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ACTIVATION OF SOCIAL COHESION AS A FACTOR FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH POLITICAL CULTURE

В статті розглянуто особливості становлення політичної культури молоді під впливом активізації соціальної згуртованості. Виявлено, що такий процес на індивідуальному рівні веде до підвищення політичної культури загалом, що зумовлене концентрацією ресурсів окремої особистості задля готовності до кооперації, а на груповому – спостерігається поглиблення уявлень про політику та корекції мотивів до участі в політичній взаємодії, проте проявляється спрощення ціннісних орієнтацій особистості та відсутність значимого впливу на політичну поведінку особистості.

Ключові слова: політична культура, соціальна згуртованість, уявлення про політику, політичні цінності, мотиви участі в політиці, політична поведінка.

In this article we describe the investigation the formation for the youth political culture under the influence of the social cohesion activation. We founded that such a process at the individual level leads to an increase in political culture in general, which is due to the concentration of resources of the individual in order to prepare for cooperation, while on the group there is a deepening of personality perception about politics and correction of motives to participate in political interaction, however, we observed the simplification of personality values orientations and lack of significant influence on the political behavior of the individual.

Key words: political culture, social cohesion, political ideas, political values, motives for political participation, political behavior.

Relevance. The studying of psychological peculiarities of grouping people around certain political ideas occupies a prominent place in political and psychological discourse. Such attention is explained by the importance

of understanding the cooperation factors of people in the political environment, the process of such an association and an ability of the combined team to influence the course of a political process in a society. However, the study of the process of cohesiveness in the political environment is often limited to the study of different parts of the individual political interaction. Therefore, in our opinion, it is necessary to concentrate efforts on the study of a phenomenon that combines the idea of a young person about politics, its values, motives for inclusion in the political life of society and the manifestation of such political activity. The combination of these characteristics is described by the term «Political Culture».

This article is an overview of some of the results of the studying of Social Capital as a psychological resource for the formation of a youth Political Culture. (Social cohesion is defined by us as one of the components of Social Capital) [1].

The purpose of this article is to reveal changes in the manifestation of the structural components of the youth Political Culture under the influence of the activation of social cohesion.

Analysis of the previous publications. One of the first interpretations of the concept of «Political Culture» was given by I. G. Gerder, which by this term indicated the level of maturity of culture [2]. In the Ukrainian political science at the beginning of the twentieth century, this term V. K. Lypynskyi described as a certain level of desire and ability of the population to use in political activity knowledge about politics and previous experience of social activity [3].

G. Almond and S. Verba are engaged in the systematic study of Political Culture. The result of their concept was the mutual work «Culture of Citizenship», in which authors made attempt to compare the study of Political Culture in a number of Western Europe countries. Researchers pointed out that the complex and simultaneously dynamic system of balanced political and cultural orientations is formed in a democratic society [10]. Modern democracy is a complex network of institutes with diverse channels of representation and centers of decision-making power. For these reasons, it should be considered not as a «mode», but as a set of «private regimes», each of which is formed around a particular social group [5].

G. Almond's work is echoed by the theory of democratic stability of H. Eckstein, in which there is the view that for a normal existence of a democratic political system a mixture of open contradictions or «balanced inequality» is required. The researcher writes that Political Culture is a continuation of other examples of social relationships, which are characterized by the general level of «civic engagement» in public life [14].

We can assume that Political Culture as a complex psychological system consists of certain structural components that form the views of the individual on the political environment and the behavior in it.

One of these components is political competence. They are interpreted as the ability of people to analyze and assess political situations through their own political experience and considerations in order to formulate political views. Also, political knowledge is interpreted as a range of actual information about a policy that is stored in long-term memory [12].

Another component of Political Culture is political values. R. Inglehart points out the relationship between the existence of certain values orientations of the society and its democratic development: citizens of high-living states, interpersonal trust, and tolerance are more inclined to accept and support democratic institutions than countries with a low level of these indicators. The author also emphasizes that the development of democracy is not directly dependent on economic growth since the interaction is carried out indirectly, but through the social structure and Political Culture [17].

Characterizing the motives for participation in political organizations, P. Clark and J. Wilson, indicate that this is the result for influencing of three types of motives: material (including material benefits that have monetary value that can be translated into value or perceived as rewards); solidarity (awards deriving from the act of participation that create the opportunity for communication to gain social prestige, to show a sense of social identity, for example, party spirit); purposeful (participation in the fulfillment of the goals, which will not bring personal benefits, but they play an important role in society) [13].

Political behavior is characterized as the formation of abilities, solving problems concerning the protection of private and public interests; the ability to assess the political situation and assess the impact of individual's actions in the political environment; the ability to purposefully influence the political environment [22]. It is also necessary to note the beginning of an active study of such aspects of participation as the political behavior of certain social groups of youth, the nature, form, mechanism, and effectiveness of socio-political participation of young people at various socio-political levels [11].

As for the study of social cohesion, we need to say about two points of view on the interpretation of the concept: by emphasizing the attitude of citizens towards membership in a group and by fixing joint activities within the group. Initially, the emphasis was placed on the duration of the person's membership in the social group [20].

The authors of another study identified cohesiveness as a resource that holds people in the groups in which they are. Cohesion is also seen as a

resultant force that acts on members of the group to remain its members. Thus, the view of cohesion as an attraction of membership in a group for its participants remains the most widespread interpretation [19]. There is also a different view that considers social cohesion as a causative system that determines the mood and behavior of people [15].

The researchers acknowledged that the focus on individual group decisions about membership in the social groups should be expanded to include their attitude to this phenomenon. In this approach, «membership in a group» is a relative «object», to which each member of the group is treated positively or negatively. In addition, views on social cohesion should be based on the development of the positions fixation and behavior of community members. So N. Gross and V. Martin argued that the definition of cohesion should be based on the attitude of people to how attractive the group to be to them personally because such an attitude is the most important reason for decision-making on membership in a group [16].

N. Friedkin points out that interpersonal grouping not only helps to produce homogeneous, coordinated positions and behavior of members, but also helps to resolve daily small and large divergences, that arise in social groups. Continuing this opinion, the author points out that interpersonal interaction based on good coherence between people is unlikely leads to a negative consensus. Such a negative consensus is unlikely in the presence of positive interpersonal affection, as they are the result of rewarding interactions and in turn, such awards support a positive attitude towards the community. Summing up N. Friedkin points out that if all rewarding interactions are discontinued, positive interpersonal relations between the members of the group should be weakened and there will be a negative consensus on membership in the group [15].

However, science is also known for the phenomenon of group thinking, discovered by I. Janis: groups with unchanged composition after a while adopt very unprofessional decisions because the desire for unanimity becomes more important than the realistic assessment of possible options for action [21].

These views on the processes occurring in the group in the political and psychological discourse generate importantly, in our opinion, questions: how will the formation of a political decision in the this groups take place and where the boundary between effective group work and the desire of the individual to associate with a team in losing of personal conviction, how interpersonal processes in a group can affect the political views of the individual.

Presenting main material. From the foregoing, it can be concluded that for the effective and productive existence of a society, it must be dominated by a certain type of Political Culture that can be characterized as democratic, in which the main source of power is the cohesive community that

is part of this society. It follows that the Political Culture of the society is a set of Political Cultures of each participant of this community. Thus, we concentrate on studying the manifestation of psychological features that directly affect the formation of Political Culture.

In our study, we use such definition of Political Culture – a system of psychological attitudes that form the interaction of the individual with the political environment. Thus, in the concept of «Political Culture» one can distinguish the following psychological components:

- personality representation about politics;
- political values of the individual;
- motives of the personality to participate in the political interaction;
- the political behavior of the individual.

Social cohesion is interpreted by us as the unifying resources of the individual within the group or the community as a whole and due to them methods of interpersonal and intergroup cooperation.

We consider the activation of social cohesion as a process of concentration with the help of specific cognitive, moral and volitional efforts of the individual's psychological resources in order to achieve specific goals. In an individualized version, activation is aimed at the concentration of resources of the individual in the group, and in the group variant – on the concentration of general group opportunities.

The empirical study was based on an experimental plan with preliminary and final testing of the control and experimental group and consisted of four stages: preliminary testing, activation of social interaction, a situation of manifestation of Political Culture, final testing. The procedure for carrying out the experiment is shown in Fig. 1.

Stage 1: Preliminary testing. The survey was provided with a questionnaire of 37 statements, which are aimed at studying the level of manifestation of components of Political Culture. An instruction which was given to the participants where they were asked to express their consent or disagreement with the allegations based on the following scheme: 4 – I fully support this statement; 3 – rather agree with the statement; 2 – rather do not agree with the statement; 1 – completely disagrees with the statement. By using a correlation analysis a battery of techniques for the study of Political Culture was formed in the previous stages of our investigation. After that, a dispersion analysis was conducted to describe a process for the formation of a youth Political Culture based on the influence of social capital. Based on the results of this survey, we selected scales that most clearly reflect the manifestation of each of the structural components of youth Political Culture. The questionnaire was formed by using statements from these techniques:

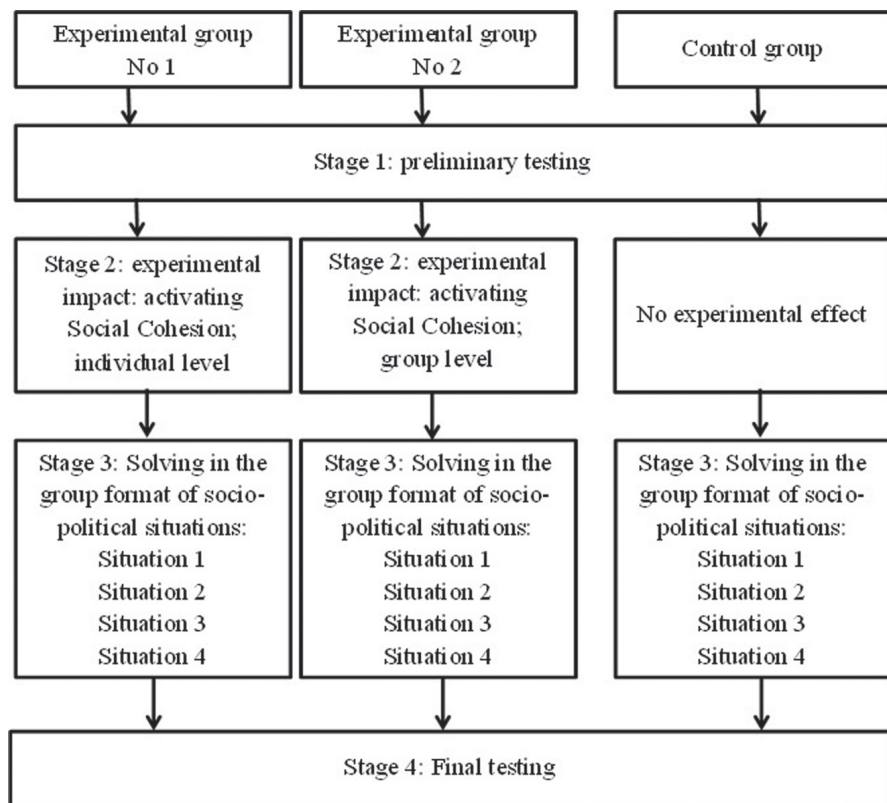


Fig. 1. Scheme of conducting an experiment on the study of the formation of structural components of the Political Culture of youth under the influence of activating social interaction

- by using the scale «Democracy» from the «ISSP Citizenship II» questionnaire [18] we investigated the structural component of Political Culture «personality representation about politics»;
- the «individualism» scale from the module for the study of the values by G. Hofstede [8] we used for investigation the structural component of Political Culture «political values of the individual»;
- «life support» scale from the technique for diagnosing the motivational structure of the personality by V. E. Milman [4] we used for investigation the structural component of Political Culture «motives of the personality to participate in the political interaction»;
- the scale of «self-assertion power» of the questionnaire of the mechanisms of political and ideological self-determination (OMPIS by Ukr.) by

G. V. Tsyganenko [9] we used for investigation the structural component of Political Culture «motives of the personality to participate in the political interaction»;

➤ the scale of «setting on political activity» from the technique of political ideas by G. Bieberbraur [7] we used for investigation the structural component of Political Culture «the political behavior of the individual».

A total of 20 questions were selected that reflect the level of formation of structural components of youth Political Culture. The remaining 17 questions were statements from other scales of these techniques, which did not show statistical significance in the previous stages of the study. In the questionnaire, such questions should have veiled those items that we used to get results. The questions were mixed randomly.

We preliminary checked the reliability of the questionnaire. The survey was conducted at the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences and Ternopil Ivan Pulu National Technical University. The sample consisted of university students, the average age of the subjects – 19,74 SD – 1,27. Gender: male – 18, female – 28. The α Krombach index was 0,747, which can be considered as a good result of the reliability of the questionnaire.

Stage 2: Activation of social cohesion. In our study the experimental groups were two: in the first, an activation of social cohesion had the individual level, in another – on the group level. Participants conducted an exercise to improve reflection, which was based on the elaboration of past social situations in which the subject participated. The participants from the control group didn't have any exercise.

Stage 3: The situation of Political Culture manifestation. The next stage of the experiment was the solving by participants from experimental and control groups of four imaginary socio-political conflicts. They concerned acute socio-political issues (reduction of scholarships, interaction with foreign students, views on the revision of historical events, attitude towards corruption politicians). All groups received the following instruction: «You have received four hypothetical situations that occur in your student environment. Please state how your group will work in these situations». The discussion was conducted in the form of a collective discussion among the members of the group. Participants were not limited in time to formulating a strategy of action. The end of the discussion was the moment when the surveyed themselves signaled that they had reached a consensus and formed a strategy acceptable to all members of the group.

Stage 4: Final testing. The questionnaire was created in the same procedure as the questionnaire in stage 1 test and consisted of the same 20 ques-

tions that we monitored the level of manifestation of the structural components of Political Culture and 16 extracurricular questions. Statements in the questionnaire were mixed randomly.

The preliminary checking of the questionnaire reliability was carried out on the same sample as the questionnaire from preliminary testing. The α Krombach index is 0,753, which is a good measure of the reliability of the questionnaire.

To compare the results of the preliminary and final tests, we used the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The analysis was carried out in the statistical package SPSS 21.

The control group consisted of 62 people, including 4 male and 58 female. The average age of participants is 18,1 SD = 0,298. The results in this group indicate that without activating social cohesion as an experimental influence the manifestations of the components of Political Culture do not change: the personality representation about politics – $Z = -1,531$, $p = 0,126$; political values of the individual – $Z = -0,49$, $p = 0,624$; motives of the personality to participate in the political interaction – $Z = -0,741$, $p = 0,459$; the political behavior of the individual – $Z = -0,543$, $p = 0,587$.

The experimental group, in which social cohesion was activated on an individual level, consisted of 62 people, 32 was women and was 30 male. The average age of participants is 20,4 years, SD is 0,495.

The following instruction was suggested to the participants: «try to remember when the last time your group was cohesive, how it was shown, what is your personal contribution to this process, why you were personally interested in the process of uniting group at that time, how you could improve cohesiveness in your group».

The personality representation about politics after the intensification of social cohesion has deepened ($Z = -4,285$, $p = 0,000$). This suggests that due to the awareness of its inclusion in the group and the opportunities provided by the cooperative, it forms the awareness of the need for cooperation, which is further manifested in solving socio-political situations.

Political values of the individual after the activation of social cohesion also undergo positive qualitative changes ($Z = -3,058$, $p = 0,002$). Thus, we can say that the process of cohesive, even at the individual level of awareness of its positive influence, allows the individual to further deepen and expand their own system of value orientations. Such behavior will base on the installation that the community in which holds the discussion about socio-political situations is being positively turned to the person and united.

The motives of the personality to participate in the political interaction also appear in a more distinct and well-defined light ($Z = -2,949$, $p = 0,003$). Also, we can say that cohesive process allows a person to more clearly out-

line his/her own motives for participation in political life. In our opinion, this can be explained by a more conscious approach to the formation of their own motives in political life, based on awareness of the needs and capabilities of other members of the community.

The political behavior of the individual after activation also manifested itself in increased activity ($Z = -3,134$, $p = 0,002$). The processes of activating political activity after the activation of the component of social capital more clearly demonstrate the importance of socio-psychological resource in building a vital activity of the individual. That is, the young person is relying on the realization that the community of which he is a member, is united and ready to help, will be more willing to take active action in the political environment.

The group, where social cohesion was activated on a group level, consisted of 52 subjects, of which 35 were female and 17 were male. The average age of participants was 20,81 years SD was 0,561.

The following instruction was suggested to the participants: «try to remember when the last time your group was cohesive, how it was shown by the group behavior as one piece, how you could improve cohesiveness in your group».

The personality perceptions about politics has deepened ($Z = -2,973$, $p = 0,003$). That is, the activation of grouping directly in the group, as in the individual case, leads to readiness to perceive new information about political life. The environment of approval, which is formed in a cohesive team, forms an atmosphere of confidence in new knowledge, which leads to a deeper insight of a particular person about politics.

The motives of the personality to participate in the political interaction also undergo changes for the better ($Z = -4,014$, $p = 0,000$). That is, the direct formation of cohesiveness more clearly forms the awareness of their personal motives to participate in politics and the motives of the community.

The political values of the individual, on the contrary, have been simplified ($Z = -4,732$, $p = 0,000$). In our opinion, this can be explained by the fact that in the group level, in order to form a consolidated solution, the person adjusts his ideas about the opinions that prevail in the group. Thus, personality forms possibility to change his/her views in order to continue his/her remaining as a member of the group and to feel unity with it. And in the further work on socio-political situations, such an installation that blurs the boundaries of the value structure of the individual, as a result, simplifies the political values of the young person.

Political behavior did not show significant results ($Z = -0,36$, $p = 0,971$). In our opinion, this can be explained by the fact that the formation of a

group of approval in which the psychological climate is very positive, however, the productivity of work in such groups is low. This opinion is also aided by statistical calculations by S. Strogatz. The researcher in his work [6] mathematically calculates the possibilities of information transfer in a social environment. The author points out that with the some number of neighbors of the information transfer node (person), the level of the influence of each individual node on the general group results decreases. Thus, the personality in group cooperation sees a decrease in the level of effectiveness of individual activism in the political sphere, and more, in our opinion, will be based on a group discussion and a group decision. Hence the decrease in the level of manifestation of the component «the political behavior of the individual».

Summing up the influence of the social cohesion activation on the components of Political Culture, we can say that the individual awareness of the presence of a certain group, which has large resources of grouping around the person positively affects of all components of youth Political Culture. However, the formation of such cohesion in direct group interaction only leads to a deepening of ideas about politics and motives for participation in political interaction. And the political values of the person eroded in the process of association. The lack of significant changes in political behavior in the group version of the activation of the psychological resource of social cohesion suggests the diffusion of political activity among the whole group, which leads to a decrease in manifestations of individual political behavioral activity.

Conclusions. Political Culture is a system of psychological attitudes that form the interaction of an individual with a political environment. In the concept, we can distinguish the following psychological components: personality representation about politics, political values of the individual, motives of the personality to participate in the political interaction, the political behavior of the individual.

Social cohesion – is a combining resource of the individual and the group that determines the ways of interpersonal cooperation in this community. Activation of social cohesion is a concentration through the specific cognitive, moral and volitional efforts of the psychological resources of the individual or group to solve certain problems.

The activation of social interaction at the individual level leads to an increase Political Culture in general, due to the concentration of personal resources and willingness to cooperate. In this case, the person does not know about the resources of other members of the community and therefore maximally concentrates their own potential. With the same, the activation of the social cohesion at the group level, person for the purpose

of the resources concentration for the unity of the group as a whole seeks greater affection for the community, which leads to the simplification of the political values of the individual. Also, the formation of a common psychological resource base reduces the ability of a person to trace their own contribution to the group results, which leads to the impoverishment of political behavior of the individual.

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A b s t r a c t

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ACTIVATION OF SOCIAL COHESION AS A FACTOR FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH POLITICAL CULTURE

The article deals with the peculiarities of the formation of structural components of youth political culture under the influence of the activation of social cohesion. We defined Political Culture as a system of psychological attitudes that form the interaction of an individual with the political environment. This complex system includes the following structural components: personality representation about politics, political values of the individual, motives of the personality to participate in the political interaction, the political behavior of the individual. Social cohesion is interpreted as the unifying resources of the individual and the group, which determine the ways of interpersonal cooperation in this community. The activation of social interaction at the individual level leads to the increasing the components of Political Culture in general, due to the concentration of personal resources and willingness to cooperate. With the activation of the same social cohesion at the group level, there is a deepening of personality representation about politics and clarification of motives of the personality to participate in the political interaction, however, we can observe the simplification of political values of the individual, and the lack of significant influence on the political behavior of the individual what can be explained the diffusion of individual political activity among the whole group, which leads to a decrease in manifestations of individual political behavioral activity.

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