

ICHEU 2021**International Conference «Humanity in the Era of Uncertainty»****PSYCHOLOGICAL FEATURES OF SOCIAL ADAPTATION OF STUDENTS IN THE DISTANCE LEARNING**

Elena Yu. Dvoynikova (a)*, Natalia S. Beilina (b), Olga V. Telnova (c)

*Corresponding author

(a) Samara State Technical University, Molodogvardeyskaya st., 244, Samara, Russia,
dey.02j@gmail.com

(b) Samara State Technical University, Molodogvardeyskaya st., 244, Samara, Russia,
nabelina@yandex.ru

(c) Southern Federal University, Bolshaya Sadovaya st., 105/42, Rostov-on-Don, Russia,
telnova_ov@mail.ru

Abstract

The features of social adaptation of first-year students of Samara State Technical University are considered in the article. The social psychological conditions of the educational process of students in the distance-learning mode are described. The fundamental concepts of considering the phenomenon of social adaptation are analyzed. The types of social adaptation are constructive and destructive and their content components, the results of a research experiment to identify strategies of social interaction in the educational process of students with different types of social adaptation are researched in detail. Experimental studies have shown that first-year students have high anxiety and rigidity, medium and low levels of adaptation, which is adaptive, and only 28.5 per cent of students with a constructive type of social adaptation, characterized by active interaction and orientation of the personality towards development. The influence of the type of adaptation on the academic success of students has been determined. The features of intrapersonal content, which form the behavior of students in social interaction, are described. The results of observations of the strategies of social communication of students of both types of adaptation are given, the forms of interaction of students with a destructive type are shown. The article reflects the phenomenon of social adaptation, which ascertains its consistency according to the test indicators and at the same time demonstrates intrapersonal problems when using strategies of a destructive type. The forecast of the influence of the type of adaptation on the risk of psycho-emotional disorders is presented.

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1. Introduction

In the life of every person there were situations in which it seemed there was no way out. In some cases, such situations could escalate into periods, which could last indefinitely. The aspiration to change the course of events motivates a person to choose different strategies of behavior, planning and attitude to a problem situation. Thinking of solving problems is based on unconscious experience. The richer the experience, the closer a person's decisions are to optimal ones. But can optimal solutions always be called correct, and what exactly determines their optimum? In this aspect, the optimization of decisions is facilitated by social adaptation. It is a very complex phenomenon of parallel events of socialization, assimilation and intrapersonal transformation based on the experience gained in solving problems arising in social interaction.

2. Problem Statement

Being an urgent problem in the conditions of changes in various areas of human activity, social adaptation is of scientific interest for many researchers. The fundamental concepts of adaptation show its presence in all processes related to the life of all living organisms – from biological to psychosocial. In the biological definition, environmental conditions start the process of adaptation of the structure and functions of organisms to them (Nalchajyan, 2010). Adaptation was also considered as one of the prerequisites for survival in society – as a habitat (Parsons, 1971). The theory of the adaptation syndrome, developed by H. Selye, describes the patterns of the emergence of nonspecific resistance of the organism to the effect of a stress stimulus. These reactions are characteristic of all adaptation processes, including social adaptation. The interactionist approach made it possible to consider the adaptation of a personality from the point of view of a set of methods for overcoming difficulties, which differ from the usual adaptation to the requirements of the environment by a characteristic personality of a set of strategies for solving problems (as cited in Shibutani, 1961).

The main adaptation mechanism in the concept of S. Freud is the ego, the content of which is the rational cognitive processes of the individual, resolving the tensions between the antagonists – the instinctive the id, and the super-moral the superego (Freud, 2018). The founder of the psychoanalytic concept of adaptation, Hartmann (1958), emphasizing the importance of conflicts in personality development, argued that the tasks of adaptation to the social environment that humans possess from the moment of birth, but prolonged helplessness of infancy leads to the result of adaptation through learning. The social psychological approach considers a person as a subject and object of the adaptation process in social relations, under the influence of which he becomes a so-called product of society. In the theory of Rean (2004) adaptation is the individual's inclusion into the social environment as a system of moral and social values, social relations and norms.

3. Research Questions

Developing the author's concept of social psychological adaptation (SPA), in previous studies (Dvoynikova, 2015, 2019) we considered the formation of the ability to adapt as an ontogenetic process and

identified two of its types – constructive and destructive. The content of a constructive type is a focus on finding solutions to problems of social interaction, normal self-rating and the absence of frustrations. The destructive type contains intrapersonal conflicts and tensions, low self-rating and a focus on solving intrapersonal tensions to the detriment of solving social problems. Thus, as a result of the study, in a comparative analysis, one could see positive indicators of social adaptation of people; however, their success in social interaction depended on the type of SPA. We also found that the types of SPA are formed depending on the social psychological conditions of personality development (family upbringing and the educational environment have a leading importance). In them the basic ideas about the rules and norms of social interaction, moral and ethical values, meaning of life, and strategies for solving the difficulties of social interaction are being formed. Currently, the relevance of the topic of social adaptation has received a new development in connection with the protracted global economic crisis, suddenly aggravated by the situation of a pandemic, which excludes migration processes of the population to find work, attend educational institutions because of the severe limits of social interaction. The complex of these problems supplements the idea of people about the coming social economic changes associated with the consequences of the pandemic. All these factors represent the future difficulties of social adaptation of the population. In this regard, various social psychological destructions of social processes and psycho-emotional conditions of people are already emerging. The results of the last investigations on the impact of COVID-19 on the neurological and mental health of the population show an increase in the demand for psychotherapeutic help (Oshchepkova & Mironchenkov, 2021).

These problems actualize the entire adaptive potential of a person for self-determination, choice of a field of activity and life planning. However, the type of personality's SPA can affect the development of a personal growth (Dvoynikova, 2019). In modern conditions the freshmen students are in a system of multidirectional landmarks, which do not always correspond to the fundamental ones in the context of universal human, moral, ethical and cultural traditions (Andrienko, 2021; Andrienko & Zubkova, 2021). Formation of the direction of activity, reliance on value orientations, forming a personal identity assist in reducing intrapersonal tensions when solving a number of problems of social interaction. In this aspect, teachers are responsible for creating "conditions for the successful manifestation of the student's capabilities and personal qualities during the adaptation period with the aim of his self-realization" (Muller & Rotova, 2020, p. 19). Psychological and pedagogical support of adaptation to education at a university can create comfortable and safe conditions for students for self-realization in the educational process (Abakumova & Kagermazova, 2016). Institutions of higher education "impose on student requirements of independent and extremely dynamic development of new competencies, new forms and methods of their development and self-development, new ways of social interactions" (Grigorieva & Shamionov, 2017, p. 24). Distance learning supposes self-study of course material and online interaction with teachers and fellow students (Eliseeva & Isakova, 2021). Technically and organizationally, online training is quite progressive; however, social adaptation in these conditions cannot be fully realized and is formed in a different form, involving more skills of quasi-real relationships, which cannot facilitate the success of social adaptation.

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is to identify the relationship in the academic performance of students in the context of distance learning with different types of their social adaptation.

5. Research Methods

The experiment involved the first-year students of different faculties. As a tool for measuring adaptation indicators, we used the method of diagnosing SPA by C. Rogers and R. Dymond (as cited in Raigorodsky, 2011). The diagnostic technique is designed to measure the content components of the SPA of the individual. In order to determine the type of adaptation, the method of diagnosing self-rating of mental states by H. Eysenck was used, which determines the levels of indicators of aggression, anxiety, frustration and rigidity. In the author's diagnostic approach, we use the two indicated methods, since they allow us to diagnose not only quantitative, but also qualitative features of the content of adaptation of different types (as cited in Raigorodsky, 2011).

Our experiment, conducted at the Samara State Technical University showed the peculiarities of social adaptation of freshmen students during the period of distance learning.

To determine the characteristics of the social adaptation of students, the ascertaining stage of the work was organized. The volume of the empirical sample was 340 first-year students of the engineering-economic and electrical engineering faculties (Figure 1).

6. Findings

The following results were obtained: 28.5 per cent of students had indicators of social adaptation of a constructive type; 71.5 per cent of students – destructive. (Table 1).

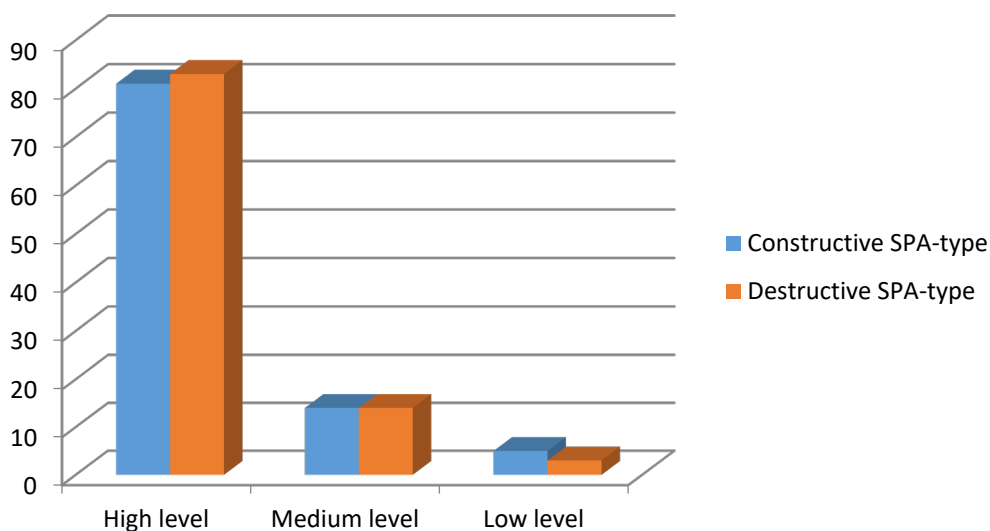


Figure 1. The level of SPA of a constructive and destructive type

Table 1. Results of the study of SPA (C. Rogers and R. Dymond) (Raigorodsky, 2011) (mean values for the sample)

Type of social psychological adaptation	Level (points in brackets) of						Escapism
	Self		Others		Emotional		
	acceptance	rejection	acceptance	rejection	comfort	discomfort	
Constructive	High (44)	High (13)	High (26)	Low (10)	High (31)	Low (5)	Low (9)
Destructive	Low (20)	Medium (16)	High (26)	Low (9)	Low (12)	Medium (17)	High (22)

The Table 2 below reflects the results of testing students in order to determine the level of their social adaptation. Thus, students with adaptation of the constructive type have high results of self-acceptance; acceptance of others and emotional comfort; low level of escapism. Among students with a destructive type of social adaptation, the indicators of self-rejection, acceptance of others and a low level of comfort with high rates of escapism dominate.

Table 2. The results of measurements according to the method of diagnostics of self-assessment of mental states (according to H. Eysenck) (Raigorodsky, 2011) (mean values for the sample)

Type of social psychological adaptation	Level (points in brackets) of		
	Anxiety	frustration	rigidity
Constructive	Low / Medium (7-8)	Low (5)	Medium (9)
Destructive	High (18)	Medium (13)	High (16)

Self-rating of mental conditions revealed the peculiarities of the combination of indicators of anxiety, frustration and rigidity, which make up the characteristic features of the types of SPA of students. Thus, students of the constructive type of SPA have low indicators of anxiety and frustration with a medium level of the indicator of rigidity. In contrast to them, students with a destructive type of SPA demonstrate high and medium levels of anxiety and frustration with a high level of rigidity.

The conducted tests showed significant differences in the characteristics of adaptation of students with different types of SPA. Students with a constructive type did not have intrapersonal tensions, were active in communication, and participated in group processes. Students with a destructive type had intrapersonal tensions and tried to get away from experiences, adapting to changing conditions.

The further scenario of the experiment was accompanied by observation of the behavior of students in the search for solutions to educational problems of psychological disciplines. Observation of the strategies of social interaction of students with different types of adaptation showed a complex of specific variations in the communication techniques. So, students with a constructive type of SPA always attended online classes with switched on cameras and did not leave the frame, used detailed answers, were active in finding solutions to educational problems and involved other students and the teacher into the communicative process. At the end of the session, they did not show signs of fatigue or fading away of interest in the topic under discussion.

Students with a destructive type of SPA often turned off the cameras, complaining about their absence or their defect, replaced detailed speech with short answers or slang from social networks, more

often than others did. They used electronic devices to search for answers even to those questions that supposed the formation of personal opinions or related to impressions from personal experience. Unlike students with a constructive type of adaptation, in communication with the teacher, they showed anxiety about the possibility of the wrong answer, refused to search for solutions. The high dynamics of interaction led to a condition of fatigue, they "left" the communication process by turning off microphones and cameras.

The ability of social adaptation is a necessary condition for the integrity of the personality development. The enrichment of the variability of the strategies determines the breadth of opportunities for self-realization. The formation of the type of SPA determines the orientation of the personality's activity either towards solving external tasks, posed by life events, or towards getting rid of intrapersonal experiences while preserving the issues of tasks that can subsequently lead to a condition of psychological crisis.

The quality of a human life is largely determined by person's adaptability. Literary characters vividly show strategies of social adaptation. For example, in the fairy tale "Junior and Carlson", in which the main character, Junior, suffering from lack of attention from adults, feeling fear of the housekeeper FrökenHildur Bock, being alone with need of a close emotional relationship, asking adults to give him a puppy, receiving a refusal, finds himself in a problematic emotional and psychological situation, in which he adapts with the help of a fictional friend Carlson (Lindgren, 2017). At first glance, this friend performs an adaptive function – he creates fantasy communications, replacing real relationships with quasi-real emotional connections, reduces the level of anxiety in communication with FrökenHildur Bock, frightening her and showing Junior her weakness, fulfills the Junior's wishes to eat jam from a jar and sit on cupboard, indulge and childishly misbehave. However, this imaginary friend has unlimited possibilities of activity, which are unachievable for Junior, and after comparing two variants of social events (real and fantasy) and avoiding real problems he exposes himself to danger. Achieving a condition of emotional comfort in a cognitive distortion of reality, under the influence of a destructive type of SPA, can lead to depressive disorders and the inclusion of many psychological defenses that support these distortions. Thus, with a destructive type of SPA, a person is in danger of developing frequent crises, psycho-emotional and psychosomatic disorders. The destructive type of SPA is adaptive to environmental conditions without the participation of the individual in the processes of its changes. Unchanging conditions have a continuous impact on the personality and represent difficulties, frustrate and keep the problem situation for an indefinitely long time. In these conditions, the person does not feel safe, does not have the possibility of self-realization, but seeks to get rid of tension.

The constructive type of SPA does not motivate relaxation by escaping reality, but presupposes active interaction with the environment, influencing its processes, enriching one's personality traits and skills.

The conditions of distance learning in a number of aspects are a crisis psychological load for students, since they involve self-work in the process of learning fundamental knowledge; the dynamics of the course of the educational process. A high level of competition in social, role and class status motivates many students to study in those specialties that would not be interesting to them in other conditions; lack

of a natural format of social communications, relationships and connections that form emotional closeness, friendly and sensual relationships.

For the quality of education in general and the development of personality, in particular, it is necessary to develop a new concept of programs of psychological and pedagogical support for the adaptation of students to study at a university. This contains methods for the development of academic independence, personal competence, psychological literacy of students for the safety of the psycho-emotional sphere of the individual in conditions of distance learning. The implementation of such programs within the framework of the development of the state education program will preserve the intellectual resource of future specialists.

7. Conclusion

The conditions of distance learning can support the development of the student's personality if he/she has obtained a constructive type of SPA, as it is the constructive type that allows one to start solving a problem without anxiety about possible erroneous decisions, actively participate in the discussion of topics in classes. They can also participate in creative work without hesitation and indecision. Students with a destructive type of SPA showed lower results of academic success, since requests for solutions to problems addressed to them act as a psycho-emotional load, increasing the level of anxiety. In it they, trying to reduce stress, refuse decisions or turn off the connection with the group present at the lesson, explaining their departure as a disconnection.

Thus, we were able to identify and analyze the features of social adaptation of students with different types of SPA and determine the directions for further research on the stated issue, in particular in the development of fundamentally new approaches to the principles of psychological and pedagogical support of first-year students in the context of distance learning.

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