8.2%) - students of the St. Petersburg State Transport University. In

terms of profiles, the study participants were distributed as follows: 96 people (39.3%) - humanitarian (Foreign Language), 72 people (29.5%) - technical, 60 people (24.6%) – humanitarian (Non-linguistic), 16 people (6.5 %) - natural sciences. Of the 244 respondents, 232 (95%) indicated that they speak a foreign language to one degree or another. 12 respondents (5%) indicated that they only speak Russian. Among those who speak foreign languages, 20 people independently assessed the level of their language competencies as "basic" (8.62%), 16 people (6.89%) - "below average", 120 people (51.72%) as "average", 56 people (24.13%) - "high", 20 people (8.62%) noted that they speak the language at a professional level. Among the respondents who speak foreign languages, the majority (140 people, 60.34%) speak only English, 76 people (32.75%) - English and German, 12 people (5.17%) - English and French and 4 respondents (1.72%) - English and Serbian.

As shown by the results of the survey, out of 244 participants, the majority (192 people, 78.68%) have experience of participating in the international activities of the university. According to the answers, students are most actively involved in the following types of international activities of the university (the form of the question allowed choosing two or more answer options, according to the results, 81.96% of students had experience of participating in several types of international activities of the university):

- International cultural events: 124 respondents (50.81%)
- International scientific and practical conferences: 112 respondents (45.9%)
- International seminars, master classes, workshops: 96 respondents (40%)
- Internship abroad and various academic mobility programs: 20 respondents (8.19%)
- Joint educational programs: 16 respondents (6.55%)
- International sport events: 4 respondents (1.63%)

Based on the data obtained during the survey, the main factor that hinders the participation of students in the international activities of the university is the insufficient development of language competencies. Among 36 survey participants who defined their level of language competence as “basic” or “below average”, only 12 people (33.33%) have experience of participation in the international activities of the university. This ratio allows us to conclude that out of 52 survey participants who did not have experience in participating in the international activities of the university, 12 could not take part in international activities due to the language barrier associated with the lack of language competencies (they only know their native language), 24 - due to insufficient development of language competencies for effective intercultural communication. It is important to note that motivation to participate in international activities in the absence of the necessary competencies can become a motivation to learn a language. Researchers agree that “the influence of motivation is seen as the key to learning a second language and one of the most important factors affecting the success of language learners” (Arzieva et al., 2020, p. 3323). It allows us to conclude that motivation to participate in international activities and to learn a foreign language can influence each other. Another 16 research participants who defined their level of foreign language proficiency as average (8 people) and high (8 people) also did not participate in the international activities of the university. Probably, in this case, the lack of motivation to participate in international activities is associated with the general level of student involvement in research and educational activities and his or her academic performance, as well as the degree of awareness of students

about various international events. These assumptions are supported by statistical data collected during the survey. 16 respondents with a level of development of language competencies sufficient for effective intercultural communication, along with 36 respondents who do not speak the language at the level necessary for intercultural communication, noted their low level of involvement in the scientific activities of the university (36 out of 52 respondents indicated that they do not participate in university research activities, and 8 of them noted that their participation in these activities is episodic). The low level of involvement in the international activities of two respondents whose language competence is sufficient for effective intercultural communication and who have shown high scientific and educational activity is probably explained by the specifics of their profiles, which are not directly related to active participation in international activities.

The research results also made it possible to identify the main sources from which students receive information about the international activities of the university. These are:

- Teachers: 75% of the respondents.
- Mass media (including groups of the international department and university in social networks): 68.8% of respondents.
- Staff of International Relations Office: 25% of respondents.

The last on the list are such sources as fellow students (18,8%) and friends (12,5%). 75% of respondents who noted that they have not received any information about the international activities of the university are of non-linguistics profiles. The lack of awareness of students in this case is explained not only by the lack of language skills, but also by the lack of interest in this kind of information. To fully disclose the reasons for the low level of involvement of successful students with sophisticated language skills in the international activities of the university and to determine the links between the profile of study and student's involvement in international activity, it is necessary to conduct a more specific study. Based on the answers to the question about the reasons and motivation to participate in the international activities of the university, we can conclude that the dominant motives of students to participate in international activities are:

- Cognitive: desire to develop linguistic and intercultural competences, to gain professional knowledge, skills and abilities (75%)
- Social: striving to establish contacts with international students (56%)
- Pragmatic motives (58%), which can be divided into two groups:
 - a) Obtaining benefits for future profession and educational level (72%)
 - b) Obtaining academic benefits (grades, scholarships, grants) (34%).

The results obtained during the questionnaire survey of students differ somewhat from the data collected by the researchers during the survey of Novgorod schoolchildren. Among schoolchildren, social motives dominated (75%), cognitive motives took second place (64%), and the smallest number of participants had pragmatic motives (27%) (Pevzner et al., 2018). In the student environment, cognitive motives dominate, followed by social motives, which are almost as common as pragmatic ones. Among

the pragmatic motives, the dominant ones are those aimed at gaining benefits for the future profession and raising the level of education, followed by the desire for scholarships, grants and additional grades.

The authors of the study believe that the discrepancy in the results of students and schoolchildren is explained by differences in the value attitudes of these social groups, which is confirmed by the results of earlier studies. For students, in contrast to schoolchildren, the value of development prevails, i.e. it prevails at this stage of human maturation (Tyrnova, 2010). In turn, schoolchildren are more focused on the development of social contacts, since in adolescence, social needs associated with interaction with people around them, recognition and respect on their part are dominant in the value system.

The main limitation of this study is that most of the respondents received information about the survey from a group in a social network dedicated to the international activities of Novgorod State University.

7. Conclusion

Based on the research results, we can conclude that students are most actively involved in such types of international activities as international cultural events, international scientific and practical conferences, international seminars, master classes and workshops. The main factor that hinders the participation of students in the international activities of the university is the insufficient development of language competencies. According to the survey, the dominant type of motivation for student participation in international activities is cognitive. The results make it possible to conclude that there is a correlation between the level of student's involvement in international activities of a university and his or her academic performance and overall level of involvement in university activities.

Based on the results described above, it can be stated that in order to increase the motivation of students to participate in international activities, first of all, it is necessary to stimulate their interest, taking into account the personal interests of students in the prospects that open up to participants in various international events of the university: the development of professional, linguistic, intercultural and social competencies, the opportunity to continue their studies at a prestigious foreign university, receive special scholarships and grants. In addition, for the effective involvement of students in international activities, it is necessary to ensure the proper level of awareness and language competence of students.

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