


Transformation of the Living Space of Students in Modern Russian Society

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Abstract: The article deals with the problems of the student's living space and the peculiarities of its transformation in modern Russian society on the basis of the theory of K. Levin and the results of a sociological study conducted among students of Kazan Federal University. The author analyzes the living space of students as a socio-demographic group, analyzes the life priorities that form the basis of the life world of a modern student, studies the factors that lead to a narrowing of the living space of young people. Despite the fact that obtaining higher professional education in itself has a positive impact on the formation of the living space of students and as a result leads to its expansion, the author identifies a number of conditions that have a negative impact on the life world of students, the most significant among which are economic conditions.

1 INTRODUCTION

The modern world demonstrates a dynamically changing picture, where the living space of a person is also in the conditions of permanent transformations. The processes of globalization, penetrating into all spheres of human activity, on the one hand, and geo-location features of territories and the presence of enclaves untouched by globalization processes, on the other, generate a completely unique form of modern civilization, which V.A. Yadov defined as "glo-local-enclavization of the "world community". These design features of world civilization generate various kinds of threats of a technogenic, ecological, economic, political nature and to a certain extent have an impact on the living space of society, most often narrowing it, leading to local and global crises.

Especially vulnerable in terms of the transformation of living space are young people, who, due to their socio-demographic characteristics, are most often influenced by various negative factors of an objective and subjective nature, such as low material security, unemployment or lack of work by

profession, housing problems, as well as various psychological and communicative problems, etc. These problems are also of high relevance for students due to the following contradiction: on the one hand, the living space of students acquiring professional education and new competencies tends to expand, on the other, the presence of various kinds of risks, on the contrary, contribute to its narrowing.

2 STUDY METHODS

This study is based on the theoretical understanding of the works of E. Husserl, K. Levin, G. Allport about the living space of society, as well as the author's interpretation of some theoretical conclusions of these authors based on a sociological study conducted by the Department of General and Ethnic Sociology of Kazan Federal University in May 2022 among full-time students. The respondents were students of Kazan Federal University who arrived from various regions of Russia. The study was conducted by a questionnaire survey. The sample size was 410 people. The observation units were selected on the

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basis of a quota proportional sample by training level (bachelor's degree – 75%, master's degree – 25%), by training specialties (Institutes – specialties - courses), by gender (men - 50% and women - 50%). Also, to assess the level of adaptation of students in a new urban and university environment for them, a survey was conducted among bachelors of 3 and 4 courses, masters of 1 and 2 courses.

3 RESEARCH RESULTS

The sociological interpretation of the concept of "living space" originates in the phenomenology of E. Husserl, who by living space understands the "living world" of a person as a kind of open space of human existence. The living space is the most significant area of human existence, where the potential of the individual is realized, the formation and development of personal, professional and social qualities of the individual takes place, where a person is socialized and becomes a person with a complex of individual characteristics and features.

The concept of "living space" is further developed in the works of G. Allport, as the most significant area of human existence, the proprium of his life aspirations, covering all stages of socialization based on life aspirations and achievements.

Describing the characteristics of the living space of the personality K. Levin relies on the idea that the actual environment of an individual's life is the physical reality and the social environment, which form algorithmic constructs in a person's mind that determine his behavior in a given situation. The living space is not something static, it can narrow or expand depending on the objective conditions and subjective characteristics of the individual. The expansion of a person's living space is facilitated not only by the possession of material values, but also by the knowledge of a person, his intellectual characteristics, as well as his ability to influence the events of the outside world. Thus, according to G. Allport, the expansion of the personal living space occurs as a result of the influence of the proprium – a positive action striving to improve human nature, which ultimately contributes to the formation of the integrity of the personality and the realization of positive goals of its development. The result of such development is the creative growth of the individual and the manifestation of his creative abilities, the achievement of life plans, which leads to the emotional maturity of the individual, expressed in empathy for the outside world and harmonious

relationships with loved ones, a sense of humor and an adequate perception of the surrounding reality.

Describing the life world of a person, K. Levin comes to the idea that the life world consists of two components – the inner and outer world. If the inner world of a person is determined by the characteristics and capabilities of his psyche, as well as intellectual and spiritual potential, then the external world is the social environment surrounding a person. It should be noted that the external world is multicomponent and subject to multi-vector influences of objective and subjective components, the cumulative mutual influence of which, according to K. Levin, creates a kind of "field" charged with positive or negative energy, contributing to the development or causing stagnation of personality. One of the spheres of the external world that has an active influence on a person and on the formation of his inner world is the professional environment, the acquisition of professional skills and competencies that eventually transform into significant components of the mental and intellectual potentials of the individual.

In the process of professional socialization, a person finds himself in various life situations, which in one way or another have an impact on the formation of his personality, being deposited in his inner world in the form of accumulated experience, as past experiences, as well as life situations connect the actual experiences of an individual with his life plans and future through a system of goal-setting and expectations.

Life plans have a significant impact on the formation and dynamics of an individual's living space, form the life priorities of a personality that develop as a personality develops at the junction of the inner and outer shells of the human life world. According to the results of our study, the life priorities of modern students are based mostly on traditional values – "to be as well off as possible" – 4.36, "to have good health and live a long life" - 4.30, "to have a good, friendly family, children" - 4.18, "to have an interesting, creative job" - 4.03 and "make a career" - 3.91. Despite the popular claims in recent years that hedonistic aspirations are increasingly inherent in modern youth, studies have shown that such a life priority as "living for yourself, enjoying life" occupies only the sixth position (3.83). At the same time, the priority "to be useful to society", which was quite popular in the Soviet past, occupies only the penultimate position (3.24). Refuting accusations from society of the desire of young people for cheap popularity through activity in social networks and blogging, the priority of "becoming

famous, popular" took only the last place (2.6) (Fig.1).

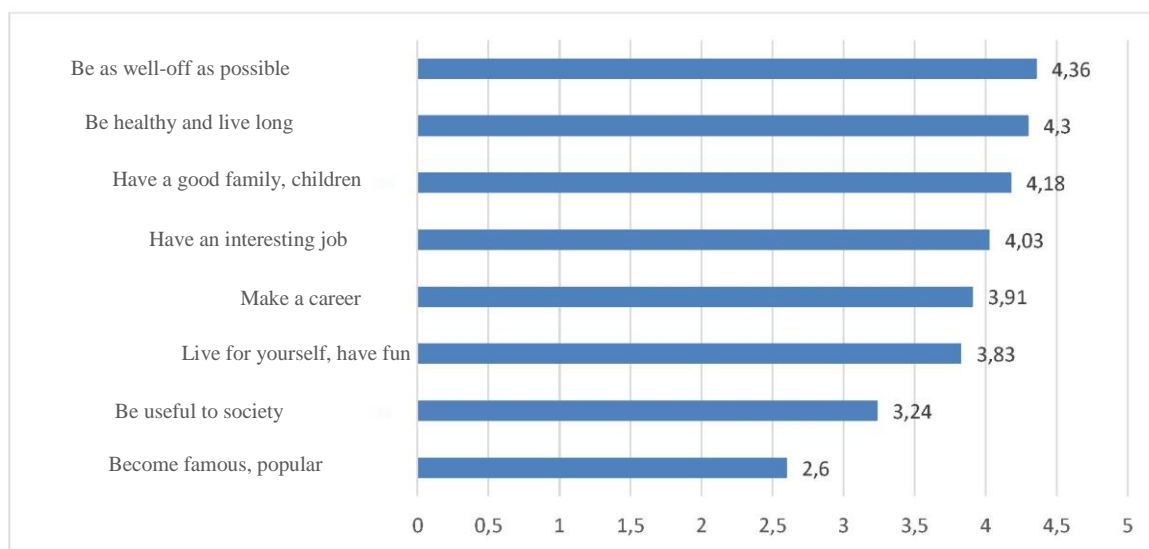


Figure 1: Life priorities of young people (on a five-point scale).

With the acquisition of life experience and in the process of professional socialization, an individual expands his life world, pushing the boundaries of the external world as a result of career growth and development, revealing ever wider opportunities and prospects, but also improves his inner world, enriching it with experience and knowledge in the professional sphere, emotional and moral baggage in the mental sphere. It should also be noted that a person's life world expands as he grows up and reaches its maximum in mature years, during his professional growth. This is especially noticeable at the peak of social activity, when an individual actively communicates with people around him - relatives, colleagues, receives an education, develops in professional activity, builds a career, while his inner world is balanced and developed. The details of

the content of an individual's inner world largely depends on the circle of his communication, on the intellectual and emotional saturation of communicative acts in the process of interaction with others. Thus, the main communication partners of the majority of respondents who participated in our survey were students of their own university (46.8%), we note that 53.7% of respondents chose this answer option among girls, 40.1% among boys. 27.6% of survey participants noted that their closest circle of communication is friends at the university and outside it. The remaining options scored less than 10% of the responses. Consequently, it can be noted that the formation of the inner world of students is largely influenced by communication in the university environment (Fig.2).

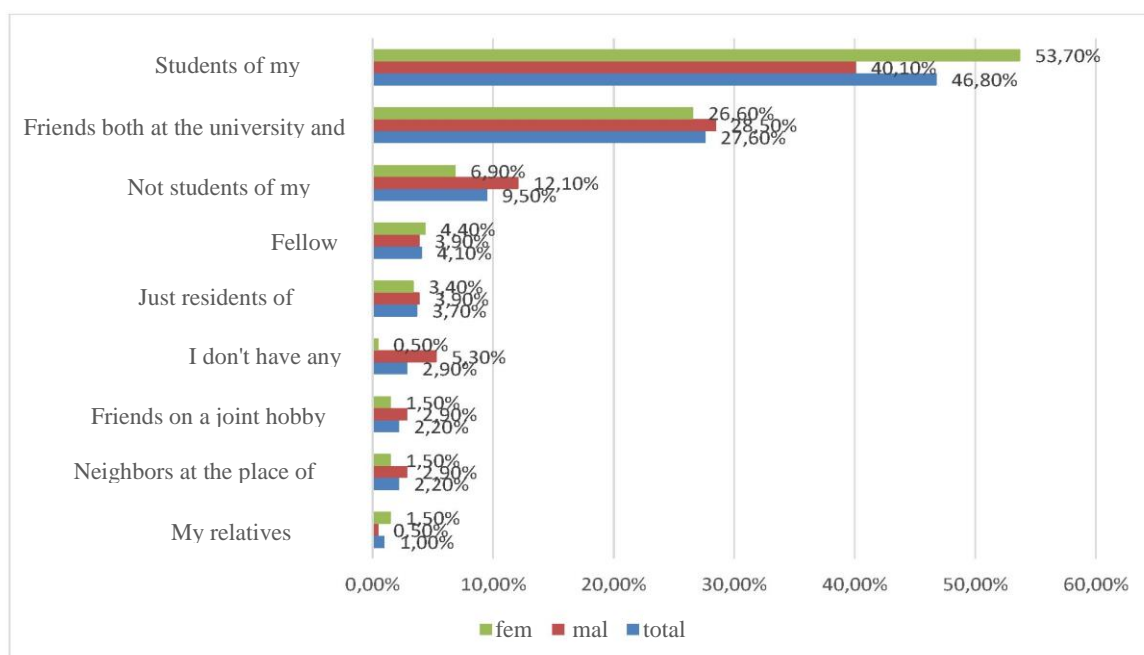


Figure 2: Distribution of respondents' answers to the question: "Do you have friends, a close circle of communication in Kazan?" (in percent).

As already noted above, the living space of a person in different periods of life undergoes transformation – expansion or narrowing. During the period of study at the university, students experience various kinds of problems, such as material, socio-psychological, communicative, etc., which in varying degrees of intensity affect the social well-being of young people, change the state of their life world. Let's turn to the results of the study and try to analyze the factors that narrow the living space of students.

As expected, economic factors were dominant, including the material well-being of the family, income, employment, housing security, etc.: lack of money and low incomes cause dissatisfaction among 35.9% of respondents, 22.2% of young people are concerned about housing problems. Despite the fact that these problems are important for both sexes, several more girls (38.4%) are concerned about the problem of low incomes than boys (33.3%), while the lack of housing worries men (26.1%) more than women (18.2%).

The living space also includes psychological and communicative components, such as a favorable socio-psychological climate in the team, a friendly atmosphere in the family, the immediate environment, peace of mind, etc. Thus, 12.9% of young people noted the presence of problems in relationships with the opposite sex (which is approximately equally important for both men and

women - 13.0% and 12.8%, respectively). 6.6% of respondents are concerned about problems of interaction with parents and/or close relatives (somewhat more significant for men (7.2%) than for women (5.9%)). 5.6% of survey participants noted problems in the field of interaction with friends, schoolmates or colleagues. This problem is more significant for women (7.4%) than for men (3.9%). Despite the prevailing opinion in society about the high communication skills of young people, 5.1% of respondents suffer from loneliness, and among them there are more women (6.4%) (men - 3.9%).

One of the significant directions of transformation of a person's living space is a change in attitude to the present, past and future, which is demonstrated by the survey participants: every third respondent (33.2%) is worried about fear of the future, uncertainty in future employment. It should be noted that women are more concerned about this problem (39.9%) (about one in four men 26.6%). Every fifth respondent (19.0%) indicated the presence of problems in their studies, while among girls 22.2% of respondents are concerned about this problem, while among boys only 15.9%. 14.9% of respondents are concerned about the problems of possible conscription, and this is expected to be a "male" problem: men – 28.5%, women – 1.0%. Approximately one in ten respondents (9.3%) is concerned about the ongoing pandemic and their state of health (11.8% of women

and 6.8% of men). It is interesting that some of the respondents indicated their own problems in the "other" answer option, which have a depressing effect on their well-being and mental comfort. Among such answers, the most common are: "problems of the future organization of life", "general depressed state",

"routine", "the problem of insufficient mental health of most people of our generation and older", "what is happening in the world", "the desire to change the country of residence", etc. Approximately every third participant of the survey (30.0%) has no problems (men – 27.1%, women – 33.0%) (Fig.3).

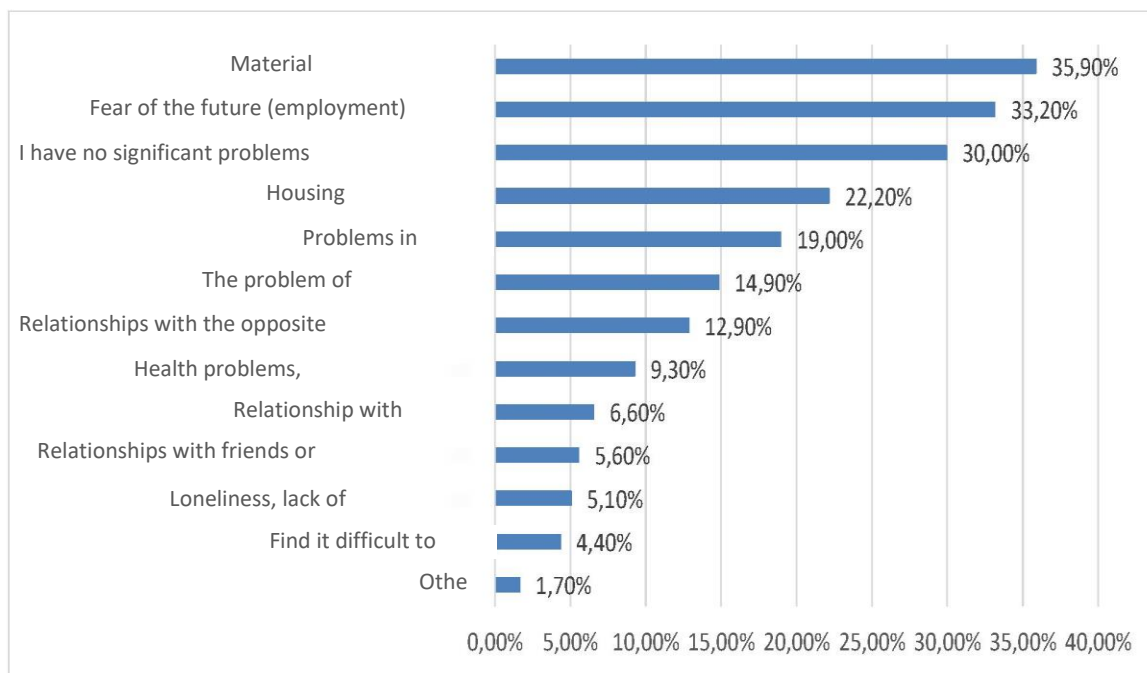


Figure 3: Distribution of answers to the question: "What personal problems bother you the most?" (in percent).

The life world of an individual begins to form in deep childhood. However, the child's living space is rather narrowed, it is suppressed by parental care and interference in the child's personal space by educators and teachers dictated by the conditions of upbringing and training. With age, an individual conquers more and more living space, but even in adulthood he is not fully freed from the influence of factors that narrow him. As a result, the individual becomes less defenseless from the influence of environmental conditions, and the psychological perception of life is less dependent on the mood and state of his vital needs.

4 RESULT DISCUSSION

According to the results of the study, it can be noted that the life priorities of modern students are based on traditional values: be financially secure, healthy, have a good family, children, have an interesting job and make a career. The main agents of communication for

students are students of their own university, which indicates the importance of communication in the academic environment for the formation of the inner world of students. Consequently, the most effective communication channel for students is the university environment.

The economic factors that constrict the living space of students are low incomes and lack of housing. Other researchers of the student youth of the post-Soviet space come to similar results. Thus, Abdirayymova G.S., Verevkin A.V., Lifanova T.Yu. note the low level of social mood of Kazakhstani students caused by material and socio-psychological problems associated with the learning process and interaction in the educational team. A number of Russian scientists come to similar results about the prevalence of dissatisfaction with their financial situation in the social moods of young people in their studies. The extremely low amount of scholarships for full-time studies pushes students to work. And this does not allow to fully engage in the educational process, and as a result is reflected in the quality of

future specialists. At the same time, this does not contribute to the acquisition of practical skills in the chosen specialty, since the work is often not related to the future profession.

The study showed that there are no noticeable problems in terms of establishing communications, neither in interactions with peers and fellow students and or work, nor with parents or relatives. To a small extent, there are problems in interactions with the opposite sex.

A high level of anxiety is observed in the attitude of young people to the present, past and future. Every third participant of the survey expressed anxiety, fear of the future, uncertainty of future employment, every fifth respondent has problems with studying. Some students are concerned about possible conscription, the ongoing pandemic and concerns about their health. We agree with the opinion of Kisilenko A.V., Shapovalova I.S. that despite the high level of anxiety, young people demonstrate contradictory forms of behavior, on the one hand, worrying about their future, for future employment opportunities, on the other – allowing gaps in training and thereby gaining problems in the educational process.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Thus, it can be noted that the living space of modern student youth is formed under the significant influence of the academic environment and on the basis of traditional universal values. The most significant factors contributing to the narrowing of students' living space are economic problems in the form of insufficient material security and lack of housing, as well as fear of the future and problems of future employment in the acquired specialty. Consequently, increasing the size of student scholarships at least to the level of the subsistence minimum and the formation of a system of state guarantees for the employment of young professionals would reduce the level of anxiety and social tension among students.

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