Theoretical-methodological approaches to the problem of social maturity development in university undergraduates

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Abstract: The current social economical context where economy evolves rapidly and informatization of modern society is at full speed poses a very important task to the system of higher education: to educate and prepare not only competent professionals but also members of society who are able to efficiently interact with various social actors at different levels, in varying conditions and spheres, capable of adequately responding to fast-changing environments, making independent and responsible decisions, taking responsibility in uncertain situations, and harmoniously balancing personal and social needs. The research purpose is to develop and justify the theoretical-methodological approaches to the phenomenon of social maturity formation among university students. The research methods included various types of analysis (content analysis, conceptual-terminological analysis, theoretical analysis, causal-functional analysis), discursive reflection, pedagogical extrapolation, and synthesis of accumulated experience. Our findings are as follows: we described and theoretically justified the continual-synergetic, socio-interactive and socio-educational approaches to the problem of shaping social maturity in university students; we have determined their structure, revealed their roles and functions fulfilled by their structural components. The practical significance of the above approaches is that, first, they reflect the way social maturity shapes itself in university undergraduates, as a pedagogical phenomenon; second, they provide its new interpretation by specifying the notion "social maturity of university undergraduates"; third, they enable to clarify its structure and reveal the specific procedures pertaining to it; fourth, they enable to develop the methodology of social maturity shaping. **Keywords:** theoretical-methodological approaches, regularities, principles, rules, development of social maturity in university undergraduates.

1. INTRODUCTION

The publications dealing with the problem of a personality social maturity are rather few in the contemporary Russian pedagogical literature. An analytic review demonstrates that some authors, such as L.A. Kalashnikova (2013), E.G. Kameneva (2004), A.R. Lopatin (2014), and others, do address the issues of social maturity shaping, whereas others like Ya.A. Bezrodnaya (2006), M.V. Lukicheva (2007), A.M. Milman (2008), N.A. Fedorova (2004), et al. view this phenomenon only as one among other pedagogical problems. At the same time, in the works we have reviewed, social maturity of a personality is mainly studied in a general scientific way, within such approaches as: the integrative (Nevzorova, 2010), interdisciplinary (Temirov, 1994), holistic (Rudneva, 2011), anthropological (Milman, 2008), etc., and in a general pedagogical way: personality-centred approach – A.R. Lopatin (2014), M.V. Lukicheva (2007), A.L. Malchukova (2005), I.A. Rudneva (2011); activity approach – I.A. Rudneva (2011), N.V. Shramko (2009); personality/activity approach - E.G. Kameneva (2004), A.M. Milman (2008), A.V. Pozdnyakov (2002); subjective/activity approach - A.R. Lopatin (2014); individual approach - N.A. Fedorova (2004); differentiated approach - N.S. Temirov (1994); individual-creative approach - E.G. Kameneva (2004), etc.. One of the advantages of this research tendency is reliance on time-proved statements and concepts

which improves the research plausibility. What follows from reliance on general approaches is the choice of general pedagogical regularities, principles and rules, which results in insufficiently clear capture of the peculiarities of this phenomenon. Besides, these approaches do not always facilitate novelty and originality of research. At the same time, the approaches, regularities and principles may not be clearly correlated.

Foreign researchers deal mostly with psychological-pedagogical and social-economic aspects of social maturity. The authors concerned with psychological-pedagogical aspects focus on revealing relationship between social maturity and other factors such as: academic progress – Arul Lawrence (2011), Jyotsana K. Shah (2012) and Sujit Bordhan (2015); healthy lifestyle – Ievers-Landis, Greenley, Burant and Borawski (2006); students' personalities – Dinesh Kumar (2013); welfare – Hasnain and Adlakha (2012). The scholars more interested in the social-economic side of the issue study the interdependence between social maturity and various social-economic phenomena, in particular, integrated managerial competence – Porvaznik and Misun (2014), repeat offending – Steinberg, Cauffman, and Monahan (2015), antisocial behaviour trajectories – Monahan, Steinberg, Cauffman, and Mulvey (2009). The works we have reviewed and analyzed cover different age groups; however, most often the object of study is teenagers (Swaroopa Rani & Sowjanya, 2016) or young adults (Vipinder & Maninder, 2013). Virtually all researches are of applied character and aim at studying the measurement and evaluation of the social maturity completion, or at revealing correlation between the social maturity and the above listed phenomena. From this follows the use of qualimetric approach, for instance, in the works by H.G. Gough (1960; 1966), Swaroopa Rani and Sowjanya (2016), and attempts at defining social maturity's structural components in order to reveal its criteria and key indicators – Greenberger, Josselson, Knerr, C., and Knerr, B. (1974). It has to be admitted that these studies have a limitation in that they are mostly concerned with diagnosis and description and are not supposed to provide any theoretical-methodological approaches to the pedagogical interpretation of social maturity and its structure, or to build up on this basis and suggest methods and techniques for its development in students.

Summing up this section of our study, we can say that literature analysis clearly shows the need for developing new pedagogical theoretical-methodological approaches to shaping the social maturity of university students that would better explicate the specific features of this phenomenon.

2. METHODOLOGY

By the term "theoretical-methodological approach to social maturity development in university students" we will refer here to "a conceptual methodological focus on the study of university students' social maturity, a position from which the object of research is to be viewed, a notion or principle guiding the whole research strategy" (Yakovlev and Yakovleva, 2006, p. 42).

Proceeding from the data accumulated by the philosophy and methodology of science, the structure of theoretical-methodological approaches to social maturity development in university undergraduates comprises the following three components: (1) design of the method, (2) structure of the object, (3) plan of practical implementation.

The content of the method design is cognitive and social attitudes that guide the processes of explication, description and reasoning when studying the social maturity development in university students. The cognitive attitudes consist of description languages (natural, artificial, mathematical) and methods (techniques, means) of proving, explanation and description of a phenomenon or a process in question. The social attitudes register the

specific historical and social determinacy of how social maturity shapes itself in students. Thus, the method design has the following key forms: explanation, description, proving, justification, construction and organisation of a system of knowledge about social maturity development. At that, the method design performs a syntagmatic function, namely, it determines both the ways of proving and explaining and the description languages (Yakovlev and Yakovleva, 2006, pp. 41–42).

The object of study is structured in correlation with the method design. The former is the ontology, description and representation of the object of study wherein the key dynamic characteristics of social maturity in university students are registered. These characteristics are introduced by a series of representations: (1) of the components making up the structure of social maturity in undergraduates, (2) of their typology, (3) of regularities that underlie their interaction, (4) of spatial-temporal structure of social maturity formation in university undergraduates. The structure of the object performs a paradigmatic function, the gist of which is to represent the image of the research object reflecting the specific way in which the social maturity of university students is formed (Yakovlev and Yakovleva, 2006, pp. 41–42).

The plan or scheme of practical implementation dictates how the structure of the object and design of the method are embodied in practice, what values a scholar has in view when setting goals and objectives for his/her research, which, in turn, determines the choice of methods and their implementation, along with the expected ultimate outcomes. The practical implementation plan includes values, targets, rules and prescriptions, as well as the accepted and prohibited ways and forms of using the paradigm. It performs pragmatic function, i.e. it works as a research program that guides setting the empirical and theoretical problems and determines how solution methods are searched for and chosen (Yakovlev and Yakovleva, 2006, pp. 41–42).

It should be noted that the three structural components of theoretical-methodological approaches, implemented within the concept of social maturity development in university undergraduates, are interrelated and interdependent. At that, the functionality of theoretical-methodological approaches is not limited to the above listed functions. We hold that the theoretical-methodological approach allows revealing the pedagogically important features of social maturity in university undergraduates, by reducing the areas of study and focusing solely on essential things. Thus, a restraining function is implemented (Yakovlev and Yakovleva, 2006, p. 42).

Each structural component of the theoretical-methodological approach is correspondent to its own peculiar method used to study the individual aspects of social maturity in university students and to ensure the desired results.

The structure of a study object is linked to conceptual-terminology analysis, in order to construe and formulate the definition of social maturity in university students; another connection is to structural analysis, which leads to determining its structural and content characteristics. The key procedures for conceptual-terminology analysis are: comparison, abstraction, analogy, induction, deduction, classification; those for structural analysis are comparison, synthesis, interpretation, analogy, idealisation, and modelling.

The method design implies using causal-functional analysis to reveal regularities of the process of social maturity development in students. The causal-functional analysis relies on such basic techniques as induction, synthesis, abstraction, idealisation, simulation, analogy, classification, description, interpretation, and prognosis.

The scheme of practical implementation draws on such procedures as pedagogical experiment, which allows defining pedagogical conditions of social maturity shaping in the undergraduates and developing a method for their use. Pedagogical experiment relies on the

following main procedures: analysis, generalisation, comparison, description, measurement, interpretation, and planning (Yakovlev and Yakovleva, 2006, pp. 24–27).

The aforesaid methods, ways and procedures take the lead when studying individual aspects of social maturity in university undergraduates; for a better performance, however, we suggest adding other procedures, in particular, those of content analysis, discourse reflection, pedagogical extrapolation, pedagogical simulation, theoretical-methodological analysis, diversification planning (Yakovlev and Yakovleva, 2006, pp. 24–27).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our findings are as follows: we described and theoretically justified the continual-synergetic, socio-interactive and socio-educational approaches to the shaping of social maturity in university undergraduates; we defined their structure, revealed their roles and functions fulfilled by their three structural components: method design, structure of the object, plan of practical implementation; we have also revealed the components' functions: syntagmatic, paradigmatic and pragmatic ones.

Our study has established regularities governing the process of social maturity development in university undergraduates – the ones that can explicate a relation between social maturity and the method of controlling its formation, between social interaction peculiarities and social learning.

Also we specified the principles of social maturity development that ensue from the above regularities: resonance interaction, self-socialisation, interactive polyphony, social interaction. The rules to be followed in order to implement these principles have also been formulated.

Besides, we considered how the above mentioned approaches and procedures may be applied to the phenomenological, procedural and methodological aspects of social maturity in university undergraduates, which has led to the following results:

First, we suggested an original interpretation of such notions as: "social maturity in university undergraduates" and "development of social maturity in university undergraduates", based on the "social learning" and "social interaction" categories. According to our suggestion, social maturity of a university undergraduate is a dynamic integrative personal trait allowing a student to engage in efficient social interaction based of a dialog with all subjects of the society on different levels and under various conditions, and to independently control the uninterrupted process of socialisation as part of learning from one's social environment (social learning). At that, development of social maturity in a university undergraduate is defined as a specially organised educational process at a university aimed at shaping the personality traits necessary for his/her successful functioning in a modern society and for a transition to self-socialisation by way of social interaction through social learning, that manifests itself in quantitative (acquiring new personality traits, reaching new types of social maturity), qualitative (transition to a new level of personality formation), and functional (transition to self-control of socialisation) transformations of a personality.

Second, we specified the structure of social maturity in university undergraduates by means of including it into the set of social learning techniques. Third, we determined the specific features of social maturity shaping in undergraduates as a process: incompleteness, non-linearity, stochasticity, continuity. Fourth, we defined the methodology of shaping social maturity in undergraduates that includes: teaching the social learning techniques (that entails independent, self-organized learning from social environment), engaging students in an active social interaction, reliance on resonance interaction, formation of reflexive skills, giving the

undergraduates a free choice in the education process and training them to assume responsibilities associated with it.

In our view, the continual-synergetic, socio-interactive and socio-educational approaches help to reveal both the specific characteristics of social maturity in university undergraduates as a pedagogical phenomenon, and the pedagogical aspects of its development as a process, since they can clarify the following: (1) phenomenological aspects that characterise social maturity of university undergraduates as a pedagogical phenomenon, including: (a) its hermeneutics, i.e. our understanding and construal of social maturity of university undergraduates; (b) its structure in alliance with its architectonics, the distinction of certain structural components and establishing the systemic relations between them; (2) its procedural aspects that describe the emergence and shaping of social maturity in university undergraduates, namely: (a) dynamic aspects (vector, rate, milestones) reflecting the changes in social maturity under the influence of relevant factors; (b) temporal aspects (duration, continuity) that demonstrate how the shaping of social maturity proceeds in time; (c) its spatiality (localisation, environment) showing the location and the characteristics of the environment where social maturity of undergraduates takes place; (3) methodological (technological) aspects which define the pedagogical conditions, methods and organisational forms of shaping social maturity in university undergraduates.

On the basis of the chosen theoretical-methodological approaches, the regularities are formulated that, in their turn, determine our study principles. Based on the general scientific conception of a regularity or law, we interpret the law of social maturity shaping in university students as the objectively existing, recurring and essential correlation between phenomena or stages of this process. The methodological function of this law lies in the fact that it is scientific knowledge in the most concise, concentrated form (Yakovlev and Yakovleva, 2006, p. 114). Depending on the nature of relations, the regularities of the social maturity development in university undergraduates can be classified as follows: (1) regularities of conditionality explicate the cause-and-effect relations between social maturity and its determining factors that are objectively existing, are necessary and have a direct impact on it; thus, these factors determine the possibility of implementing the educational process of social maturity development, along with its content and outcomes; (2) attributive regularities represent relations between inherent specific characteristics and properties of social maturity and enable to determine the features of the object of study; (3) performance regularities reflect the relations between the attained results and economic factors, i.e. reveal the conditions and circumstances of efficient work of the suggested pedagogical system (Yakovlev and Yakovleva, 2006, pp. 117–118).

We believe that the regularities perform both explanation and prognostic functions arising from their nature as objective and recurring correlation between phenomena. Explanation function implies establishing and describing various relations, in particular, the cause-and-effect relations taking place in the course of social maturity development. Prognostic function consists in determining the perspectives and scenarios of social maturity development, and in defining their probability.

The regularities determine the principles of social maturity formation, which, in their turn, characterise the ways of the regularities' implementation in accord with the set objectives. In our study when referring to a "principle" we mean initial requirements to how the process of social maturity is to be organised on the practical level, in accordance with the goal set and patterns revealed. The principles are intended to perform the regulative function in the course of social maturity developing in university undergraduates.

A literature review has revealed a list of requirements to such principles: (1) justifiability; (2) generalisation; (3) objectivity; (4) systemic qualities; (5) complementary character; (6) orientation of focus; (7) aspect character; (8) significance (Yakovlev and Yakovleva, 2006, pp. 118–120).

The above requirements allow, in accordance with the established regularities, to classify the principles of social maturity development in university undergraduates into "general" and "specific". The general principles are directly related to all revealed regularities and are universal. They are necessitated by the general methodological framework, stem from all regularities, reflect higher order laws, ensure the consistency and completeness of their system, and determine the most general rules of practice. In fact, these principles explicate the most universal methodological requirements to scientific research generally and to pedagogical research specifically. The specific principles are determined by the revealed regularities of social maturity development in university students. They have the following specific features: (1) a direct focus on attaining the planned goals of the specific research entailing characterisation of normative requirements when implementing the process under study; (2) determinacy by the general principles; (3) presence of all the qualities pertaining to the notion "principle" (Yakovlev and Yakovleva, 2006, pp. 119–121). These principles correlate to such notions as novelty and authors' viewpoint in respect of the phenomenon under examination.

In the hierarchy of pedagogical theory: "law - regularity – principle" we can discern another component that rounds off this logical sequence: "a rule". By the rules of social maturity development in university students we understand the guidelines that clarity individual aspects of application of this or that principle, the ones that are formulated as precise prescriptions or recommendations to a teacher as per what should be done in a typical pedagogical situation. Rules and principles are mutually dependent: rules follow from principles, while principles are implemented through rules. Let us now consider implementation of each of the approaches to the problem of social maturity development in university undergraduates.

The continual-synergetic approach is a methodological trend in research within which social maturity of university students is viewed as a complex, open, self-organising system whose evolution continues throughout a person's life (Soldatchenko, 2010). We ought to remember that a person is also a system of that sort. At that, by the notion "self-organising system" we refer to a complicated dynamic system that either improves or preserves its organisational pattern, in response to changes in internal or external conditions (Yakovlev and Yakovleva, 2006, p. 57). This approach allows reflecting the dialectic of social maturity development whose drivers are contradictions. The continual component is what explicates the continuous character of the process, while its synergetic component reveals its determinacy by internal and external factors, its interrelation with the environment, and the leading role of self-control and self-organisation in increasing its efficiency.

The dialectical contradictions of social maturity development as a process are reflected in its characteristic features that can be represented as mutually complementary binary oppositions: (1) incompleteness – finality; (2) multi-direction character – vectoral character; (3) stochastic character –predictability; (4) continuity – discreteness; (5) non-linearity – linearity; (6) chaotisation – organised character (orderliness).

From the standpoint of continual-synergetic approach, social maturity of a person germinates at birth and goes on uninterruptedly throughout his/her life provided that he/she has no critical inabilities, both physical and mental, and lives in a society. Thus, social

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maturity development in university students proceeds continually during their study period, it being a stage of the process.

At the same time, this development is non-linear, which manifests itself in a twofold manner. On the one hand, it is not a straightforward and simple advancement from lower levels of maturity to higher ones. On the other hand, it has points of bifurcation where a person is faced with a wide range of possible trajectories towards social maturity. Both postulates of the continual-synergetic theory explicate, to a greater degree, the procedural characteristics of social maturing of university students, associated with the process dynamics and its temporal structure.

Interpretation of social maturity of university students as a self-organising system enables to define the two mutually complementary regularities that determine its efficiency. The first regularity uncovers the relation between the method of controlling social maturity development and its efficiency; it can be formulated as follows: the efficiency of social maturity development in university undergraduates deteriorates if it is stringently controlled from the outside. In practice, this regularity is implemented through the principle of resonance interactions which demands that pedagogical management of social maturity shaping is carried out via weak resonance interactions influencing the choice of development trajectories at the moments when students are most susceptible to such influence. The principle of resonance interaction is implemented in practice through the following set of rules. First, a tutor does not give orders or demand that students do something, but engages them in the desired activity by way of asking for help or assistance. Second, instead of abstract calls for something, a tutor engages the students in real socially significant activities bringing tangible results that are easy to see and evaluate. Third, a tutor delegates, gradually but steadily, to students the increasing share of control powers and functions.

The second regularity complements the first one, by expanding and further broadening it; it is formulated as follows: the efficiency of social maturity development in university undergraduates improves if there is a transition from external control to self-control mechanisms. The principle of self-socialisation serves for its practical implementation. Socialization of a university undergraduate is viewed as a process of his/her joining the society, which implies learning social norms, roles, interaction patters, as well as self-directed control of the process, i.e. self-management; this process is carried out in the course of social interaction on the basis of learning from one's social environment. According to this principle, students should be given opportunities for independent socialisation, concurrently stimulating the mechanisms of self-socialisation for successful development of social maturity. The principle of self-socialisation entails that a set of rules are to be followed. The first rule requires that sessions of joint reflexive analysis are to be held to consider various trajectories of individual development and attainment of the goals set. The second rule is a supplement to the first one and implies that a tutor gives the students the right to independently make their reflexive choices, without exerting any pressure on them even if what the youth decide to do seems not the best option. The third rule supervenes from the second one and binds a student to be ready to take responsibility for his/her choices and decisions. In other words, the above rules are designed to invite and spur the undergraduates to make independent, conscious, responsible reflexive choices, which is the marker of a socially mature personality.

The socio-interactive approach is a methodological framework for studying social maturity development of university undergraduates. Within it, as A.L. Soldatchenko (2012) holds, social maturity development in students is closely linked to social interaction. According to the socio-interactive approach, social maturity development in the

undergraduates is linked to social interaction; at that, this process is determined by the specific historical ways and forms of social interaction. Socialisation is a process where social maturity of students is, at the same time, its result, a personality trait ensuring its efficiency, and its stage; it can also be viewed as interaction between a personality and a society. Mutual dependence of social interaction and social maturity has a reciprocal nature, since the level of social maturity in the undergraduates determines the way and efficiency of their social interaction. This approach is complemented by the above-mentioned continual-synergetic one, because a person is included into an interrupted social interaction throughout his/her life. At the same time, both social interaction and the society where it takes place are self-organising systems. Therefore, the socio-interactive approach explicates the hermeneutical and methodological aspects of social maturity of university students, outlining the trends in its definition and in the forms of pedagogical organisation of its development.

Relying on the understanding of social maturity of university undergraduates as the result of their social interaction, we can specify the regularity that characterises a link between social interaction features and the efficiency of social maturity development, which may be defined as follows: the efficiency of social maturity development in university students depends on the amount, forms and character of social interaction. This regularity determines the principle of interactive polyphony, in accordance with which the amount of such social interaction should be increased and its forms diversified. For successful practical implementation of this principle, we have to conform to a set of rules. The first one suggests that partaking in various forms of social interaction has to be voluntary; the tutor, however, must implicitly involve all students in the process of social interaction thus ensuring the large-scale participation. In accordance with the second rule, social interaction is to be as close as possible to real life settings, thus preparing students for their future activities in society. At that, it is more than essential to be tactful and provide necessary help and assistance, in order to avoid the youth getting the feeling of frustration. The third rule stipulates that evaluations must be participatory, whereby the positive, socially acceptable interactions are praised and the negative, improper ones are criticised.

The last theoretical-methodological approach used in the theory of social maturity development in university undergraduates is the socio-educational approach. Its peculiarity is that social maturity development is considered from the social learning standpoint.

Social learning here stands out as the essential characteristic of socio-educational approach. In this framework, the procedural and technological (methodological) aspects of "social learning" are accentuated: (1) as the process of conscious and purposeful learning by a student from his/her social environment; (2) as a learning technique used by students in their studies and a methodology of teaching this technique of social learning as part of educational process in a university.

Social learning (as a process of individual's learning from the social environment) is a socially determined, independent, self-governed educational, cognitive and practical activity of university undergraduates aimed at acquiring social (subjective and objective) experience with the goal of creating and structuring one's own individual experience; this is carried out in the course of interacting with different social actors.

Using the term social learning technique we refer it to a pedagogical system comprised of scientific, descriptive and procedural components; it is used by university students as an instrument of self-socialisation for purposefully learning the experience from one's social environment, structuring one's own system of social interaction on this basis, and becoming a fully-fledged member of this particular society. The fundamental method within this technique, according to A.L. Soldatchenko (2016), is social learning, which is a system of

tools used by students in the course of learning from various social subjects, ensuring attainment of the desired goal – efficient interaction based on a dialog with all the society subjects at different levels and in varying conditions.

In our opinion, social leaning is the centre around which all the basic conceptual notions are clustered: social maturity of university undergraduates, social interaction, socialisation, self-socialisation, self-socialisation mechanism and socio-cultural environment at universities. Let us now expand this statement in more detail. Social maturity of university undergraduates is simultaneously a stage of the process and a personality trait that ensures an efficient, unbroken flow of socialisation and is formed as its result in the course of social interaction through social learning, when a student masters new efficient methods and ways of social interaction. This said, self-socialisation serves as the advanced level of socialisation; a transition to it testifies that social maturity is already rather high. If a student has mastered the techniques of social learning, then he/she can master self-socialisation mechanisms by relying on the socialising potential of the university socio-cultural environment. Thus, for social maturity of university undergraduates, social learning is simultaneously its structural component as a social learning technique, and the method of its formation. Being part of the self-socialisation mechanism, social learning demonstrates a relationship to socialisation, integrates itself in the process of social interaction and is determined by it.

One of the apparent advantages of this approach is that it allows describing the formation of social maturity of university students and their socialisation in terms of pedagogy, namely by the notion "learning", and outlining the possible ways to its development – to teach students the techniques of social learning.

The use of socio-educational approach to the problem of social maturity development rests on the regularity that establishes a link between social maturity formation and social learning. According to this regularity, efficiency of students' social maturity development improves if a student consciously and purposefully learns from his/her social environment, i.e. when he/she employs the social learning technique. Practical implementation of this rule is guided by the principle of social learning that implies organization of teaching the social learning technique to students. The principle of social learning entails a number of rules through which its practical implementation takes place. The first rule says that a tutor must engage students in systematic alternative playing of the roles of a "learner", "teacher" and "self-teacher". The second rule implies that a tutor should regularly demonstrate to the students, using real-life examples, how by reliance on reflexive thinking and analysis we can learn from our social environment, and invite them to use the university socio-cultural environment for social learning. The third rule requires that a tutor attends with due care and perseverance to the task of developing in the students such skills of reflexive thinking, without which no productive learning from one's social environment is conceivable.

4. CONCLUSION

The considered methodological approaches enable to emphasize the key ideas concerning the development of social maturity in university undergraduates.

It is a phenomenon characterised by complementary binary oppositions reflecting the dialectic of the process: incompleteness and finality; non-linearity and vectoral character; stochasticity and predictability; continuity and discreteness.

Its development in university youth is implemented as the result of social interaction and determined by its amount, forms and nature.

A student independently chooses his/her personal trajectory of social maturity development, depending on his/her personal traits; he/she is non-linearly sensible to external

impacts including pedagogical ones, and thus the path of one's personal development of social maturity cannot be dictated from outside through a stringent external control.

If a student has mastered the social learning techniques, then he/she in the course of social interaction can master self-socialisation mechanisms and make a transition to self-control of socialisation, by implementing the socialising potential of the university socio-cultural environment.

The organised university socio-cultural environment, as part of a broader social environment, has socialising potential, which can be fully used by a student skilled in social learning, through social interaction.

The practical value of our study is that the use of socio-educational approach will contribute to a better efficiency of social maturity development in university students actualizing the internal personality mechanisms, in particular, self-socialisation. Among the social outcomes of the study we can mention a possibility for universities to both teach competent professionals in their respective domains and educate full-fledged members of modern society capable of its preservation and transformation, as well as partaking in efficient social interaction. Originality of the study is manifested in developing the new methodological approaches to the problem of social maturity of university students; this enables to suggest a new construal of the notion "social maturity of university students", and to outline vectors and areas for developing the methodology of its formation with reliance on social learning technique.

Certain limitations of our findings have to be pointed out. First, there is a limitation on the use of these theoretical-methodological approaches by the age group (college students) and implementation area (the pedagogical problem of social maturity development). Second, the diagnostic-evaluative aids are not completely elaborated, which is to a certain degree balanced by available research. Third, there is a need for a more detailed elaboration of the method for shaping social maturity in university undergraduates based on the theoretical-methodological provisions suggested herein.

As of now, we can envision the following perspective of further research in this area: (1) extensive further research: to study the possibility of applying this approach to other pedagogical phenomena; (2) intensive further research: to develop new approaches to the aspects of university undergraduates social maturity; (3) modernization: to improve the suggested approaches, their regularities and principles, to further specify their essential characteristics; (4) elaboration of a method for shaping social maturity in university students with consideration for all the suggested provisions.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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