

**ISCKMC 2022****International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL ACTIVITY AND CIVIL  
CONSCIOUSNESS OF MODERN RUSSIAN STUDENTS**

Irina Alexeevna Savchenko (a)\*

\*Corresponding author

(a) Moscow State University of psychology and Education, 29, Sretenka str., Moscow, Russia, arin76@mail.ru

**Abstract**

The empirical study was carried out in order to determine the influence of the forms and directions of social activity chosen by students on the degree of formation of their civil consciousness. A survey using a questionnaire developed by the author was chosen as a method of empirical research. The survey was conducted in Moscow State Psychological and Pedagogical University. The sample consisted of 350 full-time students. On the basis of the conducted empirical research, a direct relationship was established between the level of social activity of students and the degree of formation of their civil consciousness. Among the factors influencing the student's choice of a form of social activity, the most significant are close environment (friends, educational institution, family to a lesser extent) and Internet communities. For most students, the choice of a form of social activity is a completely conscious decision and rational choice. A more active position of the state in supporting forms of social activity that are significant for it will be approved by young people and will help them navigate the choice of the form and direction of social activity. It is confirmed that social activity is a very significant factor in the formation of the civil consciousness of young people. Students for whom social activity is an important and significant part of their lives demonstrate a higher level of civil identity and express a more responsible and active civil position.

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## 1. Introduction

The global socio-political changes which take place in the world and affect Russia have a major impact on the worldview of people, their understanding of the processes taking place in society and their own role in these processes (Harvey & Fisher, 2009). In a special way, the changes carried out and the contradictions they cause affect the consciousness of young people, whose worldview are being formation.

The studies conducted by modern sociologists and political scientists show that a significant part of modern youth, including students, has a rather negative civil identity, expressed in the denial of official values proclaimed by the state. Therefore, the civil consciousness of such young people is characterized by inconsistency, instability, and a pessimistic perception of the future. their country and their future in it (Arendachuk, 2018).

In order to overcome the alienation of young people from state institutions that arises as a result of such negativism and to realize the creative and intellectual potential that young people have, a comprehensive purposeful work is needed, based on the principles of social justice, cooperation and common spiritual and moral values (Skripak & Nikolaeva, 2020). Thus, the relevance of the topic of this study is reasoned by the need of society to develop ways to activate the constructive social activity of young people, as well as the peculiarities of the formation of civil consciousness of the younger generation.

## 2. Problem Statement

The socio-political situation of modern Russia actualizes the need for youth participation in the development of civil society, represented as a set of non-profit organizations whose activities are aimed to solve various social problems (Kochetkov et al., 2017). In order to be socially active and take part in the activities of various public associations, young people need a certain foundation, which is their civil position, expressed in relation to ongoing events, the ability to unite and achieve collective socially significant goals (Rudneva & Glukhova, 2014). The ability of young people to take part in activities aimed to solve social problems can be defined as social activity (Koryakovtseva, 2017).

Significant indicators of social activity of young people include, first of all, independence, which means that this activity is caused by some internal reasons, a subjective understanding of its significance and correlation with one's needs (Savrasova-V'Un, 2017). These needs must be recognized by the subject in order to serve as a motive for social activity (Shepelieva et al., 2020). The next important feature of such activity is the very nature of the needs, which should have general significance and social nature (Sharipova et al., 2020). This nature of needs is determined by their correlation and coincidence with public interests (Vasilieva et al., 2021). Thus, social activity is an activity that is conscious, independent, aimed to meet the needs of the acting subject and achieve generally significant goals.

The development of social activity and the formation of civil consciousness of young people are interdependent, since the degree of formation of civil consciousness of young people affects the ability to rationally and responsibly approach the choice of direction and form of social activity. Moreover, the experience of the solution of social problems by involving in various forms of social activity contributes

to the formation of sustainable attitudes, beliefs and values, which in the complex constitute the foundation of the civil consciousness of young people (Vardikyan et al., 2021).

### **3. Research Questions**

- i. The subject of the research is the civil consciousness of modern students, as well as the directions and forms of their social activity.
- ii. Civil consciousness is a form of comprehension of the relationship between the individual, society and the state, formed on the basis of democratic values and principles and implemented in the form of common norms and rules of activity.
- iii. The social activity of young people is an important factor and condition for the formation and development of their civil consciousness and culture. As a part of their studies at the university, students are involved in various types of social activity: educational, creative, scientific, social. In the process of understanding their own interests and needs in these areas, they form values, positions, and beliefs that reflect their civil consciousness. The important condition for purposeful activities to form the civil consciousness of student youth is to follow the principles of respect for their personality, voluntary participation in various forms of social activity, taking into account their needs and interests.

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

The purpose of the research is to determine the relationship between the characteristics of the social activity of students and the degree of formation of their civil consciousness.

The tasks are as follows:

- 1) to determine the main characteristics of the civil consciousness of students;
- 2) to consider the main types, forms, directions and features of the social activity of students;
- 3) to determine the factors influencing the choice of students' forms of social activity;
- 4) to establish the significance of the characteristics of social activity in the process of the formation of the civil consciousness of students.

### **5. Research Methods**

As a method of collecting empirical data, a survey with a questionnaire developed by the author was used. The survey was conducted offline, the questionnaires were filled in by the students themselves. The survey involved 350 full-time students, of which 68 % were students of bachelor's programs, 8 % – specialist's program students, 24 % – master's program students of all faculties of the university.

### **6. Findings**

In order. to solve the first task, the students were asked to explain the sense and meaning of the concept of the Motherland. The results showed that the majority of respondents (48 %) associate this concept primarily with the country in which they were born and live, as well as with the people and ethnic

group to which they belong (16 %). A very small number of young people (14 %) associate the concept of homeland with the state and his symbols. Based on the results of the responses that characterize the civil consciousness of modern students, the following conclusions can be drawn: firstly, the majority of respondents believe that the state and citizens have mutual obligations, the quality of the performance of which largely determines the well-being of society and the stability of the state; secondly, students are generally aware that a strong state is not so much its military power as a developed economy and common values and ideas that ensure cooperation and unity; thirdly, students tend to make higher demands on the state than on citizens, believing that it is the state that is obliged to provide the necessary level of economic and social development. It is also necessary to note that a very significant part of the respondents (about 20 %) believe that the state and citizens exist independently of each other and have no obligations towards each other.

The next block of questions concerned various forms of social activity of students. First of all, the students were asked to rate themselves as socially active. The responses allow us stating that only a third of the respondents confidently called themselves such (33 %), another 27 % chose the response “rather yes”, the option “rather no” was chosen by 28 % and 12 % responded negatively. At the same time, to the question: “Do you agree that social activity is an important manifestation of youth citizenship?”, More than three-quarters (78 %) responded positively, the rest chose the options “rather not” (18 %) and “no” (4 %). Next, the students were asked to evaluate various forms of social activity in terms of their importance for modern Russia. It is found that students consider educational (56 %), charitable (59 %) and environmental (67 %) activities to be the most significant, patriotic (47 %) activities are less significant, and political activities (39 %) are the least significant. These data to some extent correspond to the types of social activity in which the students took part. According to the results, the majority of students have experience of participation in charitable and volunteer events (78 %), as well as environmental events (volunteer clean-ups) and educational activities (82 %). It is necessary to note that the number of students who do not have experience of participation in any form of social activity is also big, which requires further study.

To do this, students were asked a series of questions regarding the significance of social activity for them, as well as its subjective motivation. It is found that social activity is highly important for students. However, more than a third do not attach much importance to social activity. That is why it is important to understand the motivation of students, in particular, how voluntary their social activity is. During the survey, it was found that only 27 % of respondents consider social activity absolutely voluntary, while for 12 % it was not. Thus, we can trace some relationship between the significance of social activity and the degree of its voluntariness, since forced and compulsory activities are not considered as valuable and subjectively significant.

Next, the students were asked whether, more active state support for the social activity of young people is required. To this question, the majority (62 %) responded positively, another 18 % chose the response “rather yes”, the same number (18 %) responded “rather not”, and only 2 % had a negative attitude towards state support for social activity. Thus, students generally support the need to support social activity by the state. The question of how students are involved in the activities of public organizations and associations is very important in the context of this study. According to the obtained

data, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents are not members of any public organizations or associations. They are mostly the members of charitable (socially oriented) organizations (31 %), trade unions (28 %), environmental (23 %) and patriotic (22 %) organizations. The smallest number of surveyed members is in political (12 %) and human rights (9 %) organizations, as well as in religious organizations (12 %). To a large extent, these data correlate with the responses to the question about the chosen forms of social activity.

The next stage of this study was to determine the influence of students' social activity on the degree of formation of their civil consciousness. To do this, all respondents were divided into two groups. The first group, called "socially active students," was made up of respondents who responded positively to the questions: "Do you agree that social activity is an important manifestation of youth citizenship?" and "Do you consider that your social activity is completely voluntary?". They chose the response "very significant" to the question "How significant is participation in various forms of social activity for you?", and they regularly participate in the forms of social activity presented in the question "In what forms of social activity did you participate?".

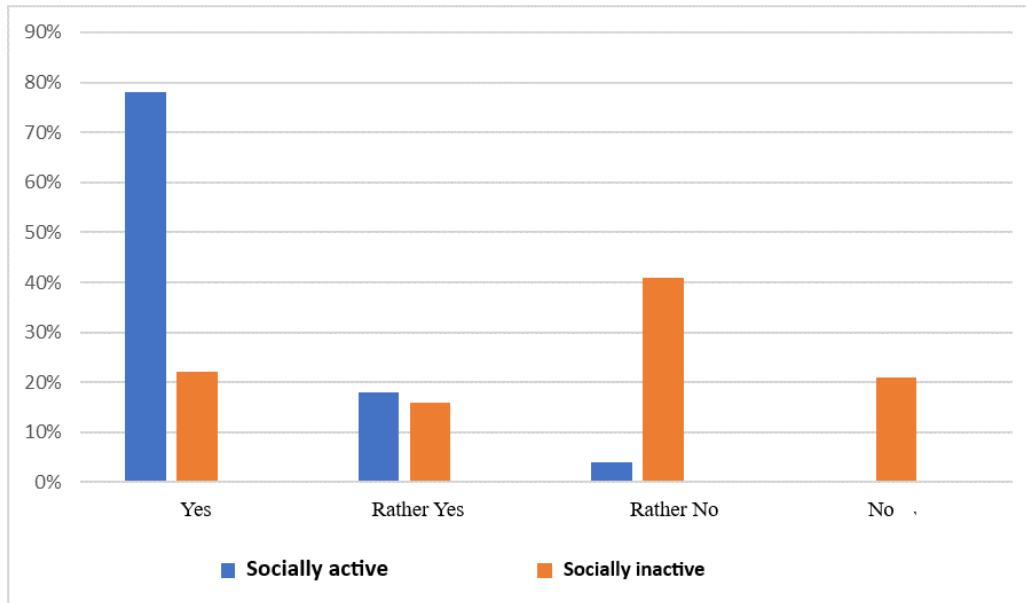
The second group of students, called "socially inactive students", was made up of respondents who responded negatively to the above-mentioned questions. They chose the response "not significant" to the question "How significant is participation in various forms of social activity for you?" and the response "never" to the question of what forms of social activity they participated in.

Next, a comparative analysis of the responses of these groups of students to the following questions was carried out:

- 1) Do you consider yourself a socially active person?
- 2) Have you ever thought about changing your citizenship?
- 3) Is it important for you to be a Russian citizen?

A comparison was also made of the degree of their agreement with judgments characterizing various aspects of civil consciousness.

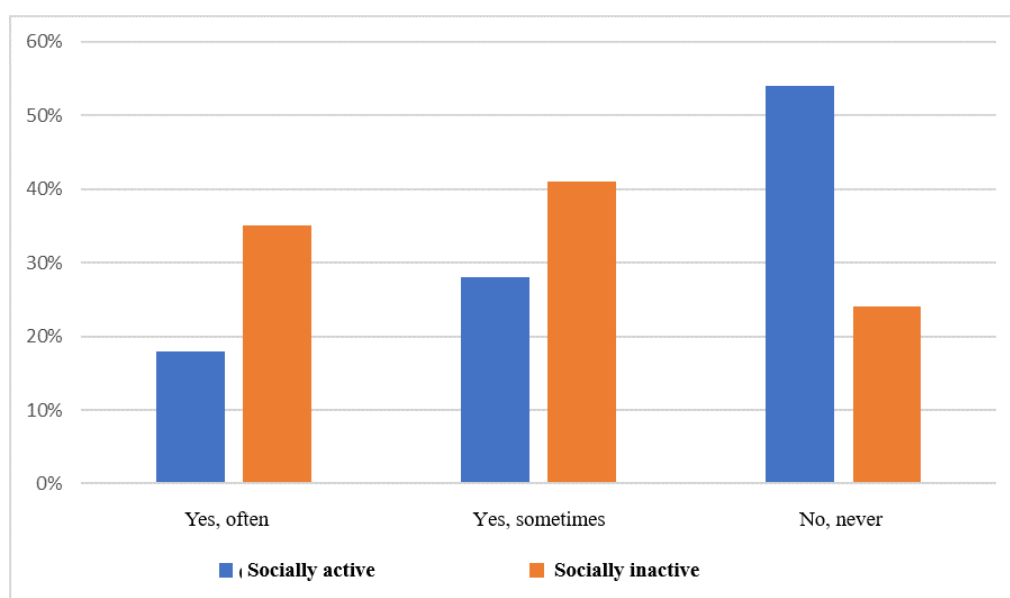
The data presented in Figure 01 show that the number of socially active students who consider themselves as socially active people is almost two times higher than the number of socially inactive students who gave similar responses to this question. And vice versa, students who are included in the group of socially inactive in the overwhelming majority do not consider themselves people with an active civil position.



**Figure 1.** Comparison of responses of groups of students to the question: “Do you consider yourself a socially active person?”

The data presented in Figure 1 show that the number of socially active students who consider themselves socially active is almost two times higher than the number of socially inactive students who gave similar responses to this question. And vice versa, students who are included in the group of socially inactive in the overwhelming majority do not consider themselves people with an active civil position.

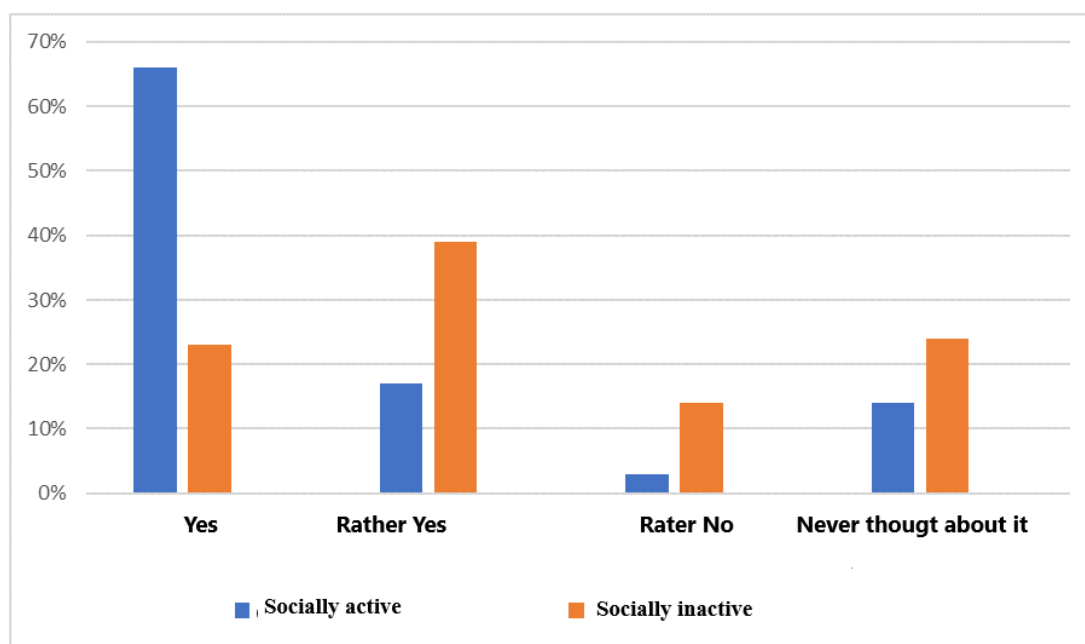
The next important aspect of the civil consciousness of young people is their attitude towards the citizenship of the Russian Federation, and in order to determine the degree of influence of social activity on this aspect, a comparison was made of the responses of the designated groups of respondents to the question of whether they had ever thought about changing their citizenship (Figure 02).



**Figure 2.** Comparison of responses of groups of students to the question: “Have you ever thought about changing citizenship?”

As it follows from the obtained data, significant differences are also found in this issue between socially active and socially inactive students: more than half of the students who define themselves as socially active citizens never thought about changing their citizenship, while about a quarter of the students named by us socially inactive thought about it.

Similar results were obtained during the analysis of the responses to the question of “How is it important for you to be a Russian citizen?” (Figure 03).



**Figure 3.** Comparison of responses of groups of students to the question: “How is it important for you to be a Russian citizen?”

The data presented in Figure 3 indicate that the importance of Russian citizenship is directly dependent on the degree of social activity: 66 % of socially active students responded that Russian citizenship is very important for them, while only 23 % of socially inactive students responded in this way.

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, according to the results of this research, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1) The civil consciousness of students is characterized by the following features:

- i. the predominance of socio-cultural and ethnic characteristics in the determination of the Motherland;
- ii. the awareness of the presence of mutual obligations of citizens and the state in relation to each other with the recognition of the leading role of the state in building relations with citizens;
- iii. a sufficiently high level of civil identity, the recognition of the value of citizenship;
- iv. rather high expectations and demands in relation to the state, while at the same time not very high readiness to independently defend their rights and fight for them.

2) The most demanded among modern students are the forms of social activity of a charitable, environmental, patriotic and educational nature, the least demanded are those of a social and political nature. The choice of a form of social activity is not always voluntary for young people and often does not have a systematic, regular character, but is situational and made under the influence of certain factors.

3) Social activity is a very significant factor in the formation of the civil consciousness of young people. Students for whom social activity is an important and significant part of their lives demonstrate a higher level of civil identity and express a more responsible and active civil position.

Thus, the study showed that social activity is a significant factor in the formation of civil consciousness of modern youth.

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