

# THE FEATURES OF OPERATIONAL COMPONENT OF SOCIAL ACTIVITY OF STUDENT YOUTH

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## **Abstract**

In this article the operational component of students' social activity research methodology has been grounded. The features of operational component of social activity of student youth have been analyzed, and levels of operational component have been characterized. As a result the levels of operational component of students' social activity have been found out and described. The factors of operational component of social activity have been analyzed.

*Key words: social activity, operational component, student youth*

## **Introduction**

The current social and political situation in Ukraine requires the active people participation in its social, political, economic, cultural and spiritual spheres of life. The activity of young people in public life is an important aspect of this problem. Therefore, research of features of the operational component of social activity of student youth is actual since exactly operational component is an implementation of social activity. The level of operational component of social activity describes the specifics of motivational, volitional, emotional and cognitive characteristics of social activity, at the same time volitional component affects the nature and continuity of operational implementation of social activity. For a high level of operational component of social activity a coordinated combination of all these activity criteria is needed.

Operational component of social activity was thoroughly studied by Leontiev (Леонтьев, 2004), Panok (Панок & Привалов, 1999), Shashenko (Шашенко, 2004) and others.

Sapriyanchuk was studying the relationship between social initiative and public activity of the individual. Thus, the ability to take the initiative in activity she defined as one of the essential criteria of human activity (Сапріянчук, 2010).

Galperin considered the problem of activity from positions of activity by means of that it is possible to change qualities of personality. Due to his opinion to bring up student as socially active personality it is necessary to create for them such activity and environment that will support their development (Гальперин, 2002).

At the same time, integrally and systematically an operational component of social activity of student youth has not been investigated, there is no methodology of research. Analysis of theoretical sources by this issue, the selection of its insufficiently known aspects allowed to ground the purpose and basic objectives of research.

**Object of the research:** the operational component of social activity of student youth.

**Aim of the research:** to study the characteristics, factors of operational component of social activity of student youth, selection of levels to the operational component of social activity.

The achievement of this aim stipulated the necessity of the formulation and solution of the following tasks:

1. To ground the methodology of research of the operational component of social activity of student youth.
2. To explore the features and factors of operational component of social activity of student youth.
3. To distinguish and describe levels of operational component of social activity.

### **Participants of the research**

715 students of different years of studying from public and private Ukrainian HEI have participated in research. Respondents were divided into the following groups:

- by age: 1) up to 18 years (19% of respondents), 2) from 19 to 20 years (35%), 3) from 20 to 25 years (9%), 4) over 25 years (7%);
  - by gender: 58% of women and 42% of men;
  - by areas of study: Social and Humanities (56% of polled), Natural Sciences and Technology (44%);
  - by form of study: full-time (77% polled), part-time (23%);
  - by year of studying: 1<sup>st</sup> year (17%), 2<sup>nd</sup> year (16,5%), 3<sup>rd</sup> year (22%), 4<sup>th</sup> year (22%), 5<sup>th</sup> year (15%), 6<sup>th</sup> year (7,5%);
  - by success of training on a ECTS scale: “A” (17%), “B” (40,5%), “C” (31%), “D” (9%), “E” (2,5%);
  - by form of HEI ownership: public HEI (66% of polled), private HEI (34%);
  - by combination of work and studying: 12% polled work due to the qualification received, 32% polled work due to other qualification; 56% polled do not work;
  - by place of residence while studying: at home with parents (51% of students), at home alone (9.5%), in rented apartments (16%), in campus (23.5%);
  - by place of residence: capital (88.5% of polled), regions (11.5%).
- It was taken into account that 6% of the investigated students are disabled people.

### **Methods of the research**

The following main indicators of the operational component of social activity were distinguished as a basic: aspiring to independence in execution of socially meaningful activities; ability and skills in doing of socially important activities that lead to the acquisition of their own vital experiences.

For research of the operational component of social activity of student youth we have developed the author’s questionnaire that consists of 21 questions. A questionnaire contains: a) questions-dichotomies (variants of answers — yes, no, it is hard to say); b) unalternative questions (possible choice of a few variants); c) open questions (personal variant of answer); d) verification questions (answers to which correlated with the previous questionnaire responses and also some methodologies of research).

Questions concern the fact and level of participation in activity of the student self-government, the nature of social activity, participation in social and public activities within the HEI, quantity of projects organized.

The level of social activity in different areas (scientific, creative, public) is possible to educe from questioning results; however we put an accent on participating in student self-government. In fact, on our opinion the most important direction in social activity

implementation is activity in the organizational area, that is most brightly shown in activity of student self-government and unites the various displays of social activity in itself. The passive attitude of students to the activity of student self-government testifies their personal adaptive position that becomes a substantial barrier to social activity of personality. At the same time scientific and creative activities are the components of social activity only in case if they are accompanied by high social motivation.

Data processing was carried out using the software SPSS, version 16.0.

### Results and Discussion

A high level of operational component was established in case of positive answer of respondent to a question: “Do you take part in the activity of self-government?” and if the amount of points in the responses to the questionnaire concerning the level of participation in student self-government, the nature of social activity, fact of participation in social, scientific, public, creative activities within the HEI and quantity of projects organized was 15 points and higher. A low level of operational activity component of students was established, when the student did not participate in student self-government activity and collected 0–15 points for these questions or if they participated in the activities of student self-government and their responses scored 0–7 points. In all other cases we refer respondents to the middle level of the operational component of social activity.

At the core of our research there is an understanding of social activity as a sustainable personal formation, which is internally determined by the individual features of a person, that is based on subjective individual’s activity, high level of social motivation, shows up in qualitative transformation of social reality within the ethical standards dominating in the society, and leads to the achievement of individual development peak, self-determination and self-assertion.

It was educed from the research results that the share of respondents who participate in the activities of the student self-government is very low (28.1%) (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Amount of students who participate in the activities of the student self-government

Do you take part in the activities of student self-government?	Amount of polled (in %)	Frequencies
no	71.9	470
yes	28.1	184

By level of student participation in social activity of different structures within the HEI more than a half of students (56.1%) do not participate at all, almost a quarter of students (27.2%) are likely involved in social activity as volunteers, and only 16.7% polled usually participate in such activity within the HEI as organizers (Table 2).

Additionally, we received an answer to the question “Do you take part in the activities of amateur groups?” Only 23.8% of respondents answered the question in the affirmative, even 76.2% of respondents marked that do not participate in the activity of groups performances.

A small share of respondents (19.8%) marks thus that their participation in social activity within the HEI has permanent character, social activity of majority of polled (79.9%) within the HEI is of temporal or situational character.

As to our opinion, social activity is a generic term for such types of activities as: communicative, public, political, cognitive, educational, labor, volitional, spiritual, creative etc., in case of their constructive, socially desirable orientation, we investigated the features of display of the operational component of social activity of students in different areas of their lives.

**Table 2.** Distribution of students by level of participation in self-government or other student structures within the HEI (scientific society, amateur groups, clubs on interests, etc.)

<b>In what role do you usually participate in social activity of self-government or other student structures within the HEI?</b>	<b>Amount of polled (in %)</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>
as an organizer	16.7	367
as a volunteer	27.2	178
do not take part	56.1	109

Thus by the level of participation in social activities within the HEI respondents were divided into 3 groups: high level (11.8%) inherent to students who use every possibility to participate in this activity; middle level (47.4%) — to those who participate in social activity, if there is no alternative, more important occupations; low level (40.8%) — to those students who do not participate in social activity within the HEI.

Following a similar algorithm by level of participation in public activity within the HEI (which is a separate form of social activity and contains the activity of individual aimed at problem solution of the relationship between the community and the state), a high level was found for 13.8% of investigated, the middle level — for 39.4% of respondents, and low level of participation in public activity of the HEI — for 46.9% of students.

Similarly the distribution of students by level of participation in scientific and creative activities within the HEI was determined, taking into account that these indices are the constituents of social activity only in case if they are accompanied by high social motivation. Thus high level of participation in scientific activity is inherent for 16.4% of respondents, middle level — for 38.7%, and low level of participation in scientific activity of the HEI — for 44.9% of students.

By degree of participation in creative activity within the HEI high level is inherent for 18.3% of investigated, middle level — for 33.2% of respondents, and low level of participation in creative activity within the HEI — for 48.5% of polled.

An important indicator of the operational component of social activity of student youth is, in our opinion, a presence and a quantity of social projects in organization of which students were involved in.

On this basis we refer students who staying in University have not organized any social project (20.0%) to low level of operational component, those who participated in organization up to 5 projects for the whole period of studying (65.6%) — to middle level, and investigated who during the studying have participated in organizing 5 projects and more (14.4%) — to high level of operational component of social activity of students (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Distribution of students by the amount of organized social projects

<b>Have you been the organizer of any social project during your training at University? If yes, how many?</b>	<b>Amount of polled (in %)</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>
no, I have not been	20.0	129
yes, up to 5 projects	65.6	424
yes, 5 projects and more	14.4	93

The special role of student self-government in the process of forming of students' social activity highlights the fact that according to the research results the majority of students (65.9%) believe that social activity of students appears exactly through activity in student self-government.

Ideas of students about their own social activity has a direct correlation with the real participation in activity of student self-government structures (0.319;  $p < 0.01$ ) (Table 4).

**Table 4.** Correlations between the students' perception of their social activity and their actual participation in activity of student self-government

Do you consider yourself a socially active personality?	Do you take part in activity of the student self-government? (amount of polled in %)	
	no	yes
no	86.9	13.1
it's hard to say	80.2	19.8
yes	50.7*	49.3*

\* — differences are statistically significant at the level  $p < 0.01$

Thus, among investigated who consider themselves socially active nearly a half (49.3%) have participated in activity of student self-government structures, while among students who do not consider themselves socially active this index is 13.1%. It also confirms a close relationship between the social activity of students and their participation in the activity of self-government structures.

On the basis of summarizing the survey results we found 3 levels of the operational component of social activity of student youth (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Levels of operational component of students' social activity

Levels of operational component	Amount of polled (in %)	Frequencies
low	26.1	171
medium	64.4	421
high	9.5	62

Thus a low level of operational component of social activity (26.1% of respondents) is characterized by situational, unstable, not necessarily independent nature of social activity, that is predefined mostly by external (requirement, evaluation, reward, fear of punishment), random situational factors. Students who are at this level of operational component of activity are not the organizers of social work, have no desire to fulfill tasks of the team, and do not often bring them to completion.

Middle level of operational component of social activity is inherent to the largest group of respondents (64.4%). It envisages mostly independent social activity, with high frequency of the amateur actions caused mainly by rational (to occupy a high status in family, group, educational institution) and pragmatic reasons. These students do not always participate in public, social and labour activities, are not quite conscious in attitude toward studies, and only sometimes become the organizers of public work.

The least group of respondents (9.5%) is characterized by high level of the operational component of social activity that envisages continuous nature of social activity, creativity in all major areas of life, organizational abilities and skills (Киричук, 1983).

Dependence of the operational component of students' social activity on educational and professional (qualification) and organizational ((HEI ownership) factors has been studied on the next stage of empirical research. In order to determine the dependence of these characteristics on the levels of operational component of students' social activity, the other educational and professional factors with  $\chi^2$  criterion were analyzed and correlation analysis with Pearson's rank correlation coefficient was performed. The results showed absence of statistically significant correlations between the level of operational component of social activity and some educational and professional factors (year of studying, form of study, combination of work and studying).

In relation to educational and professional features of operational component of social activity of students meaningful statistics differences (0.104;  $p < 0.05$ ) by criterion  $\chi^2$  and correlation analysis with Pearson's rank correlation coefficient was performed between the levels of operational component and future students' qualifications (Table 6).

**Table 6.** Correlations between the level of operational component of social activity of students and their qualification

Qualification	Levels of the operational component (amount of polled in %)		
	low	medium	high
Humanities	29.4*	63.2	7.5
Natural Sciences and Technology	22.1	65.6	12.3*

\* — differences are statistically significant at the level  $p < 0.05$

Thus, the humanitarian sciences students have a low level of operational component of social activity (29.4%), whereas only 22.1% of the natural and technical sciences students are at this level. A high level of operational component of social activity is inherent for 12.3% of natural and technical sciences students, while the students of humanitarian profile meet this level rarer — in 7.5% of cases.

Being oriented towards the socio-political situation in the country during research we conducted a questioning of 102 students from different public and private HEIs in order to verify the assumption of a higher level of social activity of students who have participated in Euromaidan. The survey was conducted on-line as well as right at Euromaidan in February, 2014. The questionnaire included the following questions: 'Why did you come to Euromaidan for the first time?', 'What does Euromaidan means for you now?', 'How often do you go to Euromaidan?', 'Are you getting financial benefits from participation in Euromaidan?', 'Can you say, that you go to Euromaidan looking for interesting events, can't you?', 'What is important for you at Euromaidan?', 'How do you react on crowding out' from Euromaidan?'. In our opinion such a selection of questions gave a chance to see the actual level of operational component of the social activity of students (taking into the account their attitudes and level of participation in Euromaidan).

A high level of the operational component was determined in case if the student's first arrival to Euromaidan was caused by personal active position that was transformed into a sense of national spirit and movement to positive social changes during the events of Euromaidan. Students who are at the Euromaidan's participants level of operational component often or almost always present and desire to play an active role in the events of Euromaidan without any financial benefits. On the question: 'How do you react on crowding out' from Euromaidan?' they mostly marked an opposite activating effect. The low level of operational component is peculiar to the participants of Euromaidan, who first arrived to Euromaidan eventually

and consider Euromaidan as meaningless or visited Euromaidan 1-2 times by chance, or possibly extract a material benefit from participating in Euromaidan. Among all the events of Euromaidan they interested only in entertainments, do not want to participate in organization and development of events. In most cases of ‘forcing out’ from Euromaidan they considered as faithful action, or this group of students felt fear. Other investigated who gave other possible answers to the questionnaire were classified as a medium level of the operational component of Euromaidan participants (Table 7).

**Table 7.** Levels of the operational component of social activity of participants of Euromaidan

Levels of operational component	Amount of polled (in %)	Frequencies	Means	S <sub>x</sub>	Sums
low	7.8	8	1.00	0.00	8
medium	74.5	76	1.00	0.00	76
high	17.6	18	1.00	0.00	18

Note: S<sub>x</sub> — standard deviation

Thus the largest group of respondents (74.5%) is at a middle level of the operational component of social activity. The high level of operational component of social activity was detected in 17.6% of polled against 9.5% of investigated students who did not participate in Euromaidan. The low level of operational component of social activity is educed only in 7.8% of polled compared to 26.1% of investigated students who did not participate in Euromaidan.

Negative relationship observed by the motivation of the first arrival to Euromaidan and type of ownership of HEI (-0.364;  $p < 0.05$ ) (Table 8).

**Table 8.** Correlations between the motivation of students’ participation in Euromaidan and HEI ownership

Why did you come to the Euromaidan for the first time?	Form of HEI ownership (amount of polled in %)	
	public	private
was offered money	3.7	23.1
was invited by friends	29.6	53.8*
could not stay at home when such events are taking place in the country	25.9	0.0
eventually	40.7*	23.1

\* — differences are statistically significant at the level  $p < 0.05$

Thus the largest share of the polled students who followed pragmatic motivation for the first arrival to Euromaidan (23.1%) presents private universities, students from public universities have this index much lower (3.7% of investigated). 25.9% students of public universities could not stay at home, when such events have taken place in the country, while no students from private universities chose this option. It is interesting that the first arrival to Euromaidan was casual for 40.7% of students from public HEIs and 23.1% of students from private HEIs.

Statistically significant differences were found between the level of activity of students on Euromaidan and type of HEI ownership (Table 9).

**Table 9.** Correlations between the levels of activity of students on Euromaidan and type of HEI ownership

The levels of activity	Form of HEI ownership (amount of polled in %)	
	public	private
just to be on Euromaidan	14.3	63.6*
actively participate in organizational activities	85.7*	36.4

\* — differences are statistically significant at the level  $p < 0.01$

Thus students of public HEI in most cases (85.7%) have aimed to participate actively in organizational activities of Euromaidan, while this index is only 36.4% for students of private universities. Negative relationship observed by the levels of activity of students on Euromaidan and type of ownership of HEI ( $-0.494$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ).

Negative relationship observed by the levels of operational component of social activity of students participating in Euromaidan and the fact of organization in HEI special events on its support ( $0.382$ ;  $p = 0.012$ ) (Table 10).

**Table 10.** Correlations between the levels of operational component of social activity of students participating in Euromaidan and the organization in HEI activities to support Euromaidan

Does your HEI organize any events to support Euromaidan?	The levels of operational component (amount of polled in %)		
	low	medium	high
no	33.3	57.1	9.5*
yes	0.0	81.8	18.2*

\* — differences are statistically significant at the level  $p = 0.012$

Table 10 shows that the level of operational component of social activity of student youth from HEIs which organized some events in support of Euromaidan is higher.

In general the assumption about the increase of level of social activity of student youth under influence of social & political events was confirmed. At the same time, it needs further checking for bigger selection that can come forward as a prospect of further researches.

### Conclusion

The empiric research results showed an insufficient level of social activity operational component of a substantial share of students, while only 10% of investigated demonstrated it at a high level.

The differences of operational characteristics of social activity of student youth due to the different educational and professional factors (qualification) and institutional factors (form of HEI ownership) were established.

In order to determine the dependence of these characteristics on the levels of operational component of students' social activity, the other educational and professional factors with  $\chi^2$  criterion were analyzed and correlation analysis with Pearson's rank correlation coefficient was performed. The results showed the absence of statistically significant correlations between the level of operational component of social activity and some educational and professional factors (year of studying, form of study, combination of work and studying).



The levels of operational component of social activity of students who participated in Euromaidan have been investigated. In general the assumption about the increase of level of social activity of student youth under influence of social & political events was confirmed. At the same time, further checking is needed for bigger selection that can come forward as a prospect of further researches.

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### THE FEATURES OF OPERATIONAL COMPONENT OF SOCIAL ACTIVITY OF STUDENT YOUTH

#### Summary

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The *actuality* of the study on features of operational component of social activity of student youth has been revealed. *Object of the research* is the operational component of social activity of student youth. *Aim of the research* is to study the characteristics, factors of operational component of social activity of student youth, selection of levels to the operational component of social activity.

The current social and political situation in Ukraine requires the active people participation in its social, political, economic, cultural and spiritual spheres of life. The activity of young people in public life is an important aspect of this problem. Therefore research of features of the operational component of social activity of student's youth is very actual since exactly operational component is an implementation of social activity.

In this article the operational component of students' social activity research methodology has been grounded.

*Fragment of the research.* The study involved 715 students of different years of studying from public and private Ukrainian HEI. Respondents were divided into the following groups: by age; by gender; by areas of study; by form of study; by year of studying; by success of training on a ECTS scale; by form of HEI ownership; by combination of work and studying; by place of residence while studying; by place of residence; by health status.

The following main indicators of the operational component of social activity were distinguished as a basic: aspiring to independence in execution of socially meaningful activities; ability and skills in doing socially important activities that lead to the acquisition of their own vital experiences.

To research the operational component of social activity of student youth we have developed an author's questionnaire that consists of different kinds of questions.

Questions concern: the fact and level of participation in activity of the student self-government, the nature of social activity, and participation in social and public activities within the HEI, quantity of projects organized.

According to the questioning results the level of social activity in different areas (scientific, creative, public) has been educed. We put the accent on participating in student self-government. In fact, on our opinion, the most important direction in social activity implementation is activity in the organizational area that is most brightly shown in activity of student self-government and unites the various displays of social activity in them. The passive attitude of students to the activity of student self-government testifies their personal adaptive position that becomes a substantial barrier to social activity of personality. At the same time scientific and creative activity are the components of social activity only in case if they are accompanied by high social motivation.

According to the results of empiric research there is an insufficient level of operational component of social activity of substantial share of students, while its high level was founded only at 10% of investigated.

The differences of operational characteristics of social activity of student youth due to the different educational & professional factors (qualification, combination of work and studying) and institutional factors (form of HEI ownership) were established.

The levels of operational component of social activity of students who participated in Euromaidan have been investigated. In general the assumption about the increase of level of social activity of student youth under influence of social & political events was confirmed. At the same time it needs the further checking for bigger selection that can come forward as a prospect of further researches.