Section 4
Psychological and pedagogical problems of modern education

PSYCHOLOGICAL FEATURES OF PRONENESS TO CONFLICT IN RELATIONS AMONG STUDENTS

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The youth proneness to conflict in the modern society is a special subject; its topicality has become obvious nowadays. The peculiarity of the youth proneness to conflict is determined by the process of global changes, transition to the civil society and the changes in political economic, social and spiritual areas of life which are related to this transition. The acceptance of a conflict as an integral part of the youth society which is predetermined by the social life can rightly be deemed to be an important move for science.

The study of conflict relations between young people is generally carried out at the level of secondary and specialized secondary education and there is no research of conflict peculiarities between university students. If such conflicts remain out of sight, they can both make young people feel worse, arouse the feeling of dissatisfaction with study and affect the learning of professional skills. Due to the mentioned factors the problem of interpersonal conflicts between students, discovering its reasons, features, ways and methods to control them becomes very topical.

The student age is characterized as a period of intensive psychological, personal and intellectual development. Researchers associate the main achievements of this age with the acceptance of young people to different social communities and adoption of new roles, appearance of socially responsible behavior.

T.V. Cherkasova distinguishes four main tendencies causing conflicts among the youth in her researches. *Contradictions caused by social and age inequality* are apparent when a young generation suffers from “the inferiority complex” and proneness to conflict due to perception inad-
equacy, command principles of upbringing, minimum effect of social encouragements and maximum influence of the punishment system which are traditionally applied to the youth. Contradictions arising on the background of increasing needs and decreasing personal opportunities to satisfy them. Factors containing the process of needs realization include social non-recognition of a young personality or results of his/her work; the society’s overrated demands from the youth; the crisis of youth value orientations. Contradictions to do with psychosocial originality of the youth that bears the potential of conflict caused by the behavioral type of an “explosive” reaction to external social obstacles and irritants. The youth is notable for a greater initiative, responsive-ness and unselfishness, high touchiness. Contradictions arising from an idealized perception of the world. The inadequate theoretical grounding in life in the society received during upbringing collides with the practice of real life and causes crisis of life goals, conflict of values, interests, mass social behavioral deviance as a form of modern youth conflicts [1].

The adaptation to new life conditions depends on the personal qualities of a student to a great extent. He/She uses skills and methods that were acquired on the previous stage of personal development. They are not always successful. The differences in moral purposes, norms, values, behavior often place a student in a conflict situation. There are its own interrelations, standards and norms of behavior, intragroup values and psychosocial atmosphere in a group. There are a lot of reasons for conflict situations in a group: personal competition, sport success and failures, rivalry for the attention of teachers or the opposite sex, economic conditions, inability to get along with other people due to personal qualities, progress in study, research and many others. Reorientation connected with the beginning of studies is a complex process depending on many factors including psychophysi-ological. The desire of independence, individuality, originality appears. Captiousness and maximalism of judgments, practicalness show. At this stage the communication circle of a young person changes, a new communication style arises, a strong need to belong to a group appears.

L.S. Titkova came to the conclusion in her researches that on this stage a young person tries to know himself/herself, to estimate his/her opportunities, to establish positive relations with the environment which is not always favorable to him and as a result of this a growth of neurotic disorders. The differences in moral purposes, norms, values, behavior often place a student in a conflict situation which can lead to an interpersonal conflict or a conflict with the whole group [2].
Group conflicts have positive and negative features. First of all they help develop intragroup relations and the group structure, intragroup dynamics. If there are no conflicts in a group, this group will stop to develop. Intragroup conflicts can either destroy the group structure or favor its unity. The role of a conflict in the intragroup adaptation depends on the nature of questions that act as a matter of dispute and on the type of social structure. Y. Е. Rastov distinguishes two levels of conflict. The first one is the level of consciousness in the form of purposes, moods, expectations, emotions; and the second level is the level of practical acts contradirectional deeds [3].

According to T.V. Cherkasova, typical conflicts in a high school include the following: conflicts caused by the inability to communicate; conflicts caused by the inadequate perception of the parties, tactlessness in communication and knowledge level (a significant role in a conflict plays a personality of an unprofessional contentious teacher); conflicts caused by different claims: needs of recognition, perception inadequacy, mistakes in upbringing, reluctance to consider the opinion of other people; conflicts based on social standards — orientations on the personal predisposition to act in a definite way; conflicts based on the principle of contradictions — a conflict between parents and children, etc. [1].

A.J. Smolelentseva considers the following reasons for a conflict in a university to be the most widespread: inadequacy of appraisals self-appraisals of students and teachers; differences in value orientations; students’ intrapersonal conflicts; low communication culture; ignorance of effective social and pedagogical techniques that ensure group cohesion, mutual understanding between parties of educational process; personal qualities — character, temper, manners, etc. [4].

V. І. Zhuravlev notes that situations connected with the problems in everyday life influence the students’ proneness to conflict greatly. The researcher also asserts that teachers’ personal qualities, their professional level, bad organization of educational process, neglected conditions in classrooms, students’ personal qualities and material problems can be reasons for a conflict in a university [5].

Thereby, the analysis of the approaches to the problem drives us to the conclusion that conflict reasons for university students can be divided into four groups: psychological (students’ personal qualities, disagreement of opinions), psychosocial (lack of cohesion, relations based on antipathy, competition, struggle for leadership in a group), organizational and pedagogical (shortcomings in the organization of
students’ learning activity, in the teachers’ work) and socio-economic (differences between members of a learning group in their economic conditions and social status). But psychological factors are the main factors of proneness to conflict among the youth. It is the personal qualities of young people that determine their behavior.

The results of empirical research into the peculiarities of students’ emotional and volitional sphere indicated that an increase of anxiety level among contentious students is the evidence of the inclination of this group to see the more situations as threatening which is reflected in the constant common feeling of tension; to suffer from social inability, personal unattractiveness and inferiority to others; to be concerned with criticism; to show reluctance to communicate without guarantees to be liked; to restrict their tenor of life.

The increase of the levels of aggression and hostility as the degree of students’ proneness to conflict grows indicates the readiness of these students to aggression, inclination to interpret the behavior of other people as hostile. This leads to the development of potentially aggressive perception as a stable quality of world-view of this group of students. The higher aggression services as a form of protest against the society’s failure to understand them and due to the dissatisfaction with their position in the society.

When we studied the students’ will power, we found that if the degree of proneness to conflict rose, this indicator decreased and students with a high proneness to conflict were characterized by a low level of will power. A lower will power among students with a high proneness to conflict revealed itself in the inability to control their emotions, in impulsive and rash acts, in the inability to keep their temper and to make themselves carry out their plans. This indicates the inability to overcome difficulties while arriving at their goals in real life.

The results of the empirical study prove that due to the age peculiarities the youth do not have any life experience, is inclined to maximalism, to the exaggerated value of their own opinion, to desire for independence, individuality, originality. Conflicts become an integral part of student life in the process of personal individualization.

It becomes necessary to inculcate the ideas of tolerant thinking that involves respect, acceptance, and understanding of the variety of cultures, self-expression forms, and modes of human individuality under economic globalization, integration, and communication development, on the one hand, and aggression increasing in degree and intensity, on the other. The paramount aim of higher education
should be to form tolerant attitudes and models of behavior that will help students efficiently solve life problems, interact with other people, keep internal balance, build a more harmonious relationship with themselves and with the world in the process of personal growth and potential development.

References

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