

Developing social activity in students studying for a teaching degree

Desarrollar la actividad social en estudiantes que estudian pedagogía

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ABSTRACT:

The paper makes a case for the development of social activity in students of pedagogical universities whose future professional responsibilities will include the facilitation of the teaching process at educational institutions in accordance with the Federal State Educational Standard, which sees education as a high-scale sociocultural phenomenon that is based on the individual's social activity. In view of the requirements placed by the modern educational system, one of the necessary factors in the training of trainee teachers is the encouragement of their social activity. The paper argues for the significance of the relevant research based on the review of academic literature in the context of the modern higher education system.

Keywords: Development of social activity; future teachers' training; educational.

RESUMEN:

El documento justifica el desarrollo de la actividad social en estudiantes de universidades pedagógicas cuyas futuras responsabilidades profesionales incluirán la facilitación del proceso de enseñanza en las instituciones educativas de acuerdo con el Estándar Educativo Estatal Federal, que considera la educación como un fenómeno sociocultural de gran escala. que se basa en la actividad social del individuo. En vista de los requisitos establecidos por el sistema educativo moderno, uno de los factores necesarios en la formación de los profesores en formación es el fomento de su actividad social. El documento defiende la importancia de la investigación relevante basada en la revisión de la literatura académica en el contexto del sistema moderno de educación superior.

Palabras clave: desarrollo de la actividad social; formación de futuros docentes; educativo.

1. Introduction

The innovations in the Russian education system at the current stage of its development intend to help students follow their individual learning curve, which increases their learning, social and professional performance. This fact calls for educators with a high level of social activity as an integral part of the personality of teachers that brings the quality of the national education to the level required to meet the current demand for innovation growth placed upon it by the society.

The Law of the Russian Federation #273-FZ "On education in the Russian Federation", Chapter 2 "The system of higher and postgraduate vocational education" lists the primary tasks faced by the higher education institutions, which include helping students form a civic stance, fostering social involvement and the ability to work and live in the environment shaped by the modern civilization and democracy (1). In view of these requirements, a pedagogical university must teach future educators how to organize the teaching process at educational institutions in accordance with the Federal State Educational Standard which sees education as a high-scale sociocultural phenomenon that is based on the individual's social activity.

Today's society has an urgent need for socially engaged educators, which is barely covered by the current best practices of educational programs at universities. The results of recent research show that a significant share of students demonstrate inadequate social responsibility for their learning results, low motivation for choosing their life path and limited ways for self-actualization.

This paper is predicated on the belief that the social activity of students during their studies at a pedagogical university stimulates their successful personal and professional growth. Therefore, the planning of focused efforts aimed at developing social activity in university students should be a mandatory part of teacher training in compliance with the modern educational space.

The purpose of this paper is to make a case for the development of social activity in future teachers and to use the experience of the departments of the Institute of Pedagogy at the M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University to prove its influence on the professional self-actualization and personal growth of a future specialist.

Research tasks: to evaluate the urgency and significance of developing social activity in students of pedagogical universities based on the review of academic literature dedicated to this problem; to assess the efficiency of social activity efforts aimed at students of pedagogical universities by analyzing the experience in this field acquired by the staff at departments of social pedagogy, special (defectologic) education and preschool education of the Institute of Pedagogy at the M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University.

To evaluate the efficiency of social activity efforts aimed at students of teaching, the authors summarized the experience in this field acquired by the staff at departments of social pedagogy, special (defectologic) education and preschool education of the Institute of Pedagogy at the M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University; they confirmed the influence caused by social activity on the students' professional and personal growth. A special focus was placed on analyzing the work of youth education teams and volunteer groups which give students an opportunity to exercise in different kinds of social activity, such as teaching, academic, cultural, creative and social activities, which positively affects the professional self-actualization and personal growth of trainee teachers.

1.1. Literature review

In researching the ways to encourage social activity in an individual, the authors turned to the field-related works by foreign scholars, which showed that the problem of social activity in young people is mostly viewed in respect to high-school students. Many authors interpret social activity as schoolchildren's participation in extracurricular activity, which is considered the primary factor of a long-term success in education (Mahoney et al., 2003). The research by H.W. Marsh, and S. Kleitman (2002), which is grounded in the three theoretical models – the threshold model, the identification/commitment model, and the social inequality gap reduction model – have shown that most beneficial effect was produced by the integration of nonacademic (sports, student government, school publications, and performing arts) and academic activities. J.A. Fredricks and J.S. Eccles (2006) examined the relations between participation in a range of high school extracurricular contexts and developmental outcomes in adolescence and young adulthood for several years based on the Childhood and Beyond Study. The results of the study showed that greater involvement in extracurricular activities is associated with academic adjustment, psychological competencies, and a positive peer context. F. Cunha and J. Heckman (2008) explored the role of family environments in the models of the evolution of cognitive and non-cognitive skills in children.

The foreign publications on education place a great focus on the level of availability of extracurricular activities. This problem was examined by H.W. Marsh and S. Kleitman (2012). A list of such activities is used to help organize an after-school life.

In the context of their research into the development of social activity in students, the authors would like to mention the article by H.W. Marsh (1992)

which analyzes the participation of students in extracurricular activities in the 1990s, based on a large, nationally representative database. Having examined sophomores' participation in extracurricular activities, the author identified the range of interests and the level of cognitive outcomes in young people prior to and after getting into college. A. Balyer and Y. Gunduz (2012) claim that students participating in extracurricular activities, despite the fact they are not directly related to their academic courses, improve their learning performance, so in some countries they are integrated into formal programs.

An interesting contribution was made by S. Bell (2010) who distinguished project-based learning as the ones most adapted to real life and viewed the practice-oriented technology of training students in their future profession in the light of the activity approach.

J. Wiers-Jenssen, B. Stensaker and J.B. Groggaard (2002) broke down the student satisfaction in Norway into components. The analysis reveals that the academic and pedagogic quality of teaching is crucial determinants of student satisfaction. The authors allocate special importance to the social climate, aesthetic aspects of the physical infrastructure and the quality of services from the administrative staff in trying to improve student satisfaction by education. The experience of improving the quality of education at the universities of the United Kingdom is reflected in the studies of J. Leckey and N. Neill (2001).

One of the prerequisites for improving the quality of education as an efficient form of bringing success to the younger generation is the facilitation of an interdisciplinary learning environment for students, as outlined by A. Kezar and S. Elrod (2012); the conditions for students' satisfaction with the quality of education in distance learning were considered by Kuo et al., (2013) and Parahoo et al, (2016)

It should be noted that the majority of materials on the facilitation of an active social position in students written by Russian scholars of pedagogy are largely represented in the research conducted on the brink of the 21st century. This explains the importance of the critical analysis, comprehension and systemization of the ideas and approaches to the problem of developing social activity in students, which were discovered at that time.

The problem of facilitating an individual's social activity skills is complex, multi-faceted and remains topical and in need of continuous improvement in line with the present-day reality. A tangible contribution to the pedagogical theory on the shaping of an aspiring teacher's personality was made by such classical pedagogues as P.P. Blonsky and A.V. Petrovsky, (1979)., N.K. Krupskaya (1958), A.S. Makarenko (1958), V.A. Sukhomlinsky (1973), S.T. Shatsky (1964); the particular practical approaches to the facilitation of teachers' social activity were developed by S.O. Grunina (2005), S.O. Grunina and N.S. Morova, (2007), A.V. Yenin and Ye.V. Lysenko, (2011), L.V. Maykova (2011), S.S. Ovchinnikov (1969), P.A. Prosetsky (1978), V.A. Slastenin (1981), L.F. Spirin (1976), A.I. Scherbakov (1980), I.A. Yaremenko (2000) and others. Problems of the relationship between the individual and society in the work of classic educators are discussed in the work by N.V. Semenova (2014).

Let us define personal engagement as "the person's ability to conduct socially significant transformations in the world through acquiring the values of material and spiritual culture that manifests itself in creativity, acts of free will and communication" (Luchkina and Zherebyatnikova, 2013). Varying interpretation of the concept of "personal engagement" is given in the works of V.Z. Kogan (1970: 4), N.Ye. Vorobyov (1976: 9), I.T. Frolov (1991: 424), A.V. Petrovsky (1982), N.V. Savin (1978).

In this study, the authors accepted the definition of social activity by I.G. Averina (2016) who interpreted it as an integrational quality and an independent, self-motivated, purposeful actions of an individual aimed at conscious interaction with the social environment, which are undertaken as part of the internal (mental) and external (practical) efforts to transform one's self and the sociocultural environment in accordance with the interests of the society.

We believe that the subject of social activity cannot be viewed in isolation from relations and activity. Researchers identified the following essential characteristics of social activity: self-identification; involvement in social interaction; prosocial behavior.

N.A. Sokolova (2014) pinpoints the following stages in the development of social activity:

1. Emergence and development of social needs within a social environment.
2. Recognition of personal context in certain kinds of social activities.
3. Setting of goals in the chosen social activity.
4. Personal involvement in the chosen social activity and transformation of social reality.
5. Analysis, self-reflection and self-assessment of the process and result of one's own social activity.

There are currently four recognized kinds of individual social activities typical for a student age, which drive the person's growth and self-improvement: learning, academic, social and creative activities (Kobysheva, 2013).

Many scholars worked on the problem of measuring and examining the degree of influence of various factors upon the development of an individual's social activity. For example, the researchers identified internal and external factors. The most comprehensive data on this problem are provided in the work by V.F. Bekhterev (1996) who identified the following groups of factors:

1. Natural factors.
2. Factors of general social determination, the macrofactors (sociopolitical, socioeconomic, socio-spiritual circumstances of the society and state).
3. Intermediate, the mesofactors (ethnocultural environment, regional specifics, type of settlement).
4. Factors of a concrete social environment, the microfactors (family, educational institutions, company of peers, colleagues at work).

Having grounded in the classification suggested by V.F. Bekhterev (1996), specifically the group of factors of a concrete social environment, the authors have looked into a range of research papers dedicated to the development of social activity in students of pedagogical universities. Below is the review of works on this problem.

Ye.A. Shants (2013) attributes social activity, tendency to self-actualization in action, responsibility, self-reliance and self-motivation to the qualities that must be present in aspiring teachers for them to be able to develop the ability to initiate socially significant transformations in the society.

L.V. Maykova (2011), in determining the pedagogical conditions for the development of social activity in university students of teaching disciplines, focuses on the facilitation of the educational process based on involving students in various socially valuable efforts, given the optimal proportion of pedagogical guidance and self-government in students' lives and the exercising of individual and differentiated approaches to encouraging social activity in students. Among the prerequisites, she sees the need to improve the levels of theoretical and methodological readiness of teachers and curators of academic teams to fostering social activity in students. Another prerequisite is the ability to form a subjective position in each student as part of their education program at vocational education facilities; this prerequisite is further elaborated by A.G. Kornilova, D.A. Danilov, A.N. Vasilyeva and coauthors (2016).

For the purposes of this study, attention should be given to the approach of M.V. Kolesnikova (2007) to the development of social activity from the pedagogical perspective, which she sees as the need to build a robust system of pedagogical situations during learning and education, which include certain goals along with the optimal forms and methods of work relying on certain organizational and pedagogical conditions:

1. Actualization of socio-professional knowledge and expectations of students in their professional life through helping the students comprehend the ideas behind social activity, academic training and developing the grounds (cognitive, axiological, psychological) for encouraging the students' motivation for socially meaningful activity.
2. Facilitation of students' practical professional work based on the evaluation of essential characteristics of the social activity phenomenon in the student environment.
3. Involvement of students of pedagogical universities in project-based social activities.

Researchers reasonably emphasize the role of projects in the development of social activity. T.V. Luchkina, G.V. Zherebyatnikova rightly argue that involving students in socially significant project design will inspire the students to act (2013: 999). The students studying for a teaching degree should be actively involved in project-based social activities during their learning, as well as internship and actual pedagogical work.

The authors back the opinion of Ye.A. Shants (2013) that sociocultural project design holds a great potential, provided the university creates the right environment for the project-based innovative work of teachers in its curricula. She sees sociocultural project design as a conceptual and technical basis for all pedagogical, sociocultural, socio-pedagogical and culturological vocations. She stresses that the degree to which the future educators master the technology of sociocultural project design will to a great extent determine the outcome of their further activity, therefore, the educators must be able to prepare and carry out a social activity, including the ability to validate an idea, identify goals and tasks, as well as possible solution paths.

In their studies into the training of special-needs teachers, M.S. Makarova, N.N. Malyarchuk, and G.M. Krinitsyna (2016) soundly posit that the successful transformation of students into special-needs experts depends on their motivation for choosing an active social stance, development of a professional mindset, the required competencies and the ability to help people by pursuing the mission of social service. In this context, they identify a

promising approach to the professional training of special-needs teachers, defining the facilitation of volunteering as a form of social practice for students, starting from the first year of learning. The regional aspect of the training of special-needs teachers is mentioned in the article by I.A. Yudina, N.A. Abramova, Ye.N. Kornilova (2017).

V.S. Savchenko (2014) points to how leisure activities influence the development of social activity in university students, which, she believes, significantly increases the opportunities for successful self-actualization, self-identification and development of positive response to social problems, helping students acquire new social experience. Creativity and creative approach as a condition for increasing the social activity of the individual is revealed in the context of the problems of pedagogy and the psychology of creative activities (Barysheva, 2008)

In the context of this study, to further comprehend and understand the theory behind the development of social activity within a pedagogical university, the authors would like to mention the work by S.O. Grunina (2011) who views the social activity of trainee teachers as the reflection of their social orientation on their social environment in a bid to generate social benefit, establish moral and ethical norms within the community where the student belongs, as well as within the outside natural, objective and social environment. Based on the results of her research, she concluded that the modelling of a teaching process at a pedagogical university should be based on such fundamentally important ideas as the relation between learning and education, social partnership, self-government and volunteering that build the core of an educational system. The researcher believes that students should develop vocationally valuable qualities and implement them through social activity via acquiring practical experience in various areas within the internal educational space and in the external environment, at local, republic, regional and federal levels. S.O. Grunina (2011) experimentally proved that the external, internal and integrating pedagogical conditions are determined by implementing the systems and activity-based approaches to the building of a model of educational system; by the orientation at the principles of self-government, social partnership and volunteering; by the consolidated impact of the value and semantic, subjective and environment, functional and activity, organizational and methodological components of the system; by the reliance on the productive socio-pedagogical system-building activity; by the selection, optimization and application of the methods for complex measurement of social activity indicators.

Therefore, the authors believe that the theoretical analysis they have undertaken gives them the grounds to validate the urgency and importance of the problem of development of social activity in the theoretical and practical training of future educators.

2. Methodology

As part of this study, the authors reviewed both national and foreign academic and psychological literature dedicated to pedagogical methodology. Such literature includes the results of the *Student of the Year* annual sociological survey conducted by the M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University (NEFU) in 2016-2018, the experience in the development of social engagement in students acquired by the staff at departments of social pedagogy, special (defectologic) education and preschool education and the results of the monitoring of employment and professional growth outcomes of the graduates from the associated departments.

The degree of social engagement in the students of the NEFU Institute of Pedagogy was measured based on the analysis of the results of the aforementioned sociological survey, the data on the awarding of enhanced scholarships for academic achievements, the performance of students in subject-based Science Olympiads (students' academic competitions) of different scales, the analysis of efforts of student associations and movements.

3. Results

NEFU carries out the annual Student of the Year sociological survey to assess the students' satisfaction with the organization and quality of education, evaluate their social mood and engagement in various areas of social reality.

The chosen method of gathering the research data was a questionnaire survey using the NEFU online survey system. The questionnaire contains questions broken down into the following categories:

- personal data;
- performance assessment of teachers, curators, curricular departments/dean's offices, the learning process, student dormitories;
- satisfaction with various aspects of student life;
- extracurricular activities.

Within this study, the authors examined the student survey results in the following areas:

- student satisfaction with studying at NEFU and specifically with studying for the chosen major (specialty);
- satisfaction with the quality of the education they are receiving;
- student satisfaction with the organization of research activities;
- student satisfaction with the work of the NEFU Student Primary Trade Unions (SPTUs);
- student satisfaction with the quality of leisure.

The results of the student survey for the categories listed above are presented in Tables 1-3, 5-6.

The results of the sociological survey indicate the high level of motivation in the students of the pedagogical university for educative work, which is one of important factors in the implementation of social engagement, in particular, the learning activity.

Table 1
Student satisfaction with studying at NEFU and specifically with studying for the chosen major (specialty)

Year	excellent	good	Fair	poor	Not sure
2016	-*	-	-	-	-
2017	31%	48%	13%	5%	3%
2018	30%	49%	8%	4%	9%

Note: *no survey data on this question.

According to the data from 2017 and 2018, the largest share of respondents fully satisfied with studying at NEFU and specifically with studying for the chosen major (specialty) was registered at the Faculty of Law (FL) (84%), the Institute of Physical Culture and Sport (IPCS) (81%), Institute of Pedagogy (IP) (79%); the smallest share was registered at the Institute of Natural Sciences (INS) (55%), the Faculty of Philology (FP) (56%) and the Institute of Foreign Philology and Regional Studies (FPRS) (57%).

An essential condition for encouraging students' engagement is their satisfaction with the quality of the education they are receiving at the university.

Table 2
Satisfaction with the quality of education

Year	Positive	Negative	Not sure
2016	87%	5%	8%
2017	-	-	-
2018	98%	1%	1%

Overall across the university, in 2016 the satisfaction with the provided education was high (80-89%) at IP, IPCS and the Faculty of Road Transport (FRT). In 2018, the students of IP gave the highest score for the quality of education (98%) as compared to FP students who were the least satisfied

(74%).

The quality of the education provided at the NEFU Institute of Pedagogy was proved by the scores the students received for the Federal Online Exam for Bachelors (FOEB) in psychological and pedagogical disciplines between 2015 and 2018. Based on those scores, the students were rewarded with Gold, Silver and Bronze Certificates of Participation. The latest achievements of the students of the Department of Special (Defectological) Education include the third place in the All-Russian Student Defectological Olympiad, Pedagogy of Unlimited Abilities, which was held in 2017 at the Herzen State Pedagogical University; and the first place won by the first-year master's students in the Vygotsky All-Russian Scholarship and Grant Competition held in 2017 by the Institute for the Acceleration of Economic Growth Fund in Moscow.

The student satisfaction with the organization of the research activities can to a certain extent reflect their level of academic engagement, which manifests itself as the students' willingness to do scientific research and participate in academic conferences.

Table 3
Student satisfaction with the organization of research activities

Year	Positive	Negative	Not sure
2016	85%	2%	13%
2017	88%	12%	
2018	81%	14%	5%

According to the survey results, in 2018, IP ranked 4th by the student attendance of research groups and elective courses. The overall satisfaction of IP students with the organization of research activities remains high.

The analysis of statistics on the awards of enhanced scholarships for research achievements to IP students showed a positive dynamics:

Table 4
Awards of enhanced scholarships for research achievements

Number of IP students who were receiving the enhanced scholarship for research		
2016	2017	Q1, 2018
48	52	31

Within the studied period, the answers of the survey respondents as to their satisfaction with the work of the NEFU Student Primary Trade Unions (SPTUs) were distributed in the following manner:

Table 5
Student satisfaction with the work of the NEFU SPTUs

Year	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not sure
2016	24%	32%	16%	7%	21%
2017	24%	45%	15%	2%	6%
2018	28%	37%	14%	3%	8%

The authors have also examined the students' answers to the question about their satisfaction with the organization of leisure, since this area of the university's activity is an indicator of how well the students are engaged in cultural and creative initiatives within their faculty and across the university.

Table 6
Student satisfaction with the quality of leisure
(contests, competitions, concerts, thematic shows, etc.).

Year	Positive	Negative	Not sure
2016	82%	3%	15%
2017	68%	10%	22%
2018	72%	8%	20%

Among the university departments where the majority of students were satisfied with leisure was IP (72%).

Therefore, based on the results of study and analysis of survey data, statistical data and the FOEB scores of the Institute of Pedagogy students, the authors conclude that the students rank high in the specified categories of social engagement.

The M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University works hard to improve the students' social engagement. The educational efforts at NEFU are supervised by the Office for Student Personal Enhancement, which is intended to facilitate the university's mission of bringing up competitive specialists by driving their intellectual, professional, moral and personal growth. The office's work focuses on several areas:

- social, pedagogical and educational work;
- employment facilitation, career growth;
- organization of cultural and other mass events for students, including the arrangement of socially important events;
- psychological counselling on problems related to learning and education, including those that concern career growth and succeeding in life.

The university has developed and put to practice a system of moral and material incentives for student engagement. One of the effective material incentives, which at the same time demonstrates the level of the student's social engagement, is a personalized enhanced scholarship (for learning, research, social, cultural and sports achievements).

The educational environment at NEFU therefore nourishes the socially active personalities of the future graduates.

At the Institute of Pedagogy, the social and pedagogical systems for student engagement are largely implemented through the work of SPTUs, youth education teams, volunteers and cultural activists. The youth education teams help students find opportunities for self-actualization and various forms of social engagement. Let us provide a brief outline of the work undertaken by the NEFU Institute of Pedagogy in this area.

Between 2003 and 2014, the Department of Social Pedagogy was supervising the Dobrovolsky (Volunteers) Youth Civic Student Organization. The

organization's mission was to spread the ideas of humanism and charity among young students by involving them in an active social life. The organization's motto was "An hour of kindness will help you forget your woes." During that period, the student volunteers helped plan various events. The volunteers arranged theater performances, charity events and fundraisers, group games and many other events for other students.

The organization's most valuable and long-term project was the Planet of Friendship project, which was running in 2012 to 2013 to integrate students with special needs into the society. The project included events involving the efforts of both special-needs students from the Republican Boarding School for Occupational, Health and Social Rehabilitation of the Disabled and their non-disabled peers from the NEFU Institute of Pedagogy. The events were hosted at various venues throughout Yakutsk (Cinema Center, Diamond Circus, the Kniga-03 library, the Razvitie NEFU student counselling center). The project also involved meetings with prominent people. According to the students' feedback, such events meant a lot to them, as they helped them acquire valuable experience in communication with people from different social strata, establishment of contact with organizations and public funds. In addition to that, such experience contributes to their research work by providing materials for their term papers, theses, academic articles.

The D.A. Danilov DAR youth education team has been functioning at the Institute of Pedagogy since 2005. The team's motto is "Each of us has their own tasks, but together we are a team!" The team's mission is to encourage an active mindset and professional attitude in university and high-school students. DAR's work priority is to foster law culture among students and schoolchildren. Starting from 2014, the team has been working on the Rights of the Child program dedicated to reinforcing a children's law culture, and on the Everyone is Different, Everyone is Equal program helping multi-cultural pupils overcome the language barrier and facilitate cross-cultural communication. The members of the DAR youth education team take part in the Youth Leader School program which runs as part of the Children's Arts Center in Yakutsk.

DAR already has tangible achievements under their belt. In 2005, they won the Best Project in Support of Young Disabled People award in project competition hosted by the Ministry of Youth Policy of the Sakha Republic with their project titled "Adaptation of children with severe speech disorders in the sociocultural environment of a multi-ethnic society." In 2010, the DAR youth education team was named the best youth education team in the republic and received the Acknowledgements and a Memorial Sign from President of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) Ye.A. Borisov. In April 2011, the achievements of the team members were recognized at the My Educational Initiative All-Russian Competition of Academic and Educational Projects (Saint Petersburg), the My Legislative Initiative All-Russian Project Competition (Moscow), and the Far-Eastern Inter-University Youth Education Team Competition in Birobidzhan in the Opening Possibilities category.

Since 2017, the Department of Social Pedagogy has been running the Tigers Youth Education Team as part of the Student Volunteering Development project. The mission of the project is to systemically involve young people in the social life, to develop and support youth initiatives aimed at facilitating the young people's volunteer efforts, to provide opportunities for fulfilling the students' potential in social and public areas; to create an environment to encourage research, academic, pedagogical and practical work for students. Starting from 2017, the members of the team has been taking part in the Success Palette social project by the Ministry for Youth and Family Policy of the Republic of Sakha, which intends to create a unique platform for personal growth, career guidance and improvement of the young people's social engagement in various forms of public and self-development activities.

Below are the most valuable projects delivered by the students of the Department of Social Pedagogy:

- the traditional New Year's celebration event for the city's special-needs children who are not patrons of any organization. It is hosted under the auspices of the General Administration Office of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) for the Management of Public Social Security and Labor of Yakutsk of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development of the Sakha Republic (it welcomes around 50 special-needs children annually);
- the Children's Leisure student project for the students from special education facilities, which runs at the Bereginya Orphanage in Yakutsk;
- since 2009, first-year students take part in the Kniga-03 project aimed to provide social services at the special library for senior and disabled people;
- as part of a project called Giving Joy, Tigers hold annual charity concerts at the Republican Residential Home for Senior and Disabled People in Yakutsk.

The Department of Special (Defectological) Education runs the Saydyy counselling center for special-needs children. It was opened to establish a research and practice platform for the development of professional competencies in students getting a degree in Special (Defectological) Education; to provide special counselling to special-needs children; to help teachers improve their qualifications in teaching and educating children with special needs. Students can use this center as a platform for the implementation of socially valuable projects, starting from their first year. Such projects include participation in the Rechenka municipal speech correction program to provide diagnostic and counselling services to children with speech disorders; in speech correction diagnostic and counselling tours to the countryside across the republic organized by the teachers and students of the department. Students independently design and implement such projects at the center as part of their term papers and theses. Such socially important projects include the arrangement of an inclusive drama group, an inclusive arts and crafts studio, a drama group for children with general speech disorders, an arts and crafts studio for children with general speech disorders. While working on their research projects, the students acquire a positive experience in social interaction, professional collaboration with teammates, satisfaction with the process and results of their work, which also increases their social engagement.

One of the good traditions of the Institute of Pedagogy is for the students of the Department of Special (Defectological) Education to hold the annual New Year's celebration event for orphans and abandoned children, special-needs children, disabled children, and to run the Help Children Celebrate charity promotion to raise gifts for such children.

Since 2008, to aid career guidance, increase students' interest to their future vocation, as well as to provide charitable, socially valuable help to children with special needs, and to help teachers bring up and educate children with social needs, the Department of Special (Defectological) Education runs the Rostok student education club for children with autistic disorders. In 2012, the department initiated the Sunbeam volunteer group which engages first-year students. The members of this group take part in charity events held by the Sun City public organization, arrange educational events at schools and learning facilities, plan leisure for children with severe speech disorders and learning disabilities. Such kind of social interaction between students in a professional environment helps them understand the meaning of their future vocation, encourages social engagement, as well as professional and personal self-identifications.

It has been proved through the monitoring of employment and career outcomes of the graduates that acts of social engagement in the learning years contribute to the teacher's successful personal and professional growth. The professional achievements of the university's graduates will testify to that effect. The alumni include the Deputy Head of the Department of Human Resources Policy of the State and Municipal Service for the Presidential Office of the Sakha Republic, headmasters of secondary schools, heads of preschool education organizations, head of the education department at the Business School postgraduate education center of the Sakha Republic, head of the department for the prevention of addictive behavior of children and teenagers of the Republican Center for Counseling, Healthcare and Social Support; director of an early development center, university teachers, recipients of the Hope of Yakutia award pins granted by the Ministry of Education of the Sakha Republic, a recipient of the Best Performer of the Youth Policy of the Sakha Republic award, winners of the 16th Makarenko International Competition among Educational Institutions hosted in Moscow (2018), winners of the Professional Competence award and of the Steps of Mastery award of the Young Speech Therapist 2018 city competition, and many others.

3.1. Discussion

In the course of their research into the ways to develop social engagement in aspiring teachers, the authors examined foreign and Russian academic publications on this problem and carried out a retrospective review of the work experience in the development of students' social engagement acquired by the NEFU Institute of Pedagogy.

Similarly to I.G. Averina (2016), the authors define social engagement as an integrational quality and an independent, self-motivated, purposeful actions of an individual aimed at conscious interaction with the social environment, which are undertaken as part of the internal (mental) and external (practical) efforts to transform one's self and the sociocultural environment in accordance with the interests of the society. Social engagement during vocation training can take the forms of learning, academic, social and creative activities.

The authors analyzed the results of the NEFU's sociological survey, which aimed to measure student satisfaction with the organization and quality of the educational process, assess their social mood and their engagement in various areas of social reality in 2016-2018.

The retrospective review of the efforts by the NEFU Institute of Pedagogy towards developing social engagement in students has shown their success in facilitating personal and professional growth in a significant number of graduated, which indicates the effectiveness of the undertaken work. The results of the study make it reasonable to suggest that the level of a teacher's social engagement during their university years is one of the criteria of his/her competitive value in the labor market.

The S.O. Grunina's predication as to the need for students to develop vocationally valuable qualities and implement them through social activity via

acquiring practical experience in various areas within the internal educational space and in the external environment, at local, republic, regional and federal levels was substantiated by the result of the author's study. The ranks of personally and professionally successful alumni are largely filled with the graduates from the Institute of Pedagogy who used to show a relatively high level of social engagement during their studies at the university.

This study which aimed to validate the need to encourage social engagement as part of the training of teachers, and the facts that its influence on professional self-actualization and personal growth of a specialist was experimentally proved by the experience acquired by the staff at the departments of the Institute of Pedagogy of the M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University, allowed the authors to formulate the following conclusions in keeping with the opinion of S.O. Grunina who believes that the ideas of the relation between learning and education, social partnership, self-government and volunteering build the core of an educational system at a pedagogical institution.

The study undertaken by the authors does not fully unravel all the aspects of the problem at consideration. The following topics still need to be carefully researched:

- development of criteria for the level of social engagement in the students of a pedagogical university;
- identification of effective techniques for the development of social engagement in teachers-in-training.

4. Conclusions

This paper centers on the problem of developing an individual's social engagement skills as an essential condition for teacher training in accordance with the demands of the modern educational environment. This demand on the teacher's personality is in fact the government's request to the vocational education system.

The inadequate degree of social responsibility for one's learning results, low involvement in the process of self-identification in one's life and the limited options for self-actualization so typical for a large number of teachers-to-be are all serious obstacles on the way to becoming a specialist.

A pressing need for pedagogical universities is to build an education system based on the demand of the modern society for teachers with a high level of social engagement, ready to do their professional work using innovative technology.

The development of social engagement calls for a system of efforts at a university aimed at encouraging such forms of social engagement as learning, academic, social and creative activities that form the foundation of a teacher's future competitive edge.

The authors think it necessary for the development of social engagement in teachers-in-training to involve students in the work of youth education teams and volunteering. The implementation of sociocultural projects creates a nurturing environment for comprehending the social meaning of the future vocation, expands opportunities for the facilitation of research work, and increases the students' social motivation in their professional activity.

The educational space of a university must be designed so as to give students ample opportunities for acquiring practical experience in various areas and to fulfill their potential outside of the university.

Therefore, by meeting all the above conditions for the development of social engagement in teachers-in-training, it is possible to raise the teachers' readiness for doing their professional work and to expand space for professional and personal self-actualization.

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