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**DEVELOPMENT OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION  
IN THE SOFT SKILLS SYSTEM OF YOUTH  
IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

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*The article identifies the socio-psychological features of the development of interpersonal communication in the soft-skills system of young people in the environment of non-formal education. The main concepts of scientific research «interpersonal communication», «soft skills», «personal socialization», «informal education» are summarized. The main forms of informal education are presented, which are aimed at the formation of social skills (soft skills) of young people, interpersonal communication skills. The experience of the Faculty of Social and Psychological Education of the Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University in the identification and formation of «soft skills» among students of higher education in the conditions of extracurricular, out-of-class work, and professional development is covered.*

**Keywords:** interpersonal communication, social skills, soft skills, individual giftedness, youth, informal education, socialization of personality, educational institution.

**РОЗВИТОК МІЖОСОБИСТІСНОГО СПІЛКУВАННЯ  
В СИСТЕМІ SOFT SKILLS МОЛОДІ В УМОВАХ ЗАКЛАДУ ВИЩОЇ  
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*У статті розкрито соціально-психологічні особливості розвитку міжособистісного спілкування в системі soft-skills молоді в умовах неформальної освіти. Узагальнено основні поняття наукового дослідження «міжособистісне спілкування», «soft skills», «соціалізація особистості», «неформальна освіта». Представлено основні форми неформальної освіти, які спрямовані на формування соціальних навичок (soft skills) молоді, навичок міжособистісного спілкування, розвиток обдарованості особистості. Розкрито досвід факультету соціальної та психологічної освіти УДПУ імені Павла Тичини щодо виявлення та формування у здобувачів вищої освіти навичок «soft skills» в умовах позанавчальної, позааудиторної роботи, професійного розвитку.*

**Ключові слова:** міжособистісне спілкування, соціальні навички, soft-skills, обдарованість особистості, молодь, неформальна освіта, соціалізація особистості, заклад освіти.

**Problem statement in a general form and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks.** According to the Strategy of the National Commission of Ukraine for UNESCO, the main goals of the commission's activities are as follows: gender equality; development of education, science; culture and cultural heritage; protection of documentary heritage; ensuring freedom of speech; preservation of the environment; popularization of sports; youth development [18].

According to the defined direction, the development of education is seen in: «expanding the opportunities for quality education for everyone throughout life; expanding the rights and opportunities of students in order to foster a creative and responsible global public position; formation of the future agenda in the field of education; expanding the penetration of innovations and digital technologies into education; promoting the development of the network of associated schools, the creation of UNESCO clubs and associations; development of the digital environment» [18; 3]. According to the direction of youth development – «strengthening the intercultural dialogue of the youth; increasing the level of competences of young people, including civic ones; strengthening of social cohesion of youth» [18; 3].

The European Commission regulates that soft skills do not refer to a specific field of activity, industry, but can be applied by an individual in different conditions and situations [3].

In the context of reforming education and higher education, the issue of forming social skills (soft skills) among future specialists, in particular those acquiring socio-economic specialties – «person-to-person» professions that solve professional tasks related to ensuring social well-being, is extremely relevant. In the community, establishment of communication links between individuals, transmission of socio-cultural experience and formation of socially accepted norms, rules, traditions. [10, p. 140].

**Analysis of recent research papers and publications.** After analyzing the scientific sources, the main works that reveal the features of soft skills formation are singled out: interpersonal interaction as a component of the «soft skills» of students of the pedagogical college (T. Kozhushkina) [9]; the role of soft skills in the formation of the personality of a modern manager and their influence on professional activity (O. Delia) [5]; mechanisms of development of «soft skills» of young people as important factors of future employment (K. Koval) [8]; peculiarities of the formation of soft skills of students of higher education in the educational process of a modern institution of higher education [6]; etc.

**The purpose of the article** is to reveal the socio-psychological features of the development of interpersonal communication in the soft-skills system of young people in the environment of non-formal education.

**Presentation of the key points of the study with a full justification of the obtained scientific results.** Key competences for life – «soft skills» – which «along with subject competences (strong thorough knowledge of clearly defined fields of knowledge – «hard» skills) determine the professional success of an individual. In contrast to hard skills, soft skills are not mandatory, but they, in combination with special ones, contribute to the formation of a specialist as a highly qualified professional» [8, p. 162].

Scientists N. Khymytsia and K. Martyniuk believe that soft-skills are «a collective term that refers to many options for behavior that help people in work, in particular team work, and also ensure successful socialization» [19]. Also, according to scientists, «an important feature of soft-skills is adaptability or flexibility, the ability to work well in different situations; the ability to be diplomatic and tactful, even when there are some disagreements or conflicts» [19].

According to N. Barabat and A. Shekh-Abed, the combination of personal qualities and interpersonal communication skills that allow people to effectively work with others, communicate clearly and solve problems collectively are soft skills [1]. However, I. Mona, I. Srur point out that soft skills include not only communication skills, but also such traits as social responsibility, creativity, ethics and emotional intelligence [2].

N. Grona, O. Semenog note in their work that «soft skills are flexible skills that are important for effective adaptation to various life contexts, and soft skills also provide an opportunity to be successful regardless of the specifics of the activity and the direction in which a person works, because the ability convincing, finding an approach to people, leading, interpersonal communication, conducting negotiation processes, teamwork, personal development, time management, erudition, creativity contribute to further career growth and quick response to new life challenges» [4].

Among the theoretical works of scientists, we single out the work of O. Kirdan. Based on the analysis of theoretical and practical aspects of ensuring the quality of educational activities, as well as self-analysis of the experience of teaching in higher education institutions, the author proposed a list of teaching methods for the formation of soft skills of students of higher education, such as: critical thinking, creativity, ability to take responsibility, ability to make decisions, leadership, ability to resolve conflicts, cognitive flexibility, organizational skills, team building, ability to work in a team, initiative, time management, sociability/ ability to communicate, self-learning and self-development, self-management, adaptability, ability to work in critical conditions, stress resistance, emotional intelligence and emotion management [6].

It is soft skills that «enable higher education graduates to be successful in their workplace» and their list is indicated, including «communication skills, leadership, the ability to take responsibility and work in critical conditions, the ability to resolve conflicts, work in a team, manage one's time, the ability to think logically and systematically, creativity, etc».

(«Recommendations regarding the application of criteria for evaluating the quality of the educational program», 2020) [17, p. 20].

Theoreticians and practitioners single out interpersonal communication as one of the important soft skills for those seeking education – it is a process of communication between individuals, as a result of which interpersonal relationships are formed and changed, and sympathy, friendship, and love appear [12, p. 146].

It is interpersonal communication that plays an important role in the process of socialization of an individual – the process of individuals entering society through various communities, collectives, and groups due to the assimilation of norms, ideals, and values through education and training [13, p. 8].

Researchers are unanimous in their opinion that «the ability to communicate supports a person's state of psychological confidence, spiritual balance, gives a sense of life perspective, and this can be achieved starting from the simplest, most obvious. Communicative skills include spiritual values, empathy, empathy, interaction, joint action, include, in particular, the ability to think critically and creatively; highlight the main, essential things; establish cause-and-effect relationships, identify difficulties in communication; flexibly build and rebuild communication depending on the communicative situation» [4].

The dynamics of an individual's interpersonal communication affects the efficiency of his production activity, as considered by the American social psychologist and founder of the theory of human relations J. E. Mayo. The specificity of interpersonal communication in the context of the theory of social exchange is also characterized by the American sociologist and social psychologist J.K. Homans. He focuses attention on direct interpersonal communication (interaction). The behavior of people is considered as a constant exchange of values – material (money, goods) and immaterial (respect, friendship), and «elementary social behavior» as direct contact between individuals is considered the primary unit of analysis of various social systems [7].

The American psychologist U.K. Schutz proposed the theory of interpersonal relations and psychological compatibility, which he called the «fundamental orientation of interpersonal relations». Its fundamental basis is the assertion of orthodox Freudianism that the social life of an adult is fatally determined by his childhood experiences. The author notes the existence of three interpersonal needs characteristic of each individual, in particular: the need for inclusion or belonging (affiliation), the need for control, the need to build close emotional ties in relationships with others. Adequate or inadequate forms of satisfaction of these needs, developed in childhood, and corresponding behavioral patterns completely determine the ways of orientation of an adult in relation to other people. That is, the features of communication and the behavior of an adult are determined by the way of satisfying three interpersonal needs formed in childhood [7].

Formation of social skills (soft skills) in students of higher education at various levels – from junior bachelor to doctor of philosophy – is a task that meets both the requirements of modern times and the challenges of practice.

In particular, one of the tasks implemented by the developers of the educational and scientific program «Social Work» of the Faculty of Social and Psychological Education of Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University is to ensure that students of higher education acquire social skills (soft skills) during the period of study that correspond to learning goals and outcomes.

The training of highly qualified scientific personnel, doctors of philosophy in social work, aimed at «training an intellectual, informed, self-identified, competitive, socially integrated specialist, capable of producing new ideas, solving complex problems in the field of professional

scientific-pedagogical and research-innovative activities, demonstrate significant authority, innovativeness, a high degree of independence, academic and professional integrity, etc» [15].

Higher education applicants are future specialists in the field of social work, scientific research, scientific and pedagogical activity, which involves the acquisition of soft skills, first of all, through mandatory and selective educational components. Thanks to the use of various forms and methods of education (in particular, training technologies), the content of the disciplines focuses on the formation of the main «soft-skills», which, along with professional (subject) competences, determine the professional self-realization of graduate students: leadership qualities, creativity, organizational skills, communication, emotional intelligence, working with information, systematic thinking, motivation.

An effective resource for the formation of interpersonal skills as a component of «soft skills» is informal education – this is education that is obtained, as a rule, according to educational programs and does not involve the awarding of state-recognized educational qualifications by education level, but can end with the awarding of professional and/or the awarding of partial educational qualifications [16].

Researchers single out the ways of acquiring soft skills in the environment of informal education by young people, namely: «at courses and trainings (for example, the public project of mass open online courses «Prometheus» offers many such trainings on a free of charge basis); work on public grounds; participation in student self-government (such practical activity will teach teamwork, project management and delegation of responsibilities)» (N. Khymytsia and K. Martynyuk) [19].

Therefore, for the development of soft communication skills of an individual, we consider such forms of informal education to be effective – training, seminars, webinars, etc.

At the Faculty of Social and Psychological Education of the Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, events are constantly organized, the purpose of which is to identify and develop «soft skills» in students and teachers (in conditions of extracurricular, extracurricular work, professional development, etc.). In particular, on the basis of research units: Gender Center, Center for social and educational integration and inclusive rehabilitation and social tourism «Without barriers», Center for psychological diagnosis and training technologies «INSIGHT», Youth center «START» and others. [14].

The importance and vital necessity of forming social skills (soft skills) among future social workers and those seeking higher education with the degree of Doctor of Philosophy are indicated by the results of surveys (<https://bit.ly/3qrkEg1>). According to graduate students, academic supervisors, and stakeholders, non-formal and informal education is an effective means of forming «soft skills» (the ability to work in a team, leadership qualities, creativity, organizational skills, communication, emotional intelligence, work with information, systemic thinking, motivation).

Among the forms of non-formal education aimed at the formation of social skills (soft skills) of young people, interpersonal communication skills – youth programs («Youth worker», «Management of youth centers», «Prokachay», «Youth worker in UTC», «State creator», «Effective management of youth centers», «Active citizens», international programs), trainings and events with the assistance of the public organization «Molodizhna Platforma», the «SpivDiya» platform, as well as the all-Ukrainian program for popularizing a healthy lifestyle among young people «Healthy Challenge2, programs «PROskills of the future» and others [11, p. 153].

**Conclusions of the study. and prospects for further research in this direction.** Therefore, the formation of social skills (soft skills) by students of higher education is a task that meets the requirements of modern times and the challenges of practice. Among other important

social skills, the need for the formation of interpersonal communication skills of an individual in the process of his socialization is urgent. Therefore, promising directions for further research in the specified thematic plane are the development of appropriate organizational and methodical support for the purpose of developing the practical activities of educational institutions regarding the training of future specialists with developed social skills.

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