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A.A. Brichagina, Cand. tech. Sciences, Associate Professor,

A. A. Muhammad, student,

Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education "Irkutsk State Agrarian University named after A.A. Yezhevsky", rkutsk

THE ISSUES OF ADAPTATION OF FOREIGN STUDENTS IN THE RUSSIAN UNIVERSITIES

Key words: foreign students, adaptation, educational environment, various culture, psychological adaptation.

Ключевые слова: иностранные студенты, адаптация, образовательная среда, различные культуры, психологическая адаптация.

Abstract. The article deals with the issues of adaptation of foreign students in the Irkutsk State Agrarian University. The degree and types of difficulties during the adaptation period may differ among students from different countries, various ethnic groups. We looked at the main difficulties that arise among students from Africa. Human adaptation has two aspects: physiological and psychological. The article presents some of the problems that foreign students face while studying in the University. There is a need to conduct a more thorough study of the analysis of the difficulties of adaptation of foreign students. These studies will contribute to the development of a system of measures to increase the competitiveness of Irkutsk State Agrarian University in the global market of educational services.

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются вопросы адаптации иностранных студентов в Иркутском государственном аграрном университете. Степень и виды возникающих в период адаптации трудностей могут различаться у студентов из разных стран и различных этнических групп. Рассмотрены основные трудности, которые возникают у студентов из Африки. Адаптация человека имеет два аспекта: физиологический и психологический. В статье представлены проблемы, с которыми сталкиваются иностранные студенты во время обучения в вузе. Существует необходимость проведения более тщательного изучения и анализа трудностей

адаптации иностранных студентов. Данные исследования будут способствовать разработке системы мер по повышению конкурентоспособности Иркутского ГАУ на мировом рынке образовательных услуг.

The education of foreign students at a university is one of the criteria for the effectiveness of its activities. Export of educational services is a source of development for universities. As the population in Russia is declining, the number of applicants is also decreasing, especially in the Siberian regions. The amount of students willing to further their education in Africa and Asia are more than the allocated space in their universities. Therefore, applicants from these countries can partially replace Russian applicants.

The organization of education for foreign citizens and stateless persons in Russian educational organizations is regulated by the article number 78 of Federal Law “On Education in the Russian Federation” [8].

Passport of the priority project “Development of the export potential of the Russian education system” for 2017-2025. It is planned to increase the share of non-resource exports of the Russian Federation. This can be done by increasing the attractiveness of Russian education on the international educational market. The number of foreign citizens studying full-time in Russian educational institutions of higher education should increase. The amount of extra-budgetary funds from the export of Russian education should increase too. The number of foreign students of online courses, including those in Russian, offered by Russian educational organizations should also increase. The planned results of the project [7]:

1. The Russian regulatory framework governing the admission, training and graduation of foreign citizens and stateless persons will be improved and developed. Russian regulatory framework, procedures for their entry, exit and stay on the territory of the Russian Federation, employment and internships during their studies on the territory of the Russian Federation will improve and develop.

2. A set of measures to increase the attractiveness of educational programs for training, retraining, and advanced training of foreign citizens in Russian educational organizations and research centers will be created.

3. A favorable environment for the stay of foreign citizens during their studies on the territory of the Russian Federation will be created.

4. The brand of Russian education will be promoted on the international educational market.

Thus, the project indicates that the living environment of foreign citizens in Russia and in an educational institution in particular greatly influences the increase in the attractiveness of Russian education on the international educational market.

The living conditions of foreign students affect the speed and degree of their adaptation to the educational institution. It's known that foreign citizens studying at Russian universities face a number of difficulties.

Adaptation in a broad sense is transformation to changing external and internal conditions. Human adaptation has two aspects: physiological and psychological [5].

It should be noted that the degree and types of difficulties during the adaptation period may differ among students from different countries and different ethnic groups. We will look at the main difficulties that arise for students from Africa studying at Irkutsk State Agrarian University.

The biological aspect is the adaptation of an organism (biological being) to stable and changing environmental conditions.

International students need to adapt physically for the following reasons [4]:

1. The climate in Siberia is harsh. Applicants from Africa do not know exactly how the weather conditions are in Irkutsk. Students arriving at the preparatory department of the university in September experience shock because they do not have the necessary warm clothing. And in the future, they also have a hard time withstanding cold winters.

2. There is a big difference in time zones between Irkutsk and the student's hometown, which requires a restructuring of the body.

3. There is no opportunity to eat familiar food, since local stores do not have products typical of their native countries.

4. Not all hostels provide good living conditions for students.

5. International students often have financial problems. They have to work hard to feed themselves. Because there is currently no possibility of receiving money from relatives.

Physiological adaptation is closely related to psychological adaptation. Psychological adaptation is the transformation of a person as an individual to existence in society in accordance with the requirements of this society and with one's own needs, motives and interests. The process of active adaptation of a person to the conditions of the social environment is called social adaptation [1, 3].

International students need to adapt socially for the following reasons [2, 6]:

1. The main problem of students is the lack of knowledge of the Russian language. Students do not speak Russian before entering university. Language deficiency affects social interaction and academic achievement in a negative way, thus makes adaptation more difficult. They have big language difficulties in learning because students don't have time to assimilate scientific information presented by the lecturers of university at a fast pace in a foreign language. They experience great difficulties at first in everyday life when visiting stores,

medical institutions, pharmacies, banks and other public places. Very few Russian citizens speak English.

2. Foreign students are not able to work legally. In most cases they can only work online as English teachers.

3. Lack of family and friends nearby. Students cannot visit relatives during the holidays since their hometowns are located very far from Irkutsk.

4. There are only a few people from Africa at the university so students have almost no opportunity to speak their native language or English. There are very few lecturers of university who speak English.

5. Young people don't know local traditions and rules of behavior in various institutions. Everyone is in a state of stress caused by "culture shock" after arriving in Russia and Irkutsk in particular.

6. Some of the local population are intolerant so students sometimes have to deal with these. But university students, as a rule, do not openly express nationalist views.

7. Young people from other countries do not have knowledge about the political and economic situation in the country, city where the university is located, ethnic groups living in local areas before arriving in the country.

The listed difficulties can cause not only psychological discomfort but also major psychological problems in young people.

The university environment and the help of teachers are the main factors in the successful sociocultural adaptation of foreign students to study at Russian universities. At the stage of admission of foreign students to the university, it is necessary to provide foreign students with courses in sociocultural training, with the participation of foreign senior students who can share with future students both difficulties, personal achievements and observations [6].

Thus, while studying in Russia, especially in the first years, an international student faces many problems in everyday life, undergoes adaptation to society, the specifics of Russian education. The policy of Irkutsk State Agrarian University is aimed at ensuring favorable socio-psychological adaptation of foreign students, with taking into account not only their culture, but also their individual and psychological personality characteristics, their value and fundamental orientations. The task of the university teachers is to find forms and methods of work that can make it easier for a foreign student to get used to a new environment. It would be great if University lecturers learn English to better interact with their foreign students and speed up the adaptation of foreign students to the university.

Irkutsk State Agrarian University has sufficient potential to develop the export of educational services from higher educational institutions, in particular to African countries. Of particular importance for the formation of an effective strategy for the export of educational services is the identification of

the main problems that foreign students face during the adaptation period. There is a need to conduct a more thorough study of the analysis of the difficulties of adaptation of foreign students. These studies will contribute to the development of a system of measures and to increase the competitiveness of Irkutsk State Agrarian University in the global market of educational services.

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