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PSYCHOSOCIAL LIFE TRAJECTORIES OF ORPHANED INDIVIDUALS (RESURVEY)

The article is dedicated to the peculiarities of psychosocial trajectories of life of orphaned people or those who were deprived of parental care, in particular, the results of several experiments carried out at higher educational institutions of Zaporizhzhia are analyzed. The peculiarities of the legal and regulatory framework for the implementation of psychosocial support of such people are analyzed. Besides, the approaches of domestic and foreign scientists concerning psychosocial support of people who were orphans or deprived of parental care are investigated. The comparative analysis of the results of empirical research of life trajectories of orphaned people, who graduated from higher education institutions of Zaporizhzhia during 2001-2017, is presented. Some recommendations concerning the improvement of communication skills and socialization process of this category of people are suggested.

Keywords: *life strategy, psychosocial life trajectories, orphaned youth, youth deprived of parental care, psychological support.*

Introduction

The development of modern Ukrainian society is reflected in many social processes, structures and transformations. One of the vectors of modern education is the engagement of educational tactics of people with special needs and people who have some difficulties of functioning because of their socialization issues. Especially it concerns young people deprived of parental care. The engagement of such people into higher and vocational education is one of the state priorities today. The state and the public sector significantly enhance the prospects for orphaned children to education, vocational training, which would be able to help them find a well-paid job or fulfill themselves. Today there is a great number of boarding schools “graduates” in the modern Ukrainian society who receive secondary and even higher education, but cannot find a job. The main cause of this is the low level of awareness of government and educational institutions of the psychosocial component of orphaned children’s needs.

The article aims to clarify features of psychosocial life trajectories of people who were orphans or were deprived of parental care on the basis of the research conducted at universities of Zaporizhzhia.

The study has the following objectives: 1) to explore the legal framework of social provision of orphaned individuals and those deprived of parental care, 2) to investigate approaches of domestic and foreign scholars on psychosocial support of orphaned individuals and those deprived of parental care, 3) to present the results of a carried out psychosocial experiment aimed at investigating

life trajectories of orphaned persons who graduated from universities in Zaporizhzhia within the period from 2001 to 2017.

Research Methods

The resurvey was conducted using a questionnaire “Problems of Orphaned Students at Higher Education Institutions” during January-June 2017 with the support of Zaporizhzhia Regional Department of Children’s Fund of Ukraine. It was anonymous. The average time of filling in the questionnaire was 18 minutes. The questionnaire consists of 67 questions, most of them are closed, and some of the are open-ended (No. 2-4, 6). The question 7 provides the answer in figures, the sequence of which should be presented in chronological order depending on the order of staying at the institutions. The answers to questions №№1, 5, 8-66 should be provided in the form of encircled numbers of a correspondent variant.

For a more complete disclosure of features of the socialization of orphaned students their life journeys were analyzed. It was proposed to obtain the total coefficients of negative socialization experience that should be considered in the process of sociological data analysis in this study. The obtained coefficients of negative socialization experience are grouped according to the sets of values from 1 to 5 and from 6 to 16 points, reflecting, respectively, positive and negative social experience. The higher the coefficient of negative socialization experience was, the greater the number of forms of education, as well as the corresponding negative social practices when interacting with the previous environment the person had. This pro-

vided the basis for differentiating and comparing social experience of all orphaned respondents.

Taking into account the specifics of training orphans at higher educational institutions, the following parameters are taken as the basis: age of admission; age of social status acquisition; gender; year of study; the parameter that helped to choose a university for entry; location of the university; contacts with friends from previous places of study (stay); conflict-related interactions of orphaned students with the main agents of their socialization; estate of matrimony; plans to create family; health status; academic success; sources of income; frequency of communication with the group curator; plans after graduation; desire to be employed.

The research is based on the results of a psychosocial experiment conducted with orphaned individuals who graduated from universities of Zaporizhzhia from 2001 to 2017: those who successfully graduate a university having completed the course of training and obtained Master degree, those who resumed studies, who were transferred to other institutions of education or sent down from a university because of academic failure.

This study is the last step of the research which consists of the following 3 stages:

- from 2001 to 2008 – participant observation in the Zaporizhzhia National Technical University during the performance of social worker duties (n=385) [3];

- from 2009 to 2012 – diagnostics, questioning of orphaned students of all Zaporizhzhia universities of III-IV levels of accreditation and interviewing orphaned persons who graduated from universities within a period from 2001 to 2010 (n=440) [2; 3].

- from 2012 to 2017 – a psychosocial experiment conducted with orphaned individuals who graduated from universities in Zaporizhzhia over the period from 2001 to 2017 years. The interviews were conducted in 2016-2017 (n=38).

Research Results

Orphanhood is a special psychosocial state, which according to A. Prikhozhan forms a special type of consciousness, which usually leads to deviations that accumulate in the mind of a person and contribute to distorting mental perception of social norms [5].

Adaptability to the conditions of the present is one of the important components of any child's success. Adaptability of a child is first of all a high level of his/her socialization and getting used to the living conditions. L. Shypitsyna believes that today most orphans are prone to numerous deviations as a consequence of total deprivation and maladaptation [7]. The overcoming of these psychological dysfunctions is possible by means of applying various psychological techniques, among which complex programs of adaptation and regulated secondary socialization are popular for work with orphaned children.

Overcoming the deprivation and maladaptation among young people who were deprived of parental care significantly depends on the success of their socialization. In terms of symbolic interactionism socialization is con-

sidered as the result of social interaction of people with the environment, which enables the individual to learn common with the society social experience of mastering social actions [8]. The theory of symbolic interactionism is bipolar as it combines elements of sociological and psychological theories. That is, everyone has plans of implementing his/her life scenario. Its planning and implementation often depend on the psychological and psychic characteristics of an individual.

Most psychological concepts of socialization are based on the interpretation and assimilation of various artifacts of social development of the individual. In particular, the American scientist N. Smelser defines socialization as a process of forming skills and social guidance of individuals that are relevant to their social roles [6]. That is, according to the concept of N. Smelser in the process of socialization of a personality the most important thing is the role set of individual's functioning within various aspects of social dynamics of the society and a psychological component, which identifies the algorithms of realization of the gained experience in accordance with the rules formulated by value-bearers.

The psychology of socialization is considered in the works of many authors. In particular, the author of the theory of moral development L. Kohlberg distinguished stages of socialization on the basis of the criteria for moral development of children, in particular the formation of the need for empathy [10]. Morality is the psychosocial phenomenon of realizing values of an individual. Moral upbringing of a person deprived of parental care is very important for his/her further life fulfillment in the society. The immoral patterns of adolescent behavior in most cases become deviations in adulthood. They threaten the whole society and must be prevented in the process of secondary socialization of the individual.

Representatives of American sociology consider socialization practices within structural functionalism, in particular D. Newman believes that all socialization practices should be subordinated to the social structure of the society and have functionality [11]. Within the framework of this concept, a person makes a choice within the framework of certain social structures. The success of life of a certain person depends on the interpretation of his/her needs by him/her.

Some scientists have different points of view concerning socialization and life preferences of an individual. For example, N. Luhmann believes that the most important factors of socialization are individual communication and interpretation of the behavior of individuals and social groups [9]. Communicative skills of a personality are important for implementing his/her life strategies as any life strategy must be communicated to a small or wide range of individuals. If it is a realization of a great social project and a person wants to be its implementer or organizer, it is necessary to establish effective communication work.

All these concepts are behavioral patterns that may be useful for the young people deprived of parental care.

At the same time, every country has its legal framework that provides opportunities for young people to help determine their life strategies and competencies. Regarding our country, we should emphasize the Law of Ukraine “On the Provision of Organizational and Legal Conditions for Social Protection of Orphans and Children Deprived of Parental Care” [1] and the resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine “On Improving Education, Training, Social Protection and Material Provision of Orphans and Children Deprived of Parental Care” [4]. These two documents, in our opinion, are the basis of the legal framework that should provide assistance to Ukrainian youth deprived of parental care in the formation and implementation of life aspirations and strategies. These legislative acts emphasize the problem of the formation and implementation of life practices of young people deprived of parental care and underline psychosocial techniques of helping young people deprived of parental care.

Today, Ukraine’s regulatory framework in the field of social policy and social services of the young people deprived of parental care should be updated according to the following principles: unification with international legislation and subordinate documents of developed European and North American countries in the field of psychosocial development of the young people deprived of parental care, based on innovative technologies of psychosocial service, etc.

The carried out research involving young people deprived of parental care has shown that still there are a number of problems these individuals face. Thus, at the second stage of this study, in order to clarify and analyze the way of lives of recent university graduates of the city of Zaporizhzhia, semi-structured interviews with former orphaned students were conducted. Using archiving and contact information of personnel services of universities, we established social connections with former pupils who graduated from higher educational institutions of Zaporizhzhia in previous years.

As a result of the study of psychosocial strategies of life trajectories of young people deprived of parental care, we have found that 83% of the experiment participants are religious people who attend religious institutions. This tendency is popular in social processes and controversial in terms of separation of religion from modern Ukrainian society, and especially since this indicator has increased by 2% over the last 5 years. The high level of religiousness and the desire to participate in various religious rituals should encourage the state and local governments to produce techniques of cooperation between the state and religious organizations in the field of raising the level of spirituality of both Ukrainian young people in general and those deprived of parental care in particular. Moreover, the state could have it as an additional tool for influencing young people as a specific social group. In general, this factor is positive and has positive impact on the spiritual development of youth.

The propensity of the young people deprived of parental care for domestic conflicts should be noted. So

within the period of conducting the surveys [2; 3] the number of the respondents who tend to join domestic conflicts has increased from 18% in 2008 to 27% in 2017. It should be also noted that the number of the respondents who support the initiators of the conflict is 55%. In 2012, this indicator was 51%. In general, the things have not changed within these 5 years. Young people deprived of parental care do not have skills of solving social and domestic conflicts in a constructive way. That is why the state youth policy and the work of civic organizations with this social community should also focus on measures aimed at reducing the level of proneness to conflicts in young people in general, as well in young orphaned people in particular.

In recent years, the orientations of the young people deprived of parental care in the sphere of marital and family relations are significantly changing. Thus, from 2008 to 2017, 5% more representatives of young people deprived of parental care have got married. 76% of our respondents have a positive attitude towards the family as a social institution and 90% of the respondents plan to create a family or have already created it. In the dynamics there is an increase in supporters of this position over the past five years by 8%. This fact is very important as most of the respondents did not have a complete primary socialization and were not familiar with behavior patterns of “normal” families. At the same time, one can talk about conducting trainings focused on the organization of family life for the young people deprived of parental care. If the state does not have such a program, it can create risks of family deviations in families where one or two family members were orphans.

The attitude towards the educational process of the young people deprived of parental care is ambiguous. In 80% of the respondents the academic success at a university according to the results of the first year of study decreases twice as compared to their academic achievements during school years. This can be explained by several reasons: low level of education in boarding schools; low level of motivation to study, falsification of marks at educational institutions where orphaned children study. 20% of the respondents had academic failures, this indicator increased by 4% as compared to 2012. One of the reasons is the decrease of the popularity of education among youth and the substitution of formal education by its informal forms.

The study of motivation for obtaining higher and vocational education among representatives of orphaned youth is also worth considering. In our study, we differentiated the respondents depending on the fact whether they had a guardian. Thus, the main factor in choosing a specialty for children who had a guardian was his/her recommendations (35%), and the children who were brought up in residential institutions were guided by their teachers (32%). Compared with past experiments, the number of the respondents who chose this variant has increased by 3%. That is, we have found that the life trajectories of most orphaned children depend on their guardians and

tutors. Such a high level of trust in the choice of a future specialty can be explained by the fact that the majority of young orphaned people do not want to get a profession, but prefer to live using social benefits or just entertain and enter universities to continue receiving social benefits provided by Ukrainian legislation for this category of people.

21% of the respondents have chronic illnesses and in general 3% are disabled. Over the past five years, these figures have grown by 0.5%. Based on these indicators, we can conclude that young people deprived of parental care have significant health problems and therefore require adequate state and community projects aimed at improving health and promoting healthy lifestyle.

Responsibility and honesty of the representatives of orphaned individuals can be assessed through the correlation of the answers to the questions related to health issues and the responses about bad habits characteristic of them. So 15% of the respondents regularly smoke tobacco products, 10% of the respondents use so-called electronic cigarettes. Over the last five years, the number of tobacco addicted respondents decreased by 12%, but according to the results of our study, this is caused by a global tendency of young people to smoke e-cigarettes. Besides, there are another 12% who smoke sometimes tobacco or e-cigarettes. These results show that our respondents in their words appreciate their health, and the tendency for bad habits indicates a low level of responsibility for their actions or a low level of understanding of the harm of smoking and other bad habits.

The specificity of relations between young people deprived of parental care and other students and teachers is difficult. So 70% of the respondents in 2017 and 60% in 2012 stated that they noticed their teachers' and employees' biased attitude towards them. In 2017, we conducted a survey to investigate this phenomenon. As a result, we have found that the biased attitude is considered by the respondents as mediocre evaluations of teachers, engaging them in public works, creative forms of work, remarks of about deviant behavior, etc.

The relations of young people deprived of parental care with their peers are no less complex. 30% of the participants of the re-examination consider their relations with peers and colleagues to be conflict. For 50% of the respondents it is difficult to communicate with peers and 25% of the participants of the experiment do not share interests and forms of their classmates. As compared to

further surveys these indicators have decreased by 5-7%. This suggests the inclusion of techniques for the development of communicative skills, improving the deprivation experience through the education of most respondents in family forms. The communicative skills of the respondents during the years of the experiment conduction have not improved, which shows the need to work on this problem in the future due to modification of work with young people deprived of parental care.

Conclusion

Young people deprived of parental care are a specific social category that has their own life strategies. They differ significantly from the life strategies of young people who have parents. As part of our study, we analyzed the current Ukrainian legal framework that helps to implement life strategies for orphaned young people and progressive socialization theories that could improve the implementation of life strategies for them. After analyzing the dynamics of the carried out empirical research we suggest some recommendations that may be further investigated. First, this is the creation and implementation of psychosocial techniques, trainings, programs of inclusive education, practical exercises and lectures that could facilitate the implementation of life strategies of the young people deprived of parental care.

On the whole, it can be noted that the results of the resurvey have shown the general increase of the level of adaptability and socialization of graduates of higher educational institutions to the conditions of modern Ukrainian society according to a number of parameters, on the other hand, there are still some problems of adaptation of orphaned persons to modern social realities. Along with the positive things, there are the following challenges: educational ones, which are caused by a low educational level since the time of study at comprehensive schools, domestic – due to the lack of own housing or prospects of obtaining housing from the state; family-household ones connected with the relationships with biological parents (who are deprived of parental rights) or other close relatives; psychosocial, based on the complexity of entering new social environment, taking into account the personality traits of every representative of the social group of orphans; socioeconomic factors caused by the lack of skills of earning money, spending and saving it, resume writing skills, readiness to be interviewed by potential employers; state of health; cultural and leisure activities aimed at the organization of leisure time, etc.

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СОЦІАЛЬНО-ПСИХОЛОГІЧНІ ТРАЕКТОРІЇ ЖИТТЄВИХ ПРАКТИК ОСІБ ІЗ СИРІТСЬКИМ ДИТИНСТВОМ ТА ПОЗБАВЛЕНИХ БАТЬКІВСЬКОГО ПІКЛУВАННЯ (НА МАТЕРІАЛАХ ПОВТОРНОГО ЕМПІРИЧНОГО ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ)

Статтю присвячено особливостям соціально-психологічних траєкторій життєвих практик осіб із сирітським дитинством та позбавлених батьківського піклування, зокрема в матеріалі аналізуються результати кількох експериментів, проведених на базі ВНЗ м. Запоріжжя. Проаналізовано особливості нормативно-правової бази здійснення соціально-психологічного супроводу осіб із сирітським дитинством та позбавлених батьківського піклування. Досліджено підходи вітчизняних та закордонних вчених щодо соціально-психологічного супроводу осіб із сирітським дитинством і позбавлених батьківського піклування. З'ясовано експериментальним шляхом особливості траєкторій життєвих практик дітей із сирітським минулим, які закінчили навчання у ВНЗ Запоріжжя. Наведено результати експериментального дослідження соціально-психологічних траєкторій в різні періоди часу, здійснено порівняльний аналіз результатів емпіричного дослідження життєвих практик осіб з сирітським минулим, які закінчили навчання у ВНЗ м. Запоріжжя упродовж 2001-2017 років. У цілому можна відмітити, що результати повторного емпіричного дослідження свідчать про загальне підвищення рівня адаптованості та соціалізованості випускників ВНЗ до умов сучасного українського суспільства за багатьма параметрами. З іншого боку, донині існують і певні проблеми адаптації осіб із сирітським дитинством до сучасних суспільних реалій, над якими слід наполегливо працювати міждисциплінарним командам фахівців. У підсумку виділено такі проблеми: освітні, що зумовлені низьким освітнім рівнем ще із часів навчання в загальноосвітніх закладах; житлово-побутові – зумовлені відсутністю власного житла або відсутністю перспектив отримати житло від держави, перебуваючи на спеціальному обліку; сімейно-побутові, що пов'язані із взаєминами з біологічними батьками (яких позбавлено батьківських прав) чи іншими близькими родичами; соціально-психологічні, що ґрунтуються на складності входження в нове соціальне середовище, враховуючи особистісні риси характеру кожного представника соціальної групи сиріт; соціально-економічні, що зумовлені відсутністю в осіб із сирітським минулим умінь самостійно заробляти гроші, навичок витратити та заощаджувати кошти, практичних навичок складання резюме, готовності до проходження співбесід із роботодавцем; стан здоров'я, адже більшість осіб із сирітським минулим потребує реабілітації в стаціонарних умовах; культурно-дозвілєві, що спрямовані на організацію власного дозвілля та культурного відпочинку тощо.

Ключові слова: життєва стратегія, соціально-психологічні траєкторії, молодь із сирітським дитинством, молодь позбавлена батьківського піклування, психологічний супровід.

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