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Creation of Conditions for Effective Functioning of Youth Communities and Associations Based on Educational Organizations

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Abstract

Currently, the youth movement is represented by a variety of forms, which provides vast opportunities for choosing the most suitable and interesting association for a young person. Although a return to the model of a united youth organization, which was the Komsomol organization in the past, is unlikely possible, since this idea will not find a response among young people and will contradict modern social values, youth public organizations at the present stage can apply their activities in a wide variety of directions: sports, works, ecology, patriotism.

The secondary employment of young people, which suppose the organization of activities of youth associations on the basis of educational institutions, has also received proper support. At the same time, the student movement has pursued the social maturation of young people, their involvement in the process of professional labor formation historically, in addition to the economic component (the development of economic relations, additional financial support to young people).

Nevertheless, the political transformations of modern Russia have established a completely new phenomenon of Russian youth, what distinction is disunity and split into various social and economic segments that are weakly or not at all connected with each other. Thus, the social component of the functioning of student organizations, which contributes to the direct formation of personality, is not fully reflected today. That is why the issue of organizing the activities of student youth associations requires detailed research, which should include an analysis of the experience of implementing youth association programs on the basis of educational organizations and the particularities of various models of this vector in social policy at the present stage.

The models of cooperation of youth representatives on the basis of educational organizations are reviewed, and also the opinion of representatives of this population group regarding the current conditions for the formation, functioning and provision of youth organizations and associations

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within the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation is examined in this article. As a result of that analysis, the evaluation of knowledge intensity degree of the student communities of the Financial University and Russia, as a whole, is established, and methodological recommendations for the further development of student organizations are provided, considering the individual opinions of their participants.

Keywords: youth associations, educational organizations, student societies.

1. Introduction

At the present stage one of the most important factors of functioning and development of world society is youth, which makes up about a fifth of the population of Russia and 18 % of the world's population. Youth plays an important role as a factor of social turns, renewal, initiative, energy in implementation of reforms and changes.

Currently, the terminology "youth" means an extremely broad group of people. Such ambiguity can be explained by the lack of a single conceptual comprehension, arising from a high degree of blurriness of the boundaries between the periods of childhood and adulthood in consequence with different emphasis of various sociology schools.

For instance, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) uses several forms of the term "youth" depending on the context. Nevertheless, in order to ensure statistical consistency, the range of interpretations used is based on the concept of the United Nations (UN), which determines "youth" as persons aged 15 to 24 years. As a result, the youth statistics of the UN refers to this vision ([Description..., 2022](#)).

Within the framework of this section, the category of youth is considered as a dynamic social structure. In this regard, we will take into consideration those people, who having professional and economic dependence, what is the result of continuing education in secondary specialized or higher educational institutions, are just entering adulthood. In this case, people, who are still the subject to the processes of secondary special or higher education, socialization and the acquisition of everyday experience, already make decisions about those actions that can be considered as a determinant of their own life aspirations and social behavior.

At the same time, it is important to get acquainted with the point of view regarding the age group of young people used in the international educational environment. Thus, the European Union legally defines "youth" as people aged 13 to 30 years within the framework of the Youth in Action and Erasmus+ social programs. Of course, such a general definition weakly represents potential participants of youth associations based on educational organizations, what requires taking into account more complex concepts. One of these is certainly Karl Mannheim's point of view. This Hungarian sociologist has derived the definition according to what a particular generation should be considered not only from the point of view of biological criteria and age evaluation, but also from the influence of factors of social historical transformations ([Detail..., 2022](#)).

Mannheim's position regarding the relation of a person to a particular generation comes down to the fact that, since generations determine the appearance of the whole society, it is the youth who acts as the driver, which dynamizes the social structure and brings into it values and components being innovative, advanced and necessary for post-industrial and information societies. It should be underlined that in the XXI century, it is prosocial work within the framework of the functioning of a collective or student group that can be considered as an innovative value necessary for building an effective civil society ([Pilcher, 1994](#)).

The faster the society changes, including socio-cultural and technological environment, the more dynamic the change of generations becomes and accelerates. Mannheim also recognized youth as one of the resources, that, existing at different stages of history are able to ensure the viability of society with their capabilities to mobilize knowledge and skills. In this regard, young people who make up the youth layer of society are given special importance, determining an advanced social function, the usage of which depends on the nature and social structure, as well as the culture of society.

The social category refers to the perception of youth as a certain social group, obliged to acquire the skills of full and responsible participation in the life of society. Eisenstadt, a representative of the functional approach, underlined predispositions in young people that allow them to perform many functions. According to his point of view, "youth" is a group of people who, due to their age, are in a transitional stage between the processes of primary and secondary

socialization. Being insufficiently prepared for a completely independent lifestyle, they create peer groups in which they satisfy the needs for belonging and security, as well as arm themselves with knowledge typical for adults, thereby ensuring the balance in society (Eisenstadt, 1996).

Filipiak gives a different definition. According to him, young people should be considered not only as a social group, but also as a category uniting young people in a chronological and biological sense. That means, the term "young people" refers to the totality of individuals in a certain age group, and the term "youth" refers to the state in which they are. The cultural approach, on the other hand, considers "young people" as a group with a culture and characteristics different from that in which adults function. The theory of the transfer of cultural values, issued by M. Mead, relates to this line of thought, according to which young people adapt their behavior to the features of the prevailing culture, assimilating its values and postulates and passing them to the next generations (Caraballo, Filipiak, 2021; Erwin, 1995). The consideration of culture as the dominant factor in the perception of youth is also postulated by Khalasinsky, who believed that youth is not a natural physiological and hormonal state, but an element of culture, a kind of social institution, the form of which depends on the structure and formation of society. Youth is characterized by freedom from certain types of social responsibility, economic dependence and premarital status. In its turn, social customs determine the duration of this period, the nature and boundaries of freedom (Wlodarek, 1987).

At the same time, the society clearly identifies personal and social models, responsibilities and privileges of youth representatives. Ilyinsky emphasized that the definition of the term "youth" is closely related to historical conditions. The bottom line is that it is impossible to form a single definition of the concept, since it is valid for each individual, very long historical period, depends on the nature and level of development of society. It will not be possible to create the only correct and universal definition acceptable to young people of all generations at once (Elishev, 2017).

Speaking about youth as a factor of change, we should turn to the classical definition of Mannheim, according to which youth is a reserve that comes to the forefront at those moments when society is faced with the problem of adaption to rapidly changing or completely new circumstances and conditions. This becomes possible due to the nature of this stage of development in human life. Youth can be considered as a natural reservoir of innovation, conditioned by the specifics of the development of the appropriate life phase, which includes a special receptivity, sensitivity, the need to define "yourself" through the analysis of ideas and events around. In this context, special importance is given to the own "peripherality" in combination with criticality and reflexivity (Karácsony, 2008).

The particularity of the formation and functioning of youth communities and associations on the basis of educational organizations is to create conditions through the implementation of educational, project, career guidance activities, additional education. Youth is a natural driver of change, which, by reinforcing the need for change, expresses the requirement for behavior that creates a new reality. For this reason, every change predetermines opportunities for innovation by young people. Even the combination of these two perspectives requires close attention to the relationships that arise between youth and social systems. It is not surprising that, according to the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset, the most important concept in history is the concept of generation. In his ideas the thought is traced that change of generations is akin to an endless continuation and changes history, the transmission of entrenched norms, values and patterns of behavior, on the one hand, and on the other hand – the generation of ideas attitudes in response to socio-economic and cultural changes (Lambert, 1972).

The development of the modern world with an emphasis on science and technology, the global process of economic progress and new social movements exert force against modern society, one way or another, determining the direction of its transformation. In turn, scientific progress is necessarily associated with the coverage of the education system, especially at the highest level, which creates conditions and the requirement for the creation of youth communities which are focused on the new needs of society, change in value principles and the implementation of the main goals in ensuring high quality education. The extension of formal education, the pressure associated with the completion of higher education, and not of secondary school, as it was before, creates new requirements for young people, and hence for the social institutions that educate them.

The loss of functionality of traditional social institutions and, at the same time, the acquisition of autonomy as a result of the organization of the innovative production process of modern society is a potential reason of tension between growing expectations and independence, what becomes an area of choice due to changes in the differentiation of the social structure. The problem of assimilation of new values is primarily faced by young people, who feel these changes more than other groups. Change of the meaning of moral and social principles and values leads to issues in orientation of young people and is associated with difficulties in personal adaptation of individual to social organizations.

At all times, people have speculated on the importance and necessity of including young people in public decision-making processes. Theorists from many countries note that a step aimed at attracting the voices and energy of young people can improve organizational services, provide young people with the opportunity to acquire new skills, as well as increase the sense of belonging of young people to a particular community and, as a result, society as a whole.

At the forefront of this movement are youth associations available in educational organizations that provide conditions for counseling sessions and self-expression of young people. The creation of roles in the decision-making system transfers young people from the category of recipients of prosocial services to the category of participants in the process of developing, planning and evaluating initiatives.

The involvement of young people in the work of youth associations is considered in various forms: through the creation of city councils, school and institute cells and other non-commercial organizations, in which the opinion of participants, representatives of younger generation, is of central importance when making operational decisions. Researchers refer to the participation of young people in public activities in various terms: youth engagement, youth voice, youth empowerment, youth actions, youth infusion and youth management. All these terms have a common principle: young people, as competent agents of society, are able to make decisions and deserve the right to vote in situations that affect their lives and the state of the community.

The factors reflecting the significant importance of youth associations were supported by numerous research facts, in which it was underlined that the interaction of youth with peers, especially those that complement educational programs, has a positive effect on academic success, what means, this form of extracurricular activity has an impact on the overall cognitive growth and intellectual development of the student.

Moreover, the interaction of students with their peers has a greater impact on the development of interpersonal communication skills, leadership qualities and overall personal growth than formal ties with teachers in the framework of studying academic disciplines. Finally, communication with students of different racial and ethnic groups has a positive effect on the attitude and values of students regarding racial and ethnic awareness and involvement.

Student organizations are one of the key factors in developing a sense of belonging to an educational institution, thereby they support the efforts of the educational institution to retain students. If a student does not feel engaged in the study material, then there is a high probability that he will not continue his education and will not graduate. The evolution of student organizations, along with the student union movement, has offered students a space to create a sense of belonging to the student community, as well as opportunities for engagement and learning. Before the advent of student organizations, these links between learning and engagement were not obvious.

Thus, the movement of student unions has defined the role of youth student associations as a concept of intellectual growth focused on a holistic approach to student development. Studying the evolution of student organizations made it possible to hear and evaluate the role of the student's voice. In addition, the development of student unions has sanctioned the necessary emphasis on the possibility of extracurricular activities, which actually contributes to improving the quality of education. Youth associations based on educational organizations show that to grow and develop the ability to think critically, students must be able to establish links between their own education and the current problems of society.

Theoretical prerequisites for the formation of cooperation models of youth representatives based on educational organizations

Considering the historical landscape of student organizations, the importance of their evolution as part of the student experience can be highlighted. To understand how best to meet

educational needs now and in the future, it is important to recognize why young people choose student organizations. In addition, both historical and modern perspectives can help scientists and practitioners understand how participation in student associations of young people contributes to the educational and intellectual growth of a student, further emphasizing their importance in the higher education system. As higher education continues to be developed, it is important to eliminate misunderstandings related to the goals of creating student organizations, and to establish student organizations more firmly as important elements of the learning environment.

One of the forms of participation of young people in youth associations is the initiation of a club system in the educational environment. In the foreign educational climate, clubs and member associations have already demonstrated success in voluntarily attracting young people and providing a context for positive learning and youth development. In fact, it was club work that became the reason for the existence of many national youth organizations in the XX century. Clubs and member organizations have different names – squad, patrol, league, society, team. Regardless of the term, these are usually small, flexible groups of young people formed within larger organizations, most often represented by universities and colleges.

Successful youth organizations are united by the following features:

- future orientation;
- clearly specified and formulated mission;
- a responsible management team that values young people and strives to develop their success;
- positive identification unrelated to social problems.

Effective organizations are respectful and hospitable towards young people, focused on promotion and training, but not on correcting and educating its members. In their study of public youth organizations, Heath and McLaughlin refer to youth organizations as "family organizations". Pittman in his turn believes that successful organizations are primarily those that are built and operate on the principles of looking after their members. The researcher underlines that the care of the organization is transmitted to young people through four important ways. Firstly, an environment is created in which young people feel respected and heard. Secondly, opportunities are provided for creating channels of mutual understanding between adults and young people. Thirdly, a constant information and emotional exchange is maintained. Fourthly, opportunities are identified that through training and motivation channels encourage young people to contribute to the common good through service, protection, philanthropy and active problem solving (Sanders, 2001; Pittman, 1991).

Thus, effective youth organizations provide young people with several important advantages:

- Expanding contacts with adults;
- Training and acquisition of useful, practical skills;
- The practice of taking formal leadership and organizational roles;
- The possibility of showing responsibility to society.

Marsland notes that organizations with a strong potential to satisfy the needs of young people offer programs with a variety of options for active projects, emphasize the experience of social groups and provide individual attention and counseling. Programs offering activities appropriate for development and supervised by adults that attract and support the engagement of young people, provide a variety of opportunities for activities, rhythms of work and games, opportunities to evaluate talents of members through flexible approaches to assessing existing skills (Marsland, Day, 1987).

This approach attracts young people, who are considered as a resource that needs to be developed, and not a problem that needs to be solved in some way. Often such programs are aimed at a recognizable "product": a speech, a team report, a video or a service project. Active programs attach crucial importance to the process of youth development as a whole, and not just to a specific cohort of young people. Stable relationships of mutual trust and respect expand the circle of support for a young person and offer models of success, vocation, lifestyle, career options and making reasonable decisions.

Group work unites young people around a common deal or commitment to a common goal or task. Social group work creates community and opportunities for interpersonal relationships through affiliation or membership in an association. These groups have clear goals and rules of affiliation, often those in the creation of which the youth took part. Whether its dance groups, drill

teams, music groups, football teams or theater groups, their range of development-appropriate activities are supervised by consistent and reliable adults who make it clear that each participant is responsible for following the rules and administration.

The concept of a club, membership organization or society is extremely old and is not limited to youth and educational institutions. For example, in the 19th century, the French Nabis, a group of disaffected artists, created a semi-secret brotherhood around their fervent commitment to a new way of artistic expression. Their society held weekly meetings, dinners and a set of rituals. Membership in the society was possible only by invitation, from which the members' devotion to each other and to the stylized poster and print art of urban life was very strong. In this case, the word "club" refers to an organization that is youth-oriented and run by adults; has organizational sponsorship and a stated mission or goal; exists independently of the formal structure of educational organizations. The main goal of youth clubs is to create an atmosphere in which young people can develop by studying and practicing the roles and responsibilities associated with active membership in society (Auricchio, 2004).

As part of the broader goal of youth development, most clubs have specific program accents, from sports to competencies, such as dancing, hiking, crafts, entrepreneurship, cultural inclusion, leadership and community work. Club activity, as a means of conducting a thorough developing social education related to values, character formation, leadership, the development of racial and cultural identity, intra-group solidarity and citizenship, offers a number of significant advantages.

However, it is important to acknowledge that the aspects of group work, which some people call strengths, are by their nature potential sources of discouragement, alienation, and negative experiences for others. Based on the work of Kleinfeld and Shinkwin, six important aspects can be identified that should be taken into account by youth workers, parents, leaders and young people within the framework of club activities and group work (Kleinfeld, Shinkwin, 1983).

Organizations and programs with a history usually work to preserve traditions and discard attributes that do not make much sense for modern youth. As a consequence, groups should have the freedom to redesign themselves in various cultural, economic, racial and ethnic contexts so that the ideology of the association reflects the systems of belief, expectations and values of its participants, representatives of youth.

The expressed desire and obvious need of some groups to be "exclusive" challenges the views of fairness, accessibility and choice for young people in their youth organizations. Most often, this issue appears in regard to groups created to meet development needs related to gender, race and culture/ethnicity. Heather J. Nicholson considers that youth groups dedicated to the individual needs of the same gender, race or ethnic group are justified when there is a goal of positive impact, what means, that an identifiable problem or issue should be solved to move forward towards parity and equal opportunities (Nicholson et al., 2004).

If the club's activities are aimed to satisfy the needs of young people and adults who are members of the club, the organizational accountability is sometimes difficult. The key point here is to develop programs and to describe the results in terms of youth development. Youth and adult leaders can verify responsibility and the acquisition of skills, regardless of what they do: breeding animals, participating in a precision shooting team or registering voters.

Important security and structure requirements must be balanced with the needs to experiment, take risks and learn lessons. Such lessons are easier to be learnt in a small group in a club or youth association. The small size of the group encourages also close personal interaction between its members and provides opportunities for flexible programming aimed to meet individual needs.

At the same time, a strong adult leader has the potential to create, influence and even lead the activities of a small group, often with the tacit understanding that young people find it convenient and comfortable. So, obsessive control by adults denies young people an opportunity to practice in solving problems and making independent decisions. The youth associations, where adults prevail, offer many young people that they experience as part of educational or nurturing process. Due to this effect the interest disappears quickly to such organization.

The small size and permanent nature of youth clubs usually facilitates creating an environment in which young people feel more free while talking and discussing problems without the risk of getting ridicule, misunderstanding, condemnation or negative labels. When there is

active leadership in planning and conducting group events and meetings, they can put together an agenda that meets their expectations.

In addition, when roles alternate and are distributed, young people develop a sense of belonging, usefulness, importance and contribution. The lack of separation by ability and strict age segregation is a real plus for youth groups associated with informal youth organizations. The club environment can become one of the few places where young people take on roles based on their desire and interest.

It is important that clubs and youth groups keep flexibility that allows them to consider and reflect the norms and values of participants, the educational program and significant public institutions. Young people should be involved in scheduling, determining expectations from participation and setting work standards. Sometimes rules created by adults to encourage participation restrict inadvertently young people who, for reasons beyond their control, cannot meet deadlines and fulfill their obligations qualitatively. The rules regarding attendance, timeliness, dress code and involvement of parents should be carefully analyzed to see if they serve the needs of adult leadership or youth development.

Adult leaders take a special responsibility for initiatives, regardless of whether they play a formal, institutionalized role or an informal, hidden role in the group. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of youth associations based on educational organizations is the development of youth, their responsibility and participation in the life of society. The organization that builds its youth development work on the basis of a club or group form of work faces the issue of club autonomy in comparison with organizational consistency.

At the same time, it is important to maintain organizational flexibility and responsiveness of the group to young people. Of course, the imposition of a rigid structure and cruel rules can provide a more universal and effective solution to the problem of inconsistency of intra-organizational operational issues in the short term. Nevertheless, such approach can hardly be acceptable, especially in the case of working with young people, representatives of youth. Much more effective is the method when a detailed explanation of the mission and goals of the association takes place, as well as training leaders to understand their organizational responsibilities and adapting members to the chosen work model within the framework of the organizational ideology accepted by all members.

Youth communities and associations based on educational organizations can be created by young people themselves or by interested adults. In this regard, it is necessary to consider the stages of creating a youth organization at an educational institute, taking into account the various types of such organizations, their goals and principles, advantages and features. It is also important to pay attention to the time factor and the conditions for the formation of the association, under which one or another entity will be engaged in rallying young people around a common goal. By the end, recommendations and tips will be formed, following which it is possible to significantly improve the efficiency of both existing and newly emerging cells of informal interaction of youth representatives at an educational organization.

Regardless of the direction of activity, goals and available resources a youth association can be as broad as narrow in scope, the same as an organization, whose members are purely adults, people formed finally within a particular social system. Such societies can operate locally, nationally, or even internationally. Despite the youth bias, there may also be adults at the base of such associations: coaches, mentors, employees of an educational organization.

Moreover, a local youth organization represented within a separate educational unit can also operate in the context of the activities of a larger structure: for example, a local youth coalition for the promotion of patriotic initiatives may have a youth advisory council that publishes its proposals on what, in their opinion, will help encourage young people to form appropriate ideological inclinations, but already to a wider audience by speaking at specialized conferences and congresses or by making statements in the media and the Internet.

Speaking about the expediency of supporting initiatives to create youth associations on the basis of educational institutions, it is necessary to highlight the advantages that a representative of the younger generation receives from participating in the activities provided by the agenda of such organizations. Thus, participation in group activities helps young people develop personal and interpersonal skills and competencies. There is the ability to think critically and to solve problems inventively, as well as taking personal and group responsibility. It follows from this, that this kind

of pastime contributes to the development of sense of confidence and self-esteem in young people. Moreover, in case of the described types of activities in the association, in which the presence of acts of involvement from its participants is implied, the development of abilities to empathy and complicity is clearly observed in their nature (Gurinovich, 2010).

Such effects act as a healthy alternative to unsafe activities, the reflections of which are now and then traced among the representatives of the younger generation at different ages. Participation in social activities, especially, those provided on the basis of an educational organization, is a protective factor, the relevance of which determines the propensity of a young person to make the right choice of values and hobbies. This result can be explained by the fact that by participating in the activities of a public organization, a safe identity is formed in a person, in which the subject is less likely to be involved in risky activities with undesirable consequences.

In addition to development of personal characteristics, the engagement of youth representatives in the activities of methodological associations based on educational institutions can contribute to the development of professional management and administration skills. As a result, participation in the activities of youth associations gives opportunities the youth representatives for personal growth and creates the basis for the skills and abilities necessary to build a professional career.

Often to ensure the effective functioning of youth associations, educational organizations provide young people with an area that can be used by members of such club for their own purposes. In such conditions, members of associations can express their thoughts free and implement skills through art and activities like that, which constitutes their desired vector of development, whether in professional environment or as part of common hobby.

Thus, youth organizations offer participants an available way to learn about various aspects of life by providing opportunities for self-expression and their will. This way of communication creates a strong support network for young people whose interests come together in one common point of correct choice of different values and principles for the association.

Speaking about the advantages of creating youth associations based on educational organizations for society, in this context it is necessary to mention a window for the possibility of changing the public perception of young people as a driver ensuring progress and seamless generational change. Such an effect becomes possible due to the involvement of young people in society life, whereby they become less inclined to create problems and form a toxic, ambiguous climate in society through the imposition of cultural and other trends, and more inclined to search for solutions.

In addition to this, youth organizations operating at educational institutions can cooperate with public associations which are represented outside the institute, college or school. This kind of cross-border interaction of thematic organizations creates opportunities for the promotion and implementation of public and socio-cultural initiatives, the additional advantage of which is the engagement of youth representatives and providing them with highly organized and healthy leisure.

As highlighted earlier, youth associations based on educational organizations can be created by two broad groups of people: young people themselves or adults who carry out a kind of mentor's and guide's functions. Both options make sense in certain circumstances and provide unique benefits. Some of the ideas underlying the creation of youth organizations by both groups should be considered due to this reason.

Adults who create or fund youth organizations can come from almost anywhere. Most often these are teachers, coaches, religious mentors, parents or employees of educational institutions. Sometimes they are not directly related to young people, but they have experience or knowledge that they would like to pass to the young generation. Regardless of their background, adults who create youth organizations are united by a commitment to youth, help to people and the goals of the group (Atas et al., 2013).

Often such people become insiders, agents, whom young people know and respect, what greatly facilitates the process of creating a youth association. It is easier for insiders practicing in one or another applied or theoretical topic to plan events that are interesting for young people. Such people are aware of the competencies required by the followers of a particular activity type.

In addition, programs initiated by insiders can attract and interest young people studying in educational organizations much more as a certain, even sometimes, initial level of trust has been worked out among young people and not only the skills and experience of the insiders do.

Moreover, if an adult mentor comes from the same location or ethnic group, young people feel that the probability is higher that such person understands the circumstances and motives for participating in the activities of thematic association, as a result, the engagement of community members increases.

Although people from outside have to overcome the difficulties associated with becoming well-known and respected young people in the community, such "outsiders" can bring new, previously unknown practices and development, views and resources into the social life of young people. Regardless of whether an adult is an insider or an outsider, the presence of an adult organizer of an association can facilitate increasing the authority of a youth organization. Such advantage can manifest when solving organizational or formal tasks.

For example, most young people have never written applications for grants, while an adult curator may have the proper competencies in this case. Due to this reason most youth organizations want to have an adult at least with whom the group is connected. Such guide opens doors which are often closed to young people whose associations are built on purely youth principles, even within the educational organization in which they are trained (Merton, 2018).

By turn, the advantages of young people come from their awareness of a particular issue that they are exploring as part of the work of a youth committee or association. Given that such association functions within the framework of an educational institution, young people know what is really going on much better than most adults hired to lead a student organization. For the detailed study of the favorite topic, they can unite with other youth organizations and have an official organization, or work in a less formal mode to stay up to date and to achieve results without involving serious resources.

Speaking about the moment favorable for the creation of a youth organization, it should be highlighted that there is no bad time for the formation of a particular social cell on the basis of an educational organization, especially if young people themselves are interested in creating such a group. However, some time periods and events are particularly well suited for adults to mobilize young people to improve the lives of their communities. Such moments include periods in which dramatic, disturbing, or significant events occur in society.

If we talk about the internal prerequisites for the creation of associations within the walls of an educational organization, then from this point of view it is difficult to find a better moment than the beginning of the academic year, when young people strive to get to know each other, to become part of the community and to find out what is happening at the university and what role they can play in possible transformations.

The starting point of a youth association can be prosocial activity, as a result, new information appears that contributes to the formation of interest by the part of young people. For example, a group of researchers on the behavioral aspects of teaching young people at university can conduct a survey among young people. The result of the survey, which is available in the form of information on a particular topic, can become a push to create a group to promote the identified hypotheses or to solve the issue occurred.

However, the information received and the lively interest in it by young people may indicate the inefficient work of existing organizations. In this case, an opportunity appears for the implementation of new beginnings, which can be performed on the basis of an educational organization with help of adults and without.

The motivation of young people to create a youth association often comes from a desire to ensure significant changes in the community. Such case is a good instance of the possibility to include young people in a large group, for example, by creating a youth advisory council by a citywide organization or a branch of an educational organization.

Speaking about the details of organizing a youth association based on an educational organization, it is important to consider the initial stage, which consists in determining the topics of the community. If the organizer is a young man, then he probably already knows the needs of the audience and the direction in which the group's activities should be arranged.

Adults may also have specific ideas for working on a specific problem or topic. However, if the organizer is an adult, it is even more important for him to get feedback on which direction the activity will attract the younger generation. Are young people interested in what the association will work around? Are they ready to devote time and effort to this? Do they believe in the possibilities of their own development?

The parameter of the association's affiliation to an existing local, regional or international organization deserves special attention. For example, if we are talking about a group of young people interested in international politics and law, should they organize a cell of UN modelers and discuss current international policy agendas through the prism of international law? In this case, there are opportunities to receive additional help and knowledge from other representatives of this community from other universities. At the same time, such option means following certain patterns and prescriptions, which can negatively affect the level of autonomy and somehow depersonalize the association and its members.

As have been already described, if the association is created by young people, then one of the options for the development of events may be the invitation of adults as sponsors or facilitators. In this case, it is important to determine the purpose and conditions of the invitation. For example, should this person appear at every meeting? Should he speak on behalf of the organization at meetings of the management of the educational organization? Should he help the association in obtaining resources, such as money and equipment? If this moment is poorly defined, the role of such a tutor becomes less clear, and his participation, as a result, less effective, which can easily lead to disappointment, excesses and opportunities missed for both sides.

In addition to the groups with which the association has thematic connection, there may be other sources, besides the educational unit itself, on the basis of which the association operates, ready to support the youth association: for example, a grant system implemented by authorities and government organizations, private agents or regional and international coalitions.

Such assistance can be provided in a variety of forms – from financing to providing locations and opportunities for free advertising.

2. Materials and methods

In order to concretize the recommendations on the formation of youth communities and associations based on educational organizations, a methodology has been developed to assess the effectiveness of the functioning of youth communities (hereinafter referred to as the methodology). The methodology has been developed based on the results of the survey among students at the Financial University. The survey is conducted every two years starting from 2017–2018 academic year. The information submission form no. SSU-1 has been developed in order to conduct the survey and to collect data. The Table 1 provides descriptive statistics on the survey conducted.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics on the survey (Source: Students' survey..., 2021–2022)

Academic year	2017–2018	2019–2020	2021–2022
Qty of respondents, persons	632	845	720
Average age of respondents, years	21,8	21,7	20,5
Average score of respondents	4,64	4,32	4,40

The core of this methodology is a regression model formed on the basis of data obtained as a result of a survey among students of the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as the Financial University). The standard record of the stated regression is presented as next:

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} W_t = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n W_{ti} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (\alpha \cdot W_{e_{ti}} + (1 - \alpha) \cdot W_{f_{ti}}) \\ W_{e_{ti}} = \sum_{j=1}^m (\beta_j \cdot W_{e_{tij}}) = \sum_{j=1}^m \left(\beta_j \cdot \left(E_{tij} \cdot \frac{T_{ij}}{T_i} \right) \right) \\ W_{f_{ti}} = \sum_{j=1}^m (\gamma_j \cdot W_{f_{tij}}) = \sum_{j=1}^m \left(\gamma_j \cdot \left(\frac{10}{k} \cdot \sum_{p=1}^k W_{f_{tjip}} \right) \right) \end{array} \right.$$

where:

W – this is an integral indicator of effectiveness of functioning of student communities;

$i = 1, \dots, n$ – this is a set of students - respondents;

W_{e} – this is an indicator of the estimated effectiveness of the functioning of student communities;

W_{f} – this is an indicator of the calculated efficiency of the functioning of student communities;

$j = 1, \dots, m$ – this is a set of functioning and being evaluated student communities;

α – this is the weight coefficient of the integral indicator;

β и γ – these are quotients of significance of students community functioning within the framework of university's student self-government system;

T_{ij} – this is qty of years while the student has been involved in the activities of students community;

T_i – this is qty of years while student's education at the university;

$p = 1, \dots, k$ – this is qty of calculated subindicators of the effectiveness of the functioning of student communities.

The given survey included the below questions to evaluate the group of calculated indicators (W_{ftijp}) on two more important students' communities at the Financial University – Scientific Student Society (SSS) и Student Council (SC):

1. Has SSS contributed to your engagement in student science;
2. Has SSS contributed to your writing of scientific works (articles);
3. Has SSS contributed to your participation in student scientific events (conferences, forums, etc.);
4. Has SSS influenced on your choice of future profession;
5. Has SC contributed to your engagement in students' life;
6. Has SC contributed to development of your creative potential;
7. Has SC contributed to your participation in student events;
8. Has SC influenced on your choice of future profession.

Average rating (see Figure 1) is a synthetic indicator of the calculated efficiency of the functioning of student communities and is given in accordance with the formula: $\frac{10}{k} \cdot \sum_{p=1}^k W_{ftijp}$.

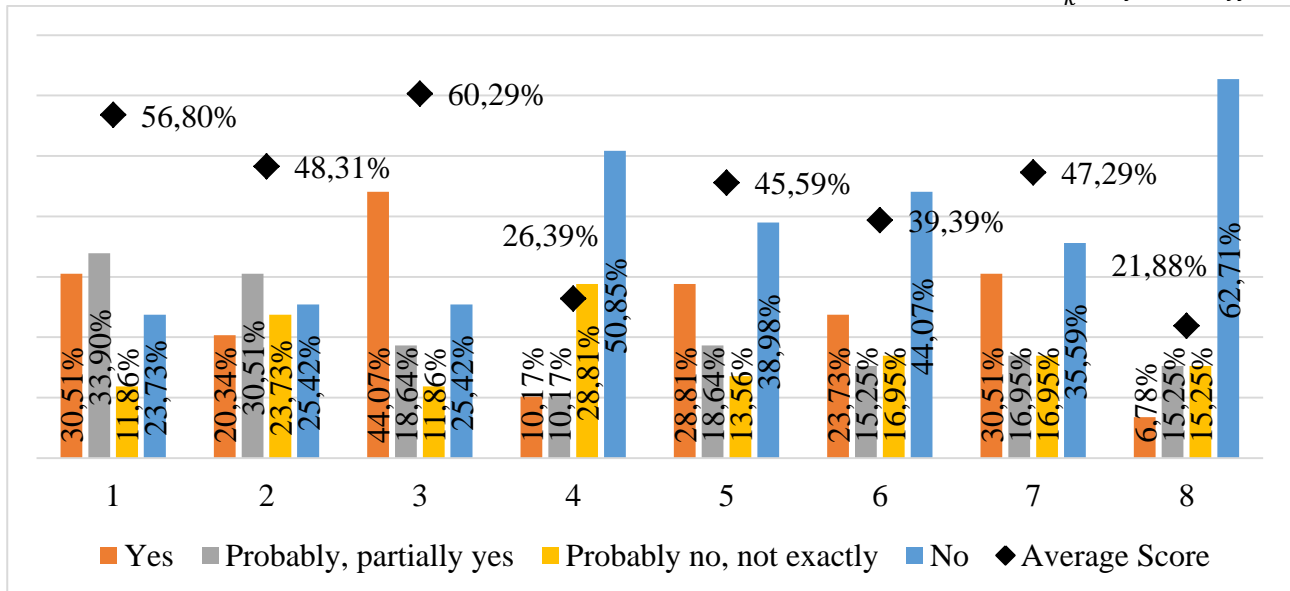


Fig. 1. The values of calculated indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the functioning of student communities and at the Financial University

Source: compiled by the authors

Also, the survey includes a set of questions to determine the indicators of the estimated effectiveness of the functioning of student communities for the periods under consideration (see Figure 2).

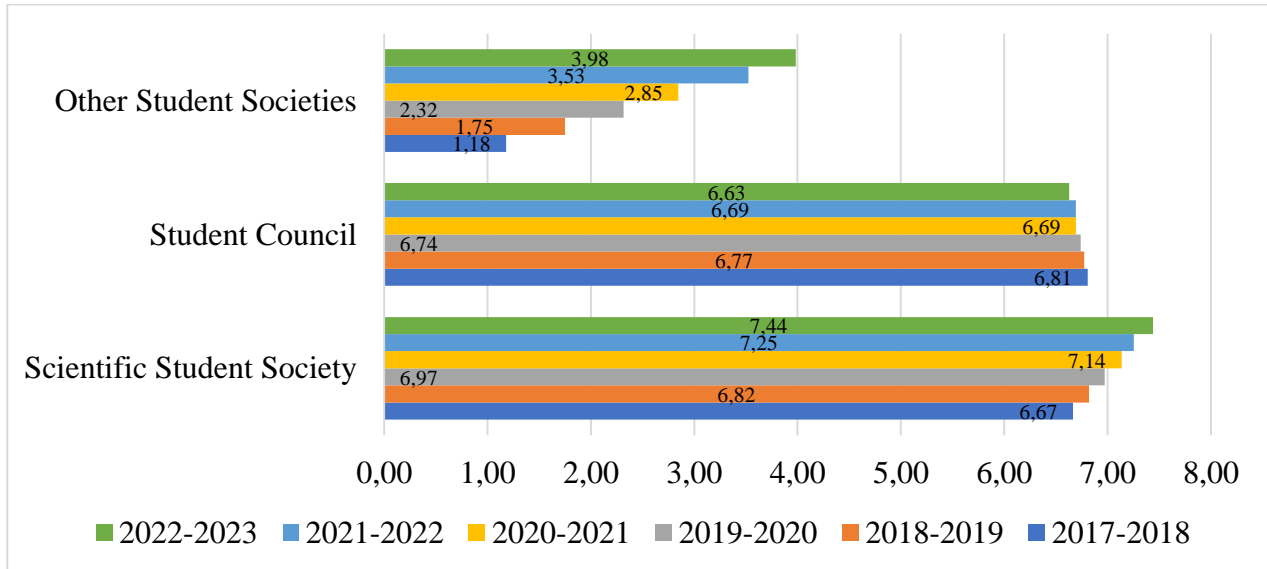


Fig. 2. The values of the indicators of the estimated effectiveness of the functioning of student communities (SSS, SC etc.)

Source: compiled by the authors

As a result of the testing of the model presented above, it has been determined that the functioning of other student communities is a statistically insignificant factor in the effectiveness of the organization of student communities at the Financial University. Taking into account this thesis the following regression was obtained, which counts the activities of the flagged key student communities (SSS – 1, SC – 2):

$$W_t = 0,333 \cdot \left(E_{ti1} \cdot \frac{T_{i1}}{T_i} \right) - 0,069 \cdot \left(E_{ti2} \cdot \frac{T_{i2}}{T_i} \right) + 1,317 \cdot \sum_{p=1}^k Wf_{ti1p} - 0,526 \sum_{p=1}^k Wf_{ti2p}$$

$$R^2 = 0,9103, \quad F = 218,88, \quad F_{kp} = 1,14, \quad t_{kp} = 1,96$$

или

$$\begin{cases} W_{ti} = 0,482 \cdot W_{e_{ti}} + 0,518 \cdot W_{f_{ti}} \\ \quad (5,294) \quad \quad (6,834) \\ W_{e_{ti}} = 0,690 \cdot \left(E_{ti1} \cdot \frac{T_{i1}}{T_i} \right) - 0,143 \cdot \left(E_{ti2} \cdot \frac{T_{i2}}{T_i} \right) \\ \quad (0,101) \quad \quad \quad (0,117) \\ W_{f_{ti}} = 2,5 \cdot \left(1,017 \cdot \sum_{p=1}^k Wf_{ti1p} - 0,406 \sum_{p=1}^k Wf_{ti2p} \right) \\ \quad \quad \quad (7,011) \quad \quad \quad (2,560) \end{cases}$$

All parameters of the model are statistically significant. Moreover, the model as a whole is statistically significant, and the coefficient of regression determination is 0.9103. The absence of autocorrelation and homoscedasticity in the presented regression was determined while the Durbin-Watson and Goldfeld-Quandt tests.

Some values of the parameters β and γ are negative due to a decrease in the objective significance of the Student Council's activities as an unscientific student community associated with the conceptual uncertainty of the goal-setting of this organization. In order to increase the effectiveness of student communities, it is necessary to implement action plans for non-scientific

student communities in accordance with the university's strategy and a program for the adaptation of new members following the example of the student adaptation program called "Coordination" at the Financial University.

Thus, the indicators of effectiveness of the functioning of student communities as at the Financial University as in Russia (see Figure 3) have a positive trend (except for 2019–2021 academic years due to the consequences caused by the quarantine restrictions because of COVID-19 pandemic), what primarily demonstrates that the knowledge-intensive student communities are organized qualitatively.

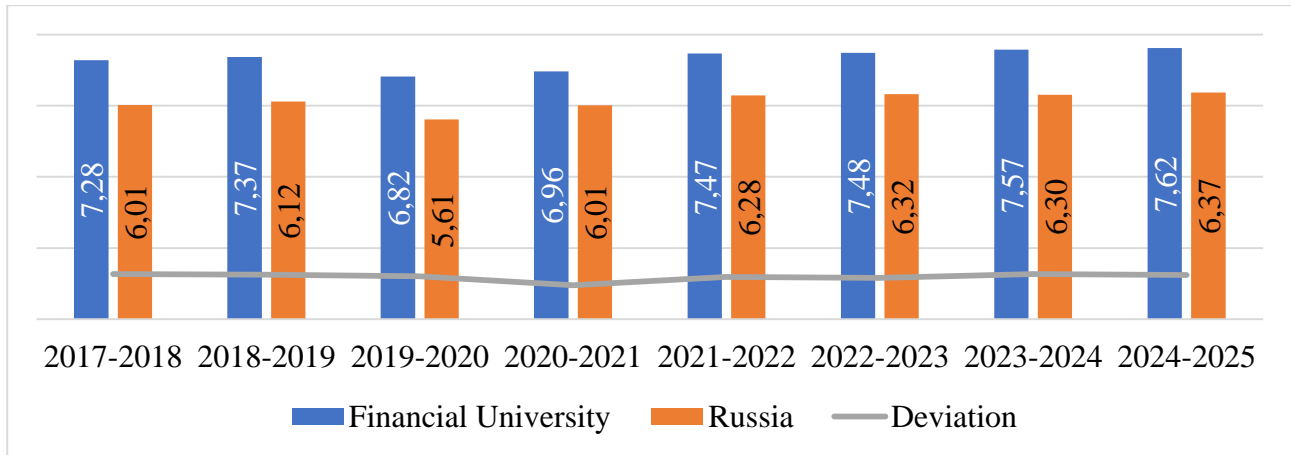


Fig. 3. The values of calculated indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the functioning of student communities and at the Financial University

Source: compiled by the authors

Based on the proposed methodology the following recommendations can be established to improve the efficiency of the functioning of student communities:

- support of the current development of student communities functioning effectively, including budget financing;
- development of more effective goal-setting system for non-scientific student communities; application of the student self-government practice used by scientific student communities to non-scientific organizations;
- rotation of non-scientific student communities from the departments of extracurricular work of universities to the management of “relevant” Vice Principal responsible for work with students/student communities.

It is worth noting that the difference in the actual and calculated evaluation is a consequence of the student’s engagement in the process of student self-government and can be characterized as goodwill (reputational effect) of the student community:

$$G_{tij} = \beta_j \cdot \left(E_{tij} \cdot \frac{T_{ij}}{T_i} \right) - \gamma_j \cdot \left(\frac{10}{k} \cdot \sum_{p=1}^k W_{ftijp} \right)$$

The goodwill can be estimated at 58.7 % for the SSS and 68.1 % for the SC (in average for the university – 64.1 %). for the student communities of the Financial University in 2021–2022 academic year. It is important to note that the goodwill of the student community is an absolute factor in improving the efficiency of the functioning of the community, as well, due to the effect of attracting junior students.

3. Results

Student professionals should understand how better to develop and implement targeted strategic educational opportunities that will contribute to improving students' cognitive skills and personal qualities. As a result, employees of the educational base used to create a youth association can get the opportunity to analyze the "live experience" of students and information

updated directly by young people about why they are interested in participating in youth associations. Such result will allow the heads of the educational organization to structure programs, services and channels of resource allocation, reinforcing the importance of the participation of student associations.

Due to the existence of two key forms of student communities in the structure of student self-government: student scientific societies and student councils, it is possible to determine the development of student self-government as a function coming from the development of two specified forms of the following type: $W_t = \sqrt{W_1 \cdot W_2}$, where W_t – this is an integral indicator of effectiveness of functioning of student communities, W_1 – this is an integral indicator of effectiveness of functioning of scientific student communities, W_2 – this is an integral indicator of effectiveness of functioning of non-scientific student communities. Visualization of the dynamics of the presented model is shown in the Figure below (see Figure 4).

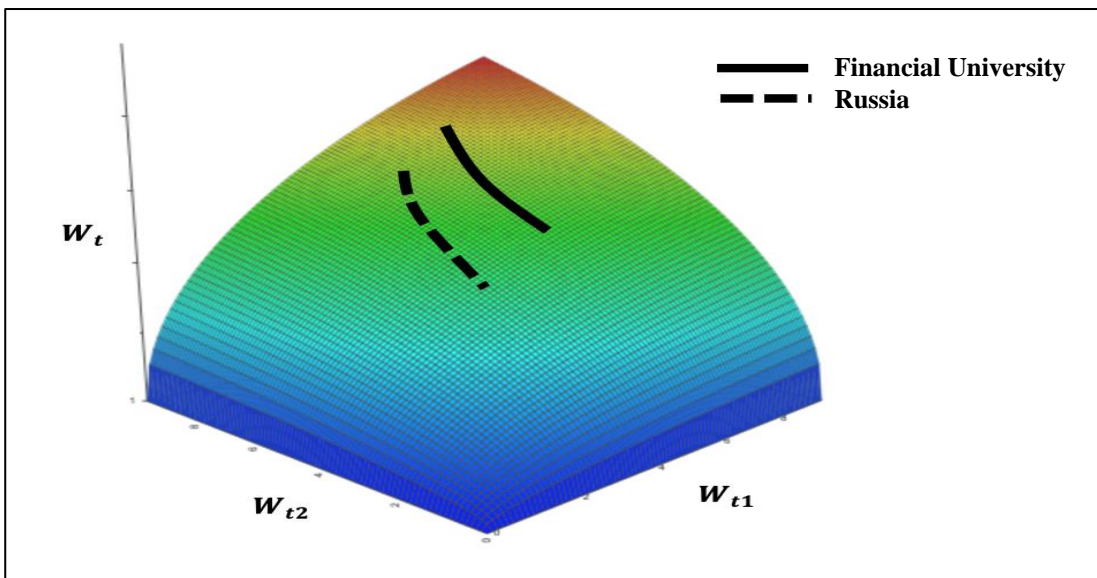


Fig. 4. The values of estimated indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the functioning of student communities and the Financial University

Source: compiled by the authors

Based on the formed models, it should be underlined that knowledge-intensive student communities are developed at the Financial University and in Russia quite qualitatively and perform activities with an efficiency of 70-80 % as a whole, and student councils, as a form of student communities with diversified approach and unclassified goals, require developing and determining conceptual content.

It is also worth considering the quality of the answers to the questions from the Table 2. According to the students' opinion student self-government and student communities are necessary primarily for the participation of students in managing the university and improvement of educational process, as well as for leisure and extracurricular activities.

Table 2. Survey of students related the topic about the importance of student communities of the Financial University

Item #	Proposed Option	Outcome
1.		
1. Why do students need student self-government in your opinion?		
1.1.	For participation in managing the university and improvement of educational process	84,7 %

Item #	Proposed Option	Outcome
1.2.	For leisure and extracurricular activities	71,2 %
1.3.	To gain manager's skills	55,9 %
1.4.	To unite university students into a single community	67,8 %
1.5.	To solve every day and social problems	62,7 %
2. Why does the university administration need student self-government, in your opinion?		
2.1.	To establish and maintain the corporate culture of the university	76,3 %
2.2.	For the arrangement of extracurricular work with students	66,1 %
2.3.	To improve the quality of the educational process	72,9 %
2.4.	For reporting to the controlling ministry bodies	20,3 %
3. Do you think student self-government bodies can influence daily life of students at your university		
3.1.	They can, if the rector's office (dean's office) gives them such an opportunity	64,4 %
3.2.	They can, if they have the funds to implement their projects and programs	54,2 %
3.3.	They can, if they are supported by reputable teachers	30,5 %
3.4.	They can, if they are supported by the majority of students	42,4 %
3.5.	I doubt very much that this is possible	11,9 %

Source: compiled by the authors

In addition, according to the students' opinion, the university management requires the presence of student communities to establish and maintain the corporate culture of the university and to improve the quality of the educational process.

At the same time, according to students' view, student self-government bodies can influence the daily life of students under circumstances that appropriate opportunity is provided by the university management and if there is appropriate financing.

Based on the conducted survey and the developed methodology, it is possible to establish the need for cooperation between the activities of students and the university management related to the organization of the activities of student communities, as from the side of determining the motivation system as from the side of conducting economic activities, including aspects of financing student communities. To achieve this task, we reiterate the importance of forming a centralized intra-university system for organization and control of student communities, including creation of appropriate administrative divisions under the leadership of the "relevant" Vice Principal responsible for student communities.

Moreover, as for the management of higher educational institutions as for the state, a student-centered strategy is optimal, which is focused on the centralized approach to maintaining the current level of students' engagement in knowledge-intensive student communities and the development of non-scientific communities aimed at socializing students by native standardization of the principles of their functioning.

4. Discussion

When creating a youth association on the basis of an educational organization, it is necessary to take into account the specifics of students' engagement in the work of such group. Astin's theory of engagement correlates with this requirement. So, in 1984 Austin developed a framework for exploring the idea that when students are more actively involved in the educational environment, they are more likely to succeed. Astin defined this process as the "inputs-outputs-environment" model, in which inputs are elements such as a student's biography and views, which are influenced by outputs – those elements that are based on the skills the student has acquired, and his

interaction with the environment is considered as well. Simply put, this theory is defined as an interactive "person-environment" model that focuses on variables of time and commitment in the context of student's engagement in studies at the relevant college or university (see Figure 5). (Astin, 1984; Abdullah et al., 2015).

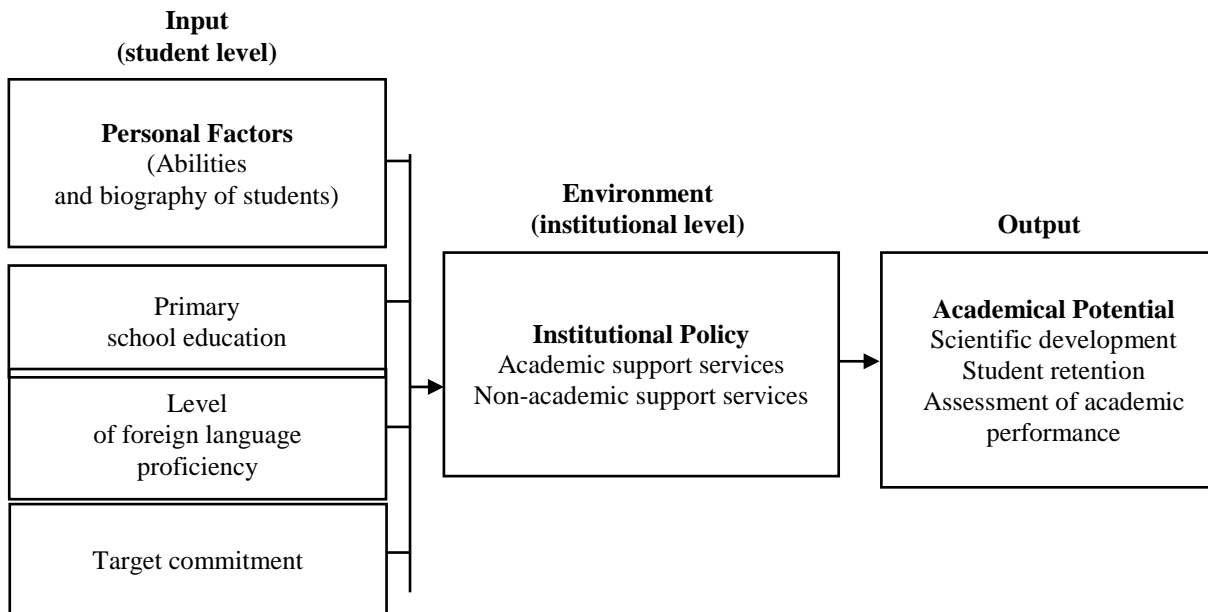


Fig. 5. The structure of Austin's engagement model (Wilmer, 2009)

It is considered that the description of these mechanisms has a direct impact on the landscape of higher education. Conclusions about the students' engagement have been made based on the observations on young people, their entrances, exits and environment, as a result, it turned out that young people, who participated in women's or men's associations, fraternities, and any kind of social activity, are more likely to stay in an educational organization and continue their education. In addition to student resilience, interest in developing talents and cultivating excellence in education has contributed to the development of student engagement theory (see Figure 6).

The point is that, in spite of student retention is certainly an important parameter of the effectiveness of a particular approach in education, the most important is the formation of a student and his talents, what is more complex than just the development of cognitive abilities. Therefore, student engagement theory recognizes the usefulness of developing talents and skills through a variety of different activities and programs.

Such interpretation of engagement is more holistic, since it takes into account both what the student brings to the educational environment and what the educational institution provides. As already noted, the theory is based on three pillars: inputs, outputs and environment. In addition to these three elements, five main statements or postulates are considered as next:

- engagement refers to the amount of physical and psychological energy that a student devotes to the learning process;
- regardless of the object, engagement occurs on a continuum, what means, different students show different degrees of engagement in relation to different motives at different times;
- the volume of training and personal development of students associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student engagement in this program;
- the effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly connected to the ability of this policy or practice to increase student engagement (Berger, Millem, 1999).

Thus, the concept focuses directly on the behavior and motivation of students as a mean of evaluating the degree of learning and growth that occurs due to student engagement. Each of the above statements or postulates forms the result of the student's engagement. Guided by the highlighted serifs of youth involvement in the work of a youth association based on an educational

organization, it is possible to assess the potential of such a group, to identify strengths and weaknesses what is considered when joining. However, to do this, it is necessary to understand each of the zones of engagement:

- Release of psychosocial and physical energy;

After reviewing why students can join student organizations, it is important to determine how each student's perception of participation and engagement, as well as their willingness to release the necessary energy, influence whether they will participate in a student group or not. And although engagement is directly influenced by the attention paid to the organization and the belief in its importance, which leads to a more positive result, the question that is important to consider is whether the time and energy costs affect a student's decision to join a student organization?

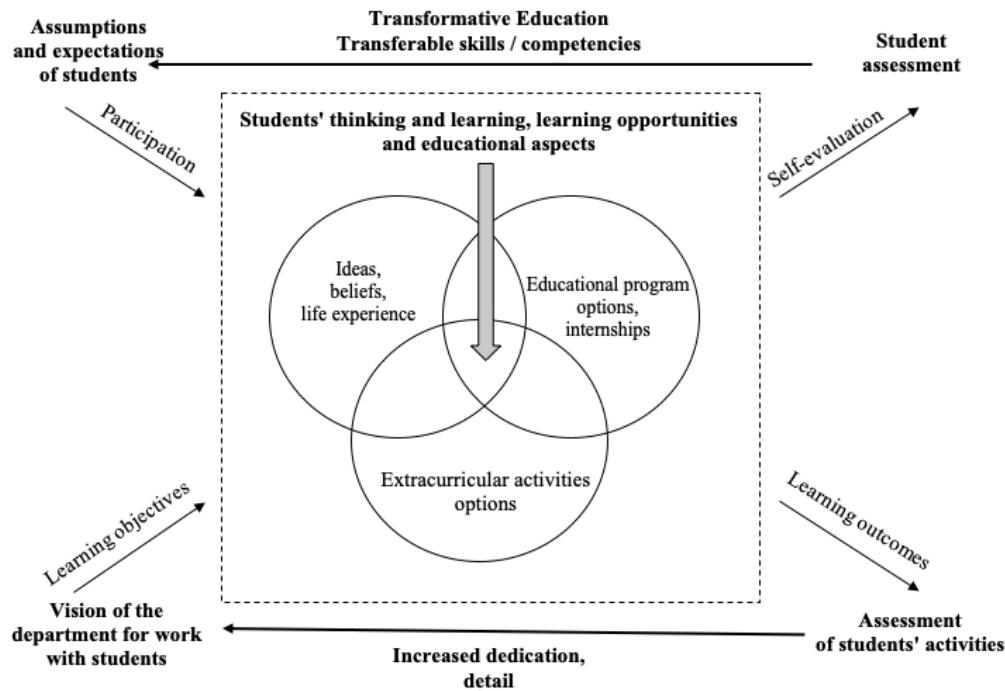


Fig. 6. Map of the educational system (Malekzade, 2020)

- Engagement is directly proportional;

The amount of time spent, as well as the quality and quantity of experience influence on student engagement. The issue for this area may be whether students have participated in student organizations before, and whether there is a correlation with participation that facilitates further engagement, especially if it was a positive experience. For example, there are direct connections between peers, which expands opportunities for engagement. At the same time, the strongest source of influence on cognitive and affective development is the student's peer group: the better the interaction with peers, the more effective the result.

The implications of this finding are very important for confirming the influence of student organizations on student development, as well as when considering why students join student organizations. In this regard, awareness, how these behaviors affect engagement, can help student professionals figure out why students join student associations initially.

- Consequences of institutional policies or practices;

When considering why students join student organizations, it is important to understand how institutional policies and practices, as a means of attracting to clubs and associations, support opportunities to increase student engagement. Moreover, if the policies or practices do not facilitate or poorly facilitate participation in student organizations, then a different question arises, if they should be reviewed to find ways to encourage more active student participation.

Of course, this approach to evaluation has its own limitations. Thus, the approach relies on the individual experience of students too much, without taking into account the organizational

perspective. That is, an educational organization in this case is only needed in the sense that the effectiveness of any educational practice is directly connected to the ability of this policy or practice to ensure engagement. However, the unit of analysis and the focus of attention is the individual student, what calls into question the effectiveness of the evaluation practice as a whole.

Finally, there may be criticism about how engagement is measured. For example, one group of researchers can study membership in clubs and organizations and estimate the number of people involved, while another group can study the degree of engagement by the quantity of hours of participation. As a result, there are many different approaches to the study of engagement, which potentially leads to inconsistencies.

However, the exploration of that, why students of an educational institution decide to participate in extracurricular activities, in particular, in student and youth associations, is the key to developing an effective program for each, purely unique student platform. It is important for teachers and employees of educational organizations to understand all the components associated with the development of student activity. Analysis of the relationship between a student, student organizations and student engagement can improve the educational environment and provide opportunities for student growth and development.

5. Conclusion

In that way student youth associations are one of the key factors in developing a sense of belonging to an educational institution, thereby providing support for the efforts of an educational organization to retain students. If a student does not feel engaged in the study material, then a high probability appears that he will not continue his education and will not graduate. The evolution of student organizations along with the movement of student unions offered students a space to cultivate a sense of belonging to the student community, as well as provided opportunities for engagement and learning. Before the occurrence of student organizations, this connection between learning and engagement was not obvious.

The emergence of youth associations based on educational organizations has defined the role of youth student groups as the basis of the concept of intellectual growth focused on a holistic approach to student development. However, the research of the evolution of student organizations made it possible to hear and evaluate the role of the voice of young people and youth representatives.

Moreover, the development of student unions has sanctioned the necessary emphasis on the possibility of extracurricular activities, what contributes to improving the quality of education. Youth associations based on educational organizations show that to grow and to develop the ability of critical thinking students must be able to establish links between their own ambitions in learning and the current problems of society.

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