The Organization of Student Self-Government at a College

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Abstract: *The role of student self-government in modern educational space is large enough since it makes it possible to extend the future graduates' training not only to professional activity, as authors note, but also to different life processes in the society. The modern college graduate should be mobile, creative and independent in managing his own life and processes related to the professional field. Student self-government comes to the fore in this issue. Its organization is the most important part of college's activities. A study carried out among the students of Nizhny Novgorod colleges is represented in the paper. Its findings showed the need for introducing changes to the current system of student self-government. The purpose of the paper is to build a model of student self-government organization, which could be used at a Russian college. The authors offered the development of methodological recommendations for organizing student self-government. The implementation of student self-government at a college should pass several stages: forming an initiative group, preparing and carrying out a sociological study to reveal self-government problems, developing a project, getting students acquainted with the project, collecting remarks and offers, finalizing the project, the order about the implementation of self-government at the college, elections to the student self-government council, organizing the public control over student self-government functioning. Moreover, the directions for the development of self-government are found out and their content is extended.*

Index Student self-government, graduates, college, students, student self-government model.

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of Russian education development sets a mission of raising a new generation, which could not only comply with the rules of a democratic state and society and live there as a full person but also create, support these conditions. [1] To implement this process a corresponding organization of social practice should be created to provide the stability of skills under formation. [2] In respect to upbringing, this means

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attracting the student youth to the participation in the process of educational institution management.

Difficulties associated with the implementation of this provision are related to the need for creating conditions, which can guarantee the positive result from the youth's participation in the process of educational institution management. [3] Forming an educational system, which includes the integral educational and training process, is the main thing in the realization of this goal. [16] The relevance of the setting of the problem of student self-government development at a college is explained by the specific nature of the student youth environment, which differs with distinct commitment in any endeavors and pro-active attitude, that's' why it needs special support in the form of creating conditions of student self-government as one of the most effective tools in the organization of this process. [4] The formation of positive motivation in students through involvement in the activity of student self-government bodies in educational and non-educational sociums is also an important Government task because the thirst for rearrangement, self-affirmation typical of this age (15-20 years) should be not spontaneous, not destroying, but creating one. [17]

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

O.A. Chirkov, G.A. Zhuravlev, A.I. Kiprianov, M.M. Morin, V.A. Kuzmin, V.V. Ukraintsev made the greatest contribution to solving the issue of the development of self-government in student collectives.

The works of I.S. Bolotin, Z.M. Grishchenko, A.V. Ponomarev, V.I. Dobrynin, T.I. Ktukhevich, D.G. Rotman, L.A. Soglaev, N.G. Bazhenova are also dedicated to the organization of student self-government.

The studentship is a period of personal and professional growth of a person. [12] During this time the student gains not only narrow professional-related skills but also is included in different types of activities allowing him to expand the world-view potential, prepare himself for intellectual and social creativity. [10] Self-government belongs to such activities. [13] In a broad sense, self-government is understood as the independence of some organized social community in managing their business, autonomous functioning of some system, making of decisions by this system on some internal issues, problems, the search and organization of the work of performers of these decisions. [5] Student self-government is usually understood as a universal educational mechanism, which is based not on compulsion and external pressure but free will expression and inner realization of the need for purposeful work on

self-improvement by students.

O.A. Chirkov represents the idea of student self-government as an attempt to unite the interests of the person in development and self-fulfillment with the interests of the state in forming a conscious civil society. A.V. Ponomarev sees student self-government as a process of forming key personal qualities of the future competitive specialist. [6] M.V. Artyukhov and T.N. Mironov suggest two functions of student self-government: providing the effectiveness of the work of all collectives of an educational institution with regard to students' interests; gaining the skills of management activity by students, which will allow them to better prepare for managing their own and socio-productive activities. [15] N.G. Bazhenova considers the student self-government's goal the activation and enrichment of the students' inner axiological potential and its relation to the graduates' general cultural competences (Nikolai 2017b).

Student self-government is a form of government implying the active participation of students in preparing, making and implementing management decisions related to the life activity of an educational establishment. [7] Based on studied definitions, we can say that student self-government is the independence of studentship in taking the initiative, making decisions and their self-organization for the benefit of their own collective or a student organization (Nikolai 2017a).

Recently a number of disputes on the organization of the work of student self-government bodies have arisen among scientists. [14] The college management can make conclusions on the usefulness of student self-organization by means of periodic interviews among students. [18]

For today, the organization of student self-organization at a college and support of social initiatives are an integral condition for self-determination and more complete realization of the students' potential.

III. METHODOLOGY

In 2017, we interviewed students of several colleges of Nizhny Novgorod in the electronic form regarding the question "How well is student self-government developed at your college in your opinion?". The results of the interview showed that the majority of students (65%) believe that self-government requires numerous modifications. In 2018, we represented a model of student self-government organization at a college and also developed several extended directions, which should be implemented in the colleges' activity. The same year students were interviewed again to find out the students' satisfaction with the offered directions. "Would you like to have these adjustments at your college?". 75% of respondents would want to implement these directions at their college. Following this, it can be concluded that the developed model is possible to use and that the offered directions in the college's activity are necessary.

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Insufficient structuredness of student self-government is one of the most commonly occurring problems when organizing it at a college. [8] Moreover, self-government at a college often doesn't address many different directions, which influence establishing of students as highly qualified professionals in

the best way, allow their diversification. That's why we put an emphasis on this aspect in this paper.

In 2017, we electronically interviewed the students of several colleges of Nizhny Novgorod on the question "How well is student self-government developed at your college in your opinion?". The results of the interview are represented in Fig. 1.
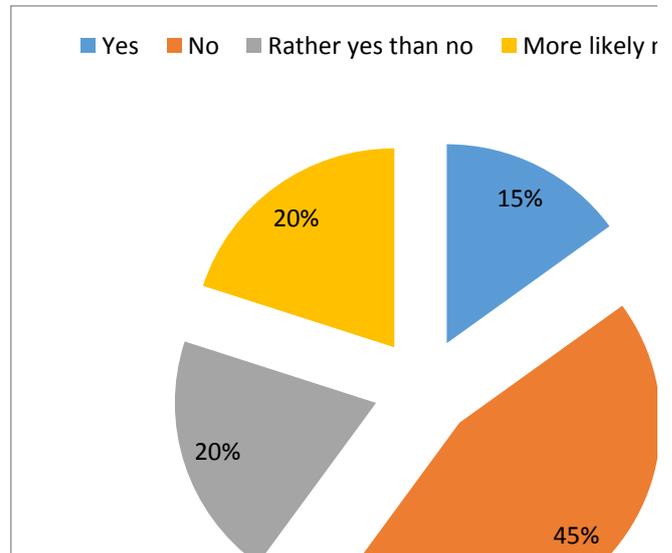

Figure 1 The results of the interview of the students of Nizhny Novgorod colleges (2017)

As the results show, the students believe that self-government at their colleges is developed not at a sufficient level. 45% of the students are completely dissatisfied with self-government organization and 20% lean toward the answer that self-government is developed rather poorly than well. In other words, it can be said that 65% of the respondents want to introduce changes in the development of student self-government.

Therefore, in 2018, we developed a model of student self-government organization at a college. It's based on the principles of level-triggered hierarchical pattern, modularity, humanization, interdisciplinarity, and self-determination. It's aimed to strengthen the role of college's student self-government bodies in educating students; to organize and monitor the students' scientific and educational activities; to activate the work of student self-government; to create unions of interest; to generate offers for improving the educational process' quality.

The model's goal is to increase the level of student self-government organization at a college. [11] In doing so, it's necessary to comply with the principles of equality, voluntariness, consistency, electivity.

We distinguished questioning, poll, interview, expert assessment and self-assessment among the methods. [20]

We offered to divide the student collectives of 1-2 courses and 3-4. There are two starostats for them. In our opinion, having separated junior and senior courses, we increased the level of governability. The load is distributed among 2 divisions. A starostat is a council of educational groups' presidents. Group presidents are chosen by the group at the beginning of the

academic year. An educational group' president together with a classroom teacher maintains control of academic progress and attendance of lessons by the educational group; fills in the report card and the notebook of absences from classes; visits educational groups' presidents' meetings and takes part in enactment of drafts placed for consideration; gives notice to group's students on the work of the group's starostat; [9] forms a regulatory body consisting of the students of this group responsible for performance of the work in a certain area.

Besides the chairman and his deputy, we distinguished several models of committees and introduced the office of the press secretary in the model. The press secretary gathers necessary information for the organization of the work of the Council, publication of the work results, informing of all members of the Council, and also carries out protocoling of Council's meetings. The committees of the Council of student self-government are formed from the students chosen by groups by certain directions of activities – the group's core. The committees' meetings take place one time in two weeks (no less frequently).

The career-guidance committee creates and organizes the work of interest clubs, creates banks of data about students, organizations of the city and the region, conducts career-guidance discussions, conversations, games, organizes meetings with people of different professions.

The intellectual committee organizes the support for underachieving students, organizes patronage over them and consultations on different subjects, organizes additional classes by the efforts of other students, settles issues related to assessment and re-assessment of separate students.

The social and law committee organizes cooperation with state employment services, psychological family aid centers, specialists of crisis centers, organizes consultations with different specialists (lawyers, doctors, psychologists), settles conflicts and disputable situations between the teacher and students.

The sociocultural committee organizes themed nights, various events of a cultural nature for students and teachers, organizes theatre/show trips, organizes the work of creative interest groups, develops and runs voluntary campaigns.

The sports and health committee carries out the task for running sports events, organizes the students' sport leisure activities, holds competitions, monitors the compliance with college's by-laws, organizes and runs recreation activities; also its tasks include the organization of participation in review competitions, extra-mural and part-time competitions between educational institutions; development of sports tourism; participation in the work for prevention of asocial phenomena at the college and beyond; organization of school student duty.

The information committee brings information about the college's life and events to students' and teachers' notice, carries out sociological studies, polls, administrates the student self-government's council's site and groups on social media; develops and releases promotional and information materials of events run at the college; carries out development, coordination and release of audio-, video-visual products; forms the band of different media resources (software programs, interactive study materials, video, and audio text-books); provides different events with multimedia means.

The college should create for its students such psychological conditions in which the student can hold an active position and express himself as a subject of educational activity in full. As a result of implementing the offered model, we increase the level of student self-government at a college.

Among recommendations, we distinguished several stages thanks to which the introduction of student self-government to the college's activity will be more effective.

Forming an initiative group. The initiative project group is one of the forms of interaction of teachers and/or other specialists of an institution. A member of the project group is formed from among employees and teachers taking an interest in the development of student self-government in the institution, able to provide scientific-methodic, information-analytical and organizational area of the work of the pedagogical collective for the development of student self-government.

Preparing and carrying out a sociological study to reveal self-government problems.

Developing a draft provision on public student self-government.

Getting student collectives acquainted with the draft provision.

Collecting students' offers and wishes concerning self-government, analyzing findings. [19]

Finalizing the project. [21]

Making a decision on full or partial student self-government.

The college director's order on the introduction of student self-government. [22]

Elections to the student self-government council. A preliminary list of candidates to self-government bodies in a group is made. At the beginning of the academic year in the first homeroom students are acquainted with the regulatory documents of the education establishment, rules of conduct, self-government bodies. Then a game "Tell about yourself" is offered when every student tells about himself in a very short time. As a result, everybody gets to know each other. After that students are offered to fill in a questionnaire with different questions and especially this one, "What task you'd want to accomplish in the group"?

Organizing public control over student self-government system functioning. [23]

Among the tasks of student self-government, there are: creating conditions for comprehensive implementation of the students' potential focused on profession establishing of the person; forming the system of highly effective mechanisms for revealing intellectual, creative and spiritual student's potential.

New, extended activity directions, which, in our opinion, are necessary to introduce into the life of colleges' student self-government are given in Table 1.

Table 1 The directions of the socially important activities of student self-government system

Activity direction	Its content
Forming educational institution's traditions	Organization and celebration of traditional holidays, such as September 1, Students' Day, the date of college foundation; Organization of creative competitive and sports programs; Development of symbolics of non-governmental organizations and student self-government
Civil patriotic upbringing	Organization of different campaigns aimed to strengthen friendship between different nationalities; Organization of the work of rehabilitation centers for students, combatants
Organization of support of the social initiative of student youth	Holding competitions of social projects; Development of comprehensive goal-oriented programs for involving students in solving problems of state youth policy; Creating public funds and attraction of sponsors who can realize student social projects; Organization of festivals and presentations of youth's social projects; Organizing and holding research and practice conferences and symposiums for sharing of experience
Development of student youth's artistic creativity	Organizing and holding creative workshops; Organization of nights off; Organization of standup and other entertaining creative competitions between groups, organization of theme-based holidays, creative nights and campaigns dedicated to the national folklore, the dates of the Russian state
Supporting research activities	Holding scientific conferences, symposiums; Assistance in publishing students' scientific papers; Assistance in writing students' scientific
Assistance in solving youth social problems	Establishing additional study grants; Organizing sanatory recreation for students at the expense of social insurance and other sources of non-budgetary financing and public student funds
Forming and teaching the student core group	Detecting student interested in community service; Carrying out sociological studies among youth; Organizing the work of the school of leaders; Working with the recruitment pool of the student core group

These types of activities allow making conditions more diverse.

In 2018, we interviewed students of several colleges of Nizhny Novgorod again, "Would you like to have these adjustments at your college?". The results are given in Fig. 2.
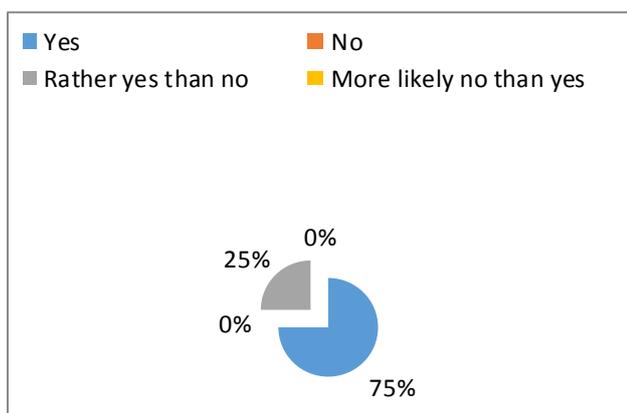

Figure 2 The results of the interview of the students of Nizhny Novgorod colleges (2018)

75% of the respondents would like to have these adjustments at their college. 25% gave the answer "probably yes than no", thus showing the need for transformations.

The implemented model of student self-government organization and offered directions of self-government activity at a college are in-demand and can be used in real activities of colleges. This will allow extending the activity of student self-government and increase the quality of the students' training.

I. CONCLUSION

We've analyzed the essence of student self-government at a college. It was found that it helps to extend the students' training not only for professional activity but also to life in general. The interview among the students of Nizhny Novgorod colleges showed the underdevelopment of self-government organization, that's why the model we offer is a good tool for the sound organization of student self-government. Besides, the results of the reinterview indicate that students want the directions we offer to be introduced to the organization of self-government at their college. They extend the activities of students, attract more and more new people to student self-government, thus increasing the level of their preparedness and, as a consequence, competitiveness of future graduates on the labor market

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