

Socio-Economic Well-Being of Young People as a Sustainable Rural Development Indicator

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Abstract — The article presents the results of the study of the factors of socio-psychological well-being of young people and their role in the sustainable development of rural territories of the South of Russia. The integrated research strategy is implemented using an example of a sample group of 343 respondents: sociological tools are complemented by a psychological test. We determined the interconnections of the adaptive capabilities of young people and age-related psychological risks associated with an unfavorable situation in the family, self-doubt, and distrust of people, aggression, and character accentuation. We emphasized the importance of the institutional mechanisms of professional agricultural education in the training of personnel for the sustainable socio-economic development of the village.

Keywords — *socio-economic well-being, youth, rural territories, sustainable development.*

I. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the target indicators in the Concept for the Development of Rural Territories of Russia is the size of the rural population. In order to prevent depopulation of rural territories, it is necessary to work not only towards equalizing welfare and quality of life in urban agglomerations and rural settlements, but also to qualitatively influence the goal-setting of the young generation in accordance with the basic values of Russian society. Among them are: collectivism, as the need to exist together with their society; justice; striving for a happy future; attitude to work and holiday; readiness for personal sacrifice for the sake of lofty agenda, patience and suffering. They are practically the opposite of the values of the consumer

society that are currently being promoted among young people. In turn, it is the institutional mechanisms of professional agricultural education that can positively affect the personal formation of the young generation of rural residents, building the social coordinate system in accordance with the basic values of Russian society. The new generation of farmers should possess not only professional, but also socio-psychological qualities that ensure the social health of the rural community, productive labor and, as a result, the sustainable development of rural areas of Russia.

The topic of sustainable development of rural territories, the related problem of depopulation of rural territories and, as a result, the need to attract young people to live in rural territories is relevant not only for Russia. This is evidenced by the numerous publications of authors covering this issue in different regions of the world. In the scientific search methodology, most often we see three main approaches with different accents depending on the specifics of the studied rural areas, their historically established conditions and development prospects: economic, social, and environmental. It is these reasons that are considered as basic and insufficient attention is paid to the socio-psychological characteristics of rural residents: their adaptive capabilities and psychological readiness to overcome the difficulties of rural life.

Vicente V.A.Q., Sánchez X.G., Castillo A.A. in their study propose to begin solving rural problems with ideological redefinition and a new social vision of sustainable development of territories [1]. For our study, we see an important conclusion – a new policy for the development of

rural settlements is determined by the totality of social ideas and purposeful activities to implement them on the basis of constructive interaction between all levels of government and the local community. In our opinion, new national ideas regarding the development of rural territories will positively affect the life goals of social groups and, above all, youth.

The need for promoting sustainable rural development policies is highlighted in the article by Trigueros M.A., Prieto E.M. [2]. In their opinion, new programs with goals that are understandable for people will help not only to retain, but also attract new residents to rural areas. An analysis of the implementation of a number of programs that they conducted during the study showed that the discrepancy between the goals and results of the implementation of the programs negatively affected the processes of maintaining the rural population. Thus, it is important that the preferences declared by the state for residents of rural territories be fully implemented.

The role of education in the processes of preserving the population of rural territories is shown in the study by Brooks M.M. Upon migration of people with education from the Great Plains countryside in Kansas, the Rural Opportunity Zone program was implemented. The author of the article conducted a survey of students at Kansas State University and interviews with local officials who manage the program. The survey results show that most students do not consider themselves able to participate in the program, despite its financial incentives [3]. In our study, we invited future specialists in the agricultural sector to discuss not only the material incentives for securing in the countryside, but also the ideas of professional development, farming and entrepreneurship. This provides not only self-employment, but also forms the socio-economic stability of the territory in terms of goal-setting and organization of young people's life. In general, it reveals their professional and personal potential [4, 5].

Most rural territories have their own unique cultural and agricultural heritage, which determines the social architecture of the settlements. This conclusion is made by the authors of the study Cejudo E., Toro F., Castillo J. [6]. It is important to properly integrate these advantages into the modern national socio-economic landscape. This, of course, will increase the attractiveness of rural areas and the agricultural system for young generations [7]. Infrastructure transformations in rural areas are investments in social morphology, ensuring the social stability of the territory.

Vasta A., Figueiredo E., Valente S., Vihinen H., Nieto-Romero M. also emphasize the importance of social ties in the local rural community for the formation of a sense of identity [8]. A case study showed how social policy tools help shape the social identity of rural residents and contribute positively to their sustainability.

Building life strategies and choosing a professional field of activity are closely related. When choosing an agricultural education, young people to some extent connect their life plans with rural areas. Therefore, it is important to use the training period not only for the development of professional competencies, but also for improving the socio-psychological qualities of the individual through participation in self-

government, leadership, sports, and cultural and leisure practices. This social experience and socio-psychological competencies will be brought into the local rural community and will have a positive impact on its sustainability and improvement of social morphology.

The results of latest studies show that social practices of sports positively affect the socio-psychological characteristics of a young person's personality.

For example, researchers Aoyagi K., Ishii K., Shibata A., Fukamachi H., Oka, K. note that the lack of physical activity amongst young people is a problem throughout the world. Classes in sports sections are considered the main opportunity to increase the physical activity of youth. The study reveals the internal and external factors of motivation for sports activities. Internal/intrapersonal factors included: the attractiveness of the sport; sense of responsibility and continuity; spirit of challenge; feeling of progress and good physical condition. External factors included: team climate; encouragement and support; peer attributes coaching policies and content; the content of physical practice [9]. Understanding youth motivation is important for our study.

Sports activities have a positive effect on psychological well-being and the success of adaptation in different social groups. Scientists Bang, H., Won, D., Park, S. [10] in their article concluded that symptoms of depression are reduced by increasing involvement in sports and increasing self-esteem in adolescents. This is important for developing effective strategies for attracting adolescents to sports and physical education programs.

The important aspect of the organization of sports and physical education is emphasized by McGlynn J., Boneau R. D., Richardson B.K. [11]. In their study they talk about the safety of such activities. This is another aspect of social sports practices – fostering a safety culture.

Social practices of involving children in additional physical education classes provide a positive socio-cultural effect for the local community. In their study, Högman J., Augustsson C., Hedström P. talk about the expansion of ideas about life in children from the lower social class [12]. For the sustainable development of the rural territory, it is important that different categories of citizens of the rural settlement have access to fitness equipment and physical development at the level of the best sports facilities in the city.

On the insufficient level of satisfaction of the population with sports and cultural-leisure services in the Stavropol Territory say researchers Ivashova V.A., Tokareva G.V., Agalarova E.G., Nadochiy Yu.B., Yushchenko I.V. That once again emphasizes the relevance of providing equal quality of services and opportunities for rural and urban territories [13–15].

Thus, the analysis of the literature on the sustainable development of rural areas and the socio-psychological well-being of young people as a possible indicator of this process showed the relevance and novelty of the research topic.

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study of the level of socio-psychological well-being of young people was carried out on the basis of educational organizations of professional agricultural education in the Stavropol Territory by the questionnaire method in October 2019. In total, 343 people took part in it. The integrated research strategy included sociological tools that were complemented by a psychological test. The data were processed in the statistical SPSS package and presented in a generalized form. We determined the interconnections of youth adaptive capabilities and age-related psychological risks associated with an unfavorable situation in the family, self-doubt, and distrust of people, aggression, and character accentuation.

III. RESULTS

The development of personal adaptive capabilities and the reduction of adaptation risk factors positively affect the social and professional adaptation of young professionals, their successful consolidation in the countryside.

The initial diagnostic control of freshmen in agricultural education in the Stavropol Territory shows that the choice of educational programs was influenced not only by the prestige of the educational organization, diploma and the high quality of educational services (51.0 and 47.2 % of respondents, respectively), but also the possibility of self-realization in study, sports, public life (37.3 % of respondents), wide employment opportunities with qualifications, competences of an agricultural graduate (27.4 % of respondents), proximity to home, the ability not to leave far from family (16.0 % of respondents).

At the stage of entering student life, 95.1 % of first-year students say that they like the study group and 91.0 % of respondents already have friends. This indicates a favorable psychological atmosphere in the teaching staff, which is an important basis for a productive exchange of views on life goal setting, career strategies and social practices of organizing life activities between representatives of urban and rural areas. According to the results of the psychological part of the diagnostic study carried out according to the method of Rozhkov M.I., Kovalchuk M.A., a small proportion of freshmen refer to risk groups. Accordingly, intra-group relations have a positive effect on the alignment of psychological indicators of freshmen at risk. According to the results of the methodology of primary diagnosis and identification of freshmen of the "risk group" (Rozhkov M.I., Kovalchuk M.A.), 8.2 % of students with high scores on the scale of the "Family Relationship" questionnaire were identified. This indicates a violation of family relations, which are most often caused by the tense situation in the family; fear of parents. 5.2 % of respondents distrust people. This is observed in freshmen who are shy in communicating with their peers because of the fear of being rejected. It is important for such respondents to provide a comfortable socio-psychological environment for establishing friendly relations with people around them. According to the "Self-doubt" scale, 17.2 % of students scored high points, which indicates high anxiety, self-doubt, and possibly low self-esteem. 7 % of

students have high scores on the "Aggressiveness" scale. The risk group on the scale "Character Accentuations" makes up a small proportion of freshmen 4.7 %. By a combination of at least three of the above indicators, 16.4 % of respondents belong to the "Risk Group".

The educational process in the system of agricultural education is aimed at the wide involvement of each student in professional and social practices, ensuring the successful adaptation of freshmen. These are Leadership Schools, sports sections and events, undergraduate tutoring, speeches by employers and excursions to advanced manufacturing enterprises, participation in the research work of the departments. This systematic work allows first-year students to expand the horizons of their goals – vital and professional. According to the results of studies conducted at the end of the first year of study, we noted a decrease in the proportion of students belonging to risk categories.

Annual surveys of graduate students of agricultural education show a steady tendency to maintain the proportion of graduates who return to their historical homeland – rural settlements of the Stavropol Territory – up to 70 %.

Institutional tools of agricultural education from educational policy with student-centered goal-setting of training and education to socio-psychological diagnosis and positive leadership practices, teamwork, entrepreneurial competencies make it possible to achieve the attractiveness of life and work in rural territories

IV. CONCLUSION

Thus, the study shows the importance of the formation of socio-psychological characteristics of the young generation in the system of agricultural education to ensure sustainable development of rural areas of Russia.

In modern studies on sustainability factors, insufficient attention is paid to the socio-psychological causes of depopulation of rural territories and especially value orientations, goals and psychological qualities of the young generation and the processes of their formation. Agrarian education as a social institution, along with ensuring the professional formation of graduates, is called upon to contribute to solving strategic issues of rural development.

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