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ANALYSIS OF GENERATIONS FOR THE YOUTH RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Abstract

The dynamics of the value scale change lies in the core for the youth research methodology. The youth research basically is organised on the basis of the previously accumulated experience of mankind, this ground of the past knowledge is implemented to extrapolate and to understand the future. The post-modernity represents the information era which reflects the basic evolution of the social communication and socialisation process of the children and young people, who are better educated and trained by the Internet sources and social media, than by the family socialisation process or school and community integration institutions. This new reality requires the new methodological basis for youth research. The common fundamental regulator includes, first of all, the system of values. The study represented in this paper reflects the short- and middle-term evolution of the values scale of the students for the education trajectory choice. Results from the research can be implemented for the understanding of the essential elements of the social regulation for the further research of the youth behaviour and mentality.

Keywords: youth research, values scale, post-modernity, generation theory, social regulation.

Introduction

The youth is examined according to the approaches that are elaborated in the previous period of time and the widely discussed question is the principal possibility of the implementation of the past rules for future generations. The rule implementation has the limit of the retro-activity, but the comparable socio-cultural regulating limit can be considered for the research of the young people, their behaviour and their choices made.

The values analysis is necessary to the different types of youth studies – the analysis of

youth as a specific category of society and the examination of specific problems of young people. The first kind of research usually develops the understanding of the youth in any society, of their role and their basic place. Studies are devoted to solving the most common theoretical, methodological problems of youth.

At the same time, we can determine “young people” as a category of social philosophy. The essence of this phenomenon and its most significant features is the relationship between youth and society, the place and role of young people in the historical process.

Another type of research takes into account private theoretical problems of youth (value orientations of young people, deviant behaviour, young people in various spheres of society).

Post-Modernity and Generations Research

Post-modernity studies witness the instrumental and practical orientation of the post-modern generations (Mead, 1972; Giddens, 1991), including the new approach of the younger generation to the choice of their professional and self-realisation path. The inter-generation differences are illustrated with the widespread analysis of the generations X and Y, and now the generation called Z that follows the previous ones since the mid-2000s. The spacy-time characteristic of value attitudes is associated with generations. In the context of globalisation, the spatial factor is increasingly less cultural than when the carriers of one culture are less compactly located on the territory of the Earth. In this regard, a generational approach is becoming more and more interesting. Generational theory (Strauss & Howe, 1991) starts from a socio-psychological analysis of socialisation processes, according to which a representative person's scheme is formed in the age period up to 10-12 years and then undergoes partial changes that do not affect key attitudes and basic values.

The values of generations bear the imprint of the influence of social events (cultural, political, economic, technological). At the first steps of socialisation, a child at an early age does not evaluate what is happening but develops the most effective technologies of life (Burova, Perrin-Bensahel, Pokrovskaja, & Kushcheva, 2016). If events (stages of the economic cycle within the

framework of Kondratieff's long waves and technological order (Perez, 2002), military-political situation, state model, etc.) in the historical period are common, then the values, attitudes, and patterns that form in most people born in the same period, are similar.

Therefore, a generation in this concept is defined as a group of people born during a certain period and experienced the influence of the same events and upbringing features, with close basic values. For each generation, these values form the "core of culture", the intentional filling with the meaning of the information and existential field. So, for the Silent generation, brought up in 1922-1943 and knowing what is hunger, the kind of fostering in the country vegetables and fruits cause subconscious complacency, confidence in the future and even happiness (Burova, Perrin-Bensahel, Pokrovskaja, & Kushcheva, 2016). In the theory of generations, the conclusion was made about the change of 4 generations, after which the repetition of key value-semiotic pictures occurs. The authors of the concept identified 4 main role-playing archetypes that clearly succeeded each other in mankind history:

- Autumn period - "heroes", "conciliators" (they must survive the "winter" crisis), the English abbreviation GI comes from "galvanised iron" ("hardened steel");
- winter - "artists", "opportunists" (securing the success and development of science and culture);
- spring - "prophets", "idealists" (renewal, improvement);
- summer - "nomads", "wanderers", "activists" (their task is to show that the old morality does not work, and to prepare the ground for a new one).

Professional Part of Generation as the Values Scale Realisation

The professional behaviour of representatives of generation Y is widely oriented toward self-realisation and creative activity (Ababkova, Leontieva, Fedorov, & Pokrovskaja, 2018). These features distinguish generation Y from members of other generations X and the previous ones (called the Baby-boomers and the Silent generation) (Strauss & Howe, 1991), the young people belonging to this age group (born approximately between 1995-2004) are focused on more efficient use of their own human resources, including their individual interest and talents within the framework of social and economic behaviour (d'Ascenzo & Pokrovskaja, 2018, p. 442). Management and consulting agencies systematically conduct applied research to help employers to understand and effectively use human resources of different generations to organise the value chain of the business. These economic studies give us a wide empirical basis and practical conclusions to understand the essential features of the phenomena of the evolution of social regulation in the information era, including the youth research approach.

This idea is illustrated with the growing influx of young people to economic, managerial and legal professions, the demand from the employers grows for training in engineering and engineering areas. The education system is oriented to cultivate the initial personal preferences, "nurture" and give young people the opportunity to realise their interests. If society needs more engineers, then today not only private consulting agencies should undertake a study of the characteristics of generations entering the labour market in the 2010-2020s, but also at the State level to start education programs and to develop a pol-

icy of measures for the formation of value orientations and attitudes toward invention, to an interest in the technical engineering approach. If at the level of society the significance of the development of value for engineering and technical facilities is also noted, then it is probably advisable to consider not only individual private initiatives in this area but also contribute to the study of those socio-cultural regulatory mechanisms that can contribute to the development of value systems of invention and innovation as the essential parts of the self-realisation.

The Coherence of the Specific Goals of Education and General Personal Self-Realisation

Representatives of Generation Y have a status-role position for the creators of a future innovation economy, both in the function of inventors and entrepreneurs. Therefore, today, probably, the state policy of education should orient the system of professional education towards the formation of technical and engineering specialists.

In a consumer society, the basic level of satisfaction of survival needs (existence and security) is quite high (Strangio, D'Ascenzo, & Pokrovskaja, 2018). This high level is formed by the intense labour of the post-war generation and the struggle for freedom and the individual quality of life of generation X. Children of generation X, born after the 1980s, see in professional activities the way to realise their own values (Gridneva, Petrov, & Pokrovskaja 2018), formed under the influence of, above all, their interests and talents and to a lesser extent under the influence of external circumstances.

In this regard, it is possible to identify some features of the generations of technical and engi-

neering labour, which are characteristic of the category of young workers who come to the enterprises since the 2000s, which allowed them to form ideas about the so-called generation Y (subject to all constraints imposed on the ideal-type). Among them:

- openness to new technical tools, readiness without barriers to immediately take new methods and equipment and use them (taking into account the interactivity and intuitive clarity of modern technology, the refusal to read instructions and undergo special training is justified);
- technical literacy is complemented by proficiency in a foreign language (usually English) at a level sufficient for effective global interaction, which also removes barriers for personal mobility and for making transactions (“globalisation”, the ability to think globally and at the same time maintain its corner of the universe and the planet in a manner that is pleasant and convenient personally for the individual);
- social and professional mobility implies an easy transition from the office to the street if the order “in the Universe” is violated (Occupy Wall Street or jasmine revolutions), or the transition from computer technology to telecommunications, from IT to modeling architectural or automotive projects, for which generation Y easily comes to learning, including distance learning.

The society is developing a prefigurative model of cultural transmission (Mead, 1972) when generation X uses human resource generation Y to teach new methods, both behavioural and communicative models, and instrumental, operational technologies, for example, the use of modern virtual space, approaches to ensuring information security, etc. In this regard, it is in-

teresting to compare generational cycles with a techno-economic paradigm shift.

The life cycle of technological changes associated with “long waves” (since it is “long waves” that are comparable in duration with generations), takes the form of a logistic curve, adding up to phases that differ in growth rates reflecting its performance, like the typical process of propagation of any technology (Utevskaia, Burova, & Pokrovskaja, 2016).

The change of technology reflects the law of ascension of needs. According to Karl Marx, a person moves to an ever-higher level of needs, while meeting some needs leads to the emergence of new ones, not only in size but also in content (in accordance with the dialectical principle of transition quality). At the micro-level, this is reflected in the transition of the values of generations from the needs of survival to the needs of self-realisation. It can be noted that the degree of awareness of personal choice and professional trajectory reflects the degree of human ascent in the economic system from the possessor of physical strength and energy, capable of launching mechanisms, to the creator of complex automated systems, information networks and cognitive technologies. If for F.W. Taylor in the first place were the physiological abilities of a person to perform the simplest physical operations, then in the post-war years, V. V. Leontief discovers the paradoxical prevalence in labor exports of the United States of labour-intensive goods against capital-intensive imports, which is associated with the new content of labor, more skilled and built on mental rather than physical effort. In technological structures, this is reflected in the development of innovations (Perez, 2002).

This shift in technology and the development of economic and managerial approaches reflect the transition from meeting basic material

needs to increase the share of creative and intellectual activity and related consumption.

So, in the middle of the twentieth century, most of the main markets are being saturated and there is a need for individualisation of products and services, for their development and creation of niches, for marketing efforts. This, in turn, forces the economic societal subsystem to perform its function in society in a new way (according to T. Parsons), combining the factors of value creation and forming new approaches to reward key factors, such as human resource or entrepreneurial talent: for example, dispersal of capital (distribution of shares to employees) or the formation of options and bonuses (for top managers).

Since people in organisations begin to play a key role in creating value and there is a need to manage talents, the beginning of the 21st century represents a time when the ability of generation Y to fully realise giftedness in creativity, including technical, becomes a resource that brings the maximum rate. In this sense, self-realisation becomes beneficial: a rare situation of convergence can be observed, when the action of internal and external factors converges in the desire for peculiarity, the development of human consciousness simultaneously with the humanisation of technological tools for realisation and creation of meanings.

In the process of development, a person becomes the creator of reality, the author of his reality, who controls his life. Self-realisation of a person begins before his birth and - if the environment in which he finds himself allows - continues until the last second of life, until the last breath. A person creates his own social fabric, changing attitudes and social structure, chooses a position for himself and performs a number of functions in the status-role model, fitting his

choice into the existing structure, violating or supplementing it. In social interactions, an individual embodies strategies for adaptation and self-actualisation: he responds to the demands of the environment and uses the social system and the existing institutional channels to meet his needs; or changes the form and content of the social fabric and forms a value scale and normative models in accordance with his vision of the picture of the world, his representations and preferences. (We can mention the world financial crisis in 2008 and Donald Trump's trade sanctions).

A representative of Generation Y follows internal attraction and interest, external pressure or manipulation is ineffective in controlling it. The task of education is to identify and nurture an interest in technology, in physical models and technical devices, to nurture this interest without suppressing or trampling its shoots.

The socialisation of generation Y is dynamic, raising the attitudes and value orientations, requiring tact and gentleness; the generation "mixes" the phases of the classical theory of generations, while mastering the values, lives them, manages them and creates values, leaving the previous generations the right to preserve them.

Representatives of Generation Y are perfectly aware of their freedom, compared to the older generation: "I will not be tied to one office, like my father, he worked at one enterprise all the time I remember myself. And for what? Who told him thanks for that?" (Pokrovskaja & Terebkova, 2015) They prefer to be "surfers", by analogy with windsurfing, according to the information field of modern society, earning only the amount of resources that are necessary to meet situational needs.

This generation, convinced of its unique-

ness and superiority over the older generations: “It’s necessary to invest wisely, only idiots put money in the bank. I will buy land in areas where there are prospects.” However, when somebody asked what tools this respondent plans to assess prospects, he gave an evasive answer: “I will figure out when there will be serious savings.” Long-term planning for representatives of this generation is preferable since short-term and medium-term planning requires an immediate response about resources and methods, but they are already accustomed to changes: resources appear and disappear, and methods and technologies are rapidly updated and replaced.

For generation Y, the concepts of “the ability to live” and “the art of living” (French - *savoir vivre*, *art de vivre*) are filled with concrete content and mean the living of today. Competences mean, among other things, the ability to use and change institutions (Ababkova & Pokrovskaja, 2016) of society for the realisation of their goals and interests.

Conclusion

The personal development is a role development that occurs when a person spontaneously assumes the role most appropriate to an individual’s role in social “co-being” with another, the mutual penetration of people’s existential spaces (Pokrovskaja & Sergeychev, 2015). Thus, the management of the group’s activities through the workshop’s regulatory base leads to a mediated, purposeful influence on the development of the personality. Personality development, in particular, is reflected in the ability to set goals - readiness for goal-setting.

The synergistic approach is a significant part of the motivating activity, which is to involve an active, thinking and creative subject

(theory Y) in the process of solving the problem and achieving the goal within the framework of the realisation of its own motives and needs. Such is learning through practice, through the behaviourist experience of doing, through the formation of a student’s personal professional and educational path.

Modern youth, as shown by the analysis, is well aware of the needs of society and, in particular, the demands of the economic environment. This determines the choice of one’s life and a professional path made by modern young people.

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