

## ASPECTS OF STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN THE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

<sup>1</sup>PhD Diachenko Olena,

<sup>2</sup>Linus Baka Joshua

*Ukraine, Sumy, Sumy National Agrarian University;*

<sup>1</sup>*Associate Professor of the Economics Department;*

<sup>2</sup>*3<sup>rd</sup> Year Student of Faculty of Economics and Management*

**Abstract.** *The main factors influencing the educational motivation of students in higher educational institutions are studied. The analysis of the factors revealed on the basis of questioning of students is carried out. The main groups of motives that characterize the students of the modern university are clarified, among which are motives educational and cognitive, professional, communicative, social, motives for avoiding punishment, creative and self-realization motives etc. Comparative characteristics of educational motivation of Ukrainian and foreign students are carried out. The analysis of the significance of these or other motives for foreign and Ukrainian students has been made. The characteristics of groups of students are offered, in accordance with their level of motivation.*

**Keywords.** *Motivation, the education system, the competitiveness of the university, professional motivation, adaptation of foreigners*

**Introduction.** The educational process in higher educational institutions is rapidly developing, responding to the needs and demands of the modern world. New educational tools and technologies are being created, methods and forms of education are improved, the range of educational content is expanding. The globalization of the market and relations leads to an increase in number of universities in Ukraine that host foreign students for study. More and more international groups are being created, including a foreign language speaking ones (English, German, French), which also becomes a stable trend in the educational system of not only specific higher education institutions that have had the practice of teaching foreign students (such as medical, foreign economic universities), but a number of others for whom these trends are quiet new.

As far as the participants in the educational process are both representatives of the education system and the students, the success of training and the demand for its result by the labour market largely depends on the motivation of students, on their needs and interests in this field, their the desire to obtain education, their psychological readiness and the ability to master the necessary knowledge. In the case of working with foreign students, the management of the educational establishment faces cultural, social and other features of the foreign students motivation. Studying and comparing the motivational spheres of all groups of students studying at a particular university is an integral part of the work on the adaptation of foreigners in the Ukrainian-speaking environment, maintaining their desire for education, promoting the maximum full implementation of all groups of students in their educational and cognitive and other types of motivation.

In connection with the foregoing, the study of the motivational sphere of university students in various aspects remains an urgent and necessary issue in the process of improving and reforming the modern educational system within individual higher educational institutions. The effectiveness of our educational system ensures its competitiveness both within the country and for potential entrants from abroad.

**Purpose of the research** is study the professional motivation of students. To achieve this goal, the following tasks are set in the work: research of modern aspects of this problem; studying motives that stimulate students, as well as inhibiting their professional and educational motivation; identify the criteria and indicators for the successful formation of professional student motivation; to conduct a comparative analysis of educational motivation of foreign and Ukrainian students in higher educational institutions; analyze the results of empirical research, based on results to make general conclusions.

Our research concerns both: problems of the general motivation of students and factors that can affect their academic performance, as well as questions of measuring and estimating the difference in motivation of different groups of students (Ukrainian and foreign). This allowed not only investigate the correspondence of the real educational environment to the needs, abilities and internal motivation of students, but also understand how this correspondence can be objective, by examining how the same environment makes it possible to realize the motivation in learning of different groups of students.

**Material and methods.** A range of methods was used during the research, theoretical analysis of psychological pedagogical and educational literature; empirical methods. A quantitative-descriptive design was utilized. Self-reporting questionnaire was the main method used for data gathering. In studying the students' professional motivation, there was used a methodology: "Studying the motives

of students' educational activity" (supplemented by V. Leontiev and N. Badmaeva). The statistical processing of primary empirical data was carried out using the standard EXCEL package. The study was attended by Ukrainian and foreign students from the Sumy National Agrarian University. Foreign students of the SNAU are represented mainly by African countries: Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Ghana, etc., as well as India, Turkey, and others.

**Research results. 1. Theoretical base of professional motivation.** The complexity and multidimensionality of motivation determine the plurality of approaches to understanding its essence, nature, structure, methods of study. What is meant as a source of activity and at the same time as a system of incentives for any activity, motivation is studied in many different aspects, which makes it interpreted differently by different authors in different ways. Researchers define it as one concrete motive, and as a single system of motives, and as a special sphere, which includes needs, motives, goals, interests in their complex interaction.

According to L. Bozhovych [1], educational motivation is induced by a hierarchy of motives, in which domains either internal motives related to the content of this activity, or external social motives related to the student's need to take a position in the system of social relations. According to A. Markova [8], the motivation for learning consists of a number of motives, therefore, the formation of motivation is not a simple increase in the positive or a strengthening of the negative attitude to learning, and the complication of the structure of the motivational sphere that stands behind it, the emergence of new, more mature, sometimes contradictory relations between them.

Numerous sources of literature review confirm that there are two main kinds of motivation: Intrinsic motivation and Extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the type of motivation that is animated by personal enjoyment, interest, or pleasure, engaging in an activity because it is enjoyable and satisfying to do. The other is extrinsic motivation, managed by reinforcement contingencies to achieve some instrumental result, such as earning a reward or avoiding a punishment. According to educators intrinsic motivation is more desirable and results in better learning outcomes than extrinsic motivation does [2].

In pedagogical literature there is no single classification of motives for choosing a profession. Various authors put forward many kinds of motivations, of which we are chosen as those that most correspond to the present reality, the following: awareness of the prospects of the chosen profession; scientific and cognitive motives; the desire to benefit; the influence of relatives and acquaintances; reference to the example; material motives; prestigious motives, etc.

Other review of existing literature works in relation to this topic revealed the following analysis.

- To enhance Motivation, commitment is seen in the literature to be very important in achieving high results in learning. It reflects how motivation is seen as a prerequisite and a necessary element for engaging students in learning.
- Engaging students in learning is not only an end in itself, but it is also a means to achieve higher academic results [3].
- Motivation intends to decrease absenteeism in schools, workplaces and others. It is one of the greatest achievements of teachers, supervisors, and leaders because this leads to higher academic achievement throughout life [10].
- If teachers want to achieve high results in their work, they should first increase the student's engagement in the classroom [6].
- The last but not least, they should listen to what the students want to say and maintain an excellent communication with them [7],[9],[10].

The motivational sphere of the individual is determined by the activity. In order for activity to become a component of development and self-development, it is important not only to deeply understand the nature of its content, but also constantly improve the motivational side of the individual. A deep knowledge and understanding of the motivational sphere can ensure success, direct the activity of the student's personality in the right direction of its development.

The ways and factors affecting a student's motivation to study arise from several reasons. Thus, this research was conducted to determine the ways and factors that affect undergraduate and postgraduate students of Sumy National Agrarian University motivation to study and views from selected lecturers in motivating students which may consequently help in the improvement of the students and teachers alike. This study may benefit the students by allowing them to understand better the factors that can affect their academic performance, student's motivation to study. They may be able to improve their academic performance with the findings that are established by this study. With this study's insights, the parents may be able to understand and help their children regarding their school matters and give them support. For the teachers, this study may help them to recognize problems encountered by the students that may pose an effect in their performance. They may find alternative actions on how to handle their students. For the school administrators, they may be able to promote thinking skills assessment in their school, letting their

teachers understand the influences of their student's preferred learning styles that will promote adequate learning opportunities and effective instructions.

**2. The empirical study of factors affecting the motivation of university students.** Within the framework of empirical study of the factors influencing the motivation of university students, a number of surveys were conducted, with the following results.

Table 1. Ways and factors that affects student's motivation to study – a case study of Sumy national agrarian university, Sumy – Ukraine

Ways and Factors that affects Student's Motivation to Study	Percentage	Descriptive Equivalent
<b>Personal condition</b>		
1. Feeling sleepy in class	76.6 %	SA
2. Feeling hungry in class	68.1 %	SA
3. Difficulty in seeing	54.4 %	SD
4. Difficulty in hearing	60.4 %	SD
5. Difficulty in breathing	92.8 %	SD
6. Difficulty in understanding	60.0 %	A
Average percentage	<b>68.7 %</b>	
<b>Study habits</b>		
1. I study only when there is a quiz	91.5 %	SA
2. I feel tired, bored and sleepy	30.6 %	SD
3. I am lazy to study	47.7 %	SD
4. I am not disturbed when studying	80.4 %	SA
5. I prefer listening to radio, watching TV, etc	90.2 %	N
6. I have no time to study at home	73.6 %	SA
7. I study only when I like	77.4 %	SD
8. I don't have a comfortable place to study	67.7 %	D
9. I copy the assignment of friends	89.4 %	SD
Average Percentage	<b>72.1</b>	
<b>Home – related aspect</b>		
1. I live far from school	91.1 %	SD
2. I live near the school	85.5 %	SA
3. I don't live with my friend	77.4 %	SA
4. Both of my parent are working	34.9 %	A
5. I do too much households	80.4 %	SD
6. I have many brothers and sisters	87.2 %	SD
Average Percentage	<b>76.1 %</b>	
<b>School – related aspect</b>		
1. The school time schedule is tight	63.8 %	SA
2. There are too many school programs	80.9 %	SD
3. There are available library references	89.8 %	SA
4. Classroom is comfortable enough	80.9 %	SA
5. There is fast internet access in the library	79.1 %	SA
6. There is enough space in the library	76.2 %	SA
7. Location of classroom	90.2 %	SD
Average Percentage	<b>80.1 %</b>	
<b>Teacher - related aspect</b>		
1. Teachers gives audio/visual aids	85.1 %	SA
2. Teacher provides varied activities	79.6 %	A
3. Teacher uses lecture method only	63.8 %	D
4. Teacher gives too much memory work	55.3 %	N
5. Teacher always scold student	98.7 %	SD
6. Teacher is frequent out/absent from class	97.4 %	SD
7. Teacher is always late	97.9 %	SD
8. Teacher has mastery of the subject	94.5 %	SA
9. Teacher discuss many topic in a short period of time	49.4 %	D
Average Percentage	<b>80.2 %</b>	

**Descriptive Equivalent**

SA-Strongly Agree-Very High Impact

A-Agree-High Impact

N-Neutral-Low Impact

D-Disagree-Very Low Impact

SD-Strongly Disagree-No Impact

Table 1 shows the sets of five ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study with their indicators. The indicators for each category correspond to their respective percentages. For the category of study habit, the indicator with the percentage value of 91.5 % was 'I study only when there is a quiz' with very high impact. Thus, have the highest influence on the student's motivation to study. Indicators 'I am not disturbed when studying' and 'I have no time to study at home' recorded a percentage of 80.4 % and 73.6 % respectively which also had very high impact on the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study.

It was followed that the indicators 'I study only when I like', 'I am lazy to study' and 'I feel tired, bored and sleepy' with percentage value of 77.4 %, 47.7 % and 30.6 % respectively had no impact on the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study. Again, the indicator 'I don't have a comfortable place to study' recorded a percentage of 67.7 % which had very low impact on the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study.

The last indicator 'I prefer listening to radio, watching TV, etc'. It recorded a percentage value of 90.2 % of not agreeing or disagreeing, thus being neutral. This means the indicator has very low impact on the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study.

Among the school-related factors, most indicators fell in the range of very high impact. In table 1, the indicator with the percentage value of 89.9 % was 'There are available library references' with very high impact. Thus, have the highest influence on the student's motivation to study. On the other hand, the indicator with the percentage value of 90.2 % was 'Location of classroom' with no impact. Thus, have the lowest influence on the student's motivation to study.

In figure 4, the indicators 'Classroom is comfortable enough' recorded a percentage of 80.9 % which also had very high impact on the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study. It was followed that the indicators 'There is fast internet access in the library' and 'There is enough space in the library' with percentage value of 79.1 % and 76.2 % respectively also had high impact on the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study. Again, the indicator 'There are too many school programs' recorded a percentage of 80.9 % which had no impact on the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study.

In table 1, for the category of teacher-related factors, the indicator with the percentage value of 94.5 % was 'Teacher has mastery of the subject' with very high impact. Thus, have the highest influence on the student's motivation to study. On the other hand, the indicator with the percentage value of 98.7 % was 'Teacher always scold a student' with no impact. Thus, have the lowest influence on the student's motivation to study. The indicator 'Teacher gives audio/visual aids' recorded a percentage of 85.1 % which also had very high impact on the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study.

Again, the indicator 'Teacher provides varied activities' recorded a percentage of 79.6 % which had high impact on the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study. The indicator 'Teacher gives too much memory work' recorded a percentage value of 63.8 % showing their neutrality with low impact on the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study. It was followed that the indicators 'Teachers uses lecture method only' and 'Teacher discuss many topics in a short period of time' impact on the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study. The last but not least are the indicators 'Teacher is always late' and 'Teacher is frequent absent from class'. With their percentage value of 97,9 % and 97,4 % respectively, they have no impact on the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study.

During the round table discussion there were discussed the ways and factors that affect student's motivation to study. The views from the students and lecturers were outlined as follows: interesting lessons and subjects, social environment in your academic group, psychological needs of the students or depression, methods of studying and teaching, zeal, passion and self-interests in the education system, relationship among students and lecturers, language barrier, lack of resource materials were the most impactful ways and factors that affects student motivation to study.

On the other hand, factors that motivate students to study are: competition among students, having school and career counseling or guidance, student's grants and scholarships, acknowledgement of grades. These were highly rated as having influence on the ways and factors that affects student's motivation to study.

It was realized that students who are motivated to study have good academic performance. Thus, have good marks, participates in school programs, contribute in and out of lectures. Therefore, there is a relationship between student's motivation to study and their academic performance in Sumy National Agrarian University, Sumy – Ukraine.

**3. Comparative analysis of motives of foreign and Ukrainian students.** The question of the progress of students of the international class has slightly different shades, rather than the academic success of the ordinary class. Here, too, is the issue of adaptation of foreign students, the possibility of other factors influence on their motivation, the interaction of students within an international group,



and so on. There is no doubt that the adaptation of a foreign student is a complex, dynamic, multilevel and multilateral process of redevelopment of the needs-motivational sphere, a set of existing skills and habits in accordance with new conditions for them.

Important mechanisms in the context of socio-cultural adaptation are stereotyping, identification, empathy, reflection and attraction. Certainly, a conscious person consciously chooses the most effective ways of social adaptation, however, the correct organization of this process, taking into account the optimizing factors, can make this path shorter. In connection with the fact that in the real pedagogical process, where the teacher uses methodological methods developed by pedagogical psychology, and these methods are insufficient to maintain the motivation for the training of foreign students, in our opinion, it is expedient to find a solution to this problem in methods that are carried out outside the educational process and associated with the personal growth of students, with the systematization of their motivational sphere, the hierarchy of the value system, the subjectivation of educational activities.

When analyzing the motivational settings of the students who study at a higher educational institution, it is important to take into account the structure of the motivational sphere, as well as to identify the dominant motives that will reveal the real motivating aspects that answer the question why a person came to study at the university, which goals he pursues, what a specialist he will become in the future.

Thus, we used the methodology developed on the basis of the questionnaire A. Rean and V. Yakunin [5] to precisely systematize the motivational sphere of foreign students and identify the most influential motives of studying and compare them with similar indicators of Ukrainian students. A. Rean, V. Yakunin, studying the features of educational and professional motivation, distinguish in its structure a number of main motives: communicative, motives of avoidance, motives of prestige, professional motives of creative activity, educational-cognitive, social. The study was found the following results.

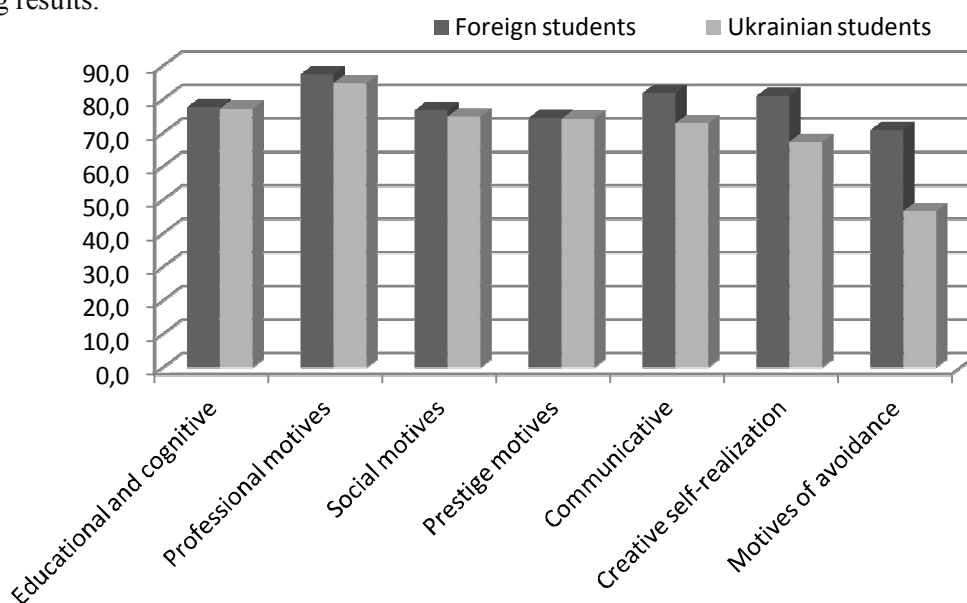


Fig. 1. Comparative analysis of motives of foreign and Ukrainian students of all years of study

It can be concluded that foreign students of SNAU have a higher degree of professional motivation in learning - the majority of students (87.5 % of respondents) showed a high level of professional motivation. There is a high level of communicative motivation, social motives, and motives for creative self-realization (more than half of students have a high level of these motivations). It is worth noting that they have a sufficiently high level of avoidance motives. 42 % of students have a high rate of this motivation, almost 53 % - the average level. These indicators are explained by the personal qualities of this group of students - it is important for them to work in a team, they are friendly and have many friends both within their group and among Ukrainian-speaking students, they easily come to contact, respect community traditions, caused by their culture, maintain ties with representatives of their people, their religions here, in Ukraine. This simultaneously affects both the high level of communicative motivation and the high level of avoidance motives - it is important for them what is saying about them by parents, friends, classmates.

As noted earlier, for two groups of students, the high significance of professional motives is inherent. Most students like their chosen professions, they want to become specialists in their chosen field and believe that their knowledge will be useful in their professional activities. Next, we can

observe some differences in the motivational field of the studied groups. So, communication, social and motives of creative self-actualization are important both for foreign students and for Ukrainians, but for foreign students the significance of these motives are far higher than for others. Teaching and motivating prestige for half of students are significant, for half - has an average degree of significance, and these figures are approximately the same for both studying groups.

The analysis of this survey in terms of courses shows how the dynamics of the motivational sphere of foreigners and Ukrainians over the years are different.

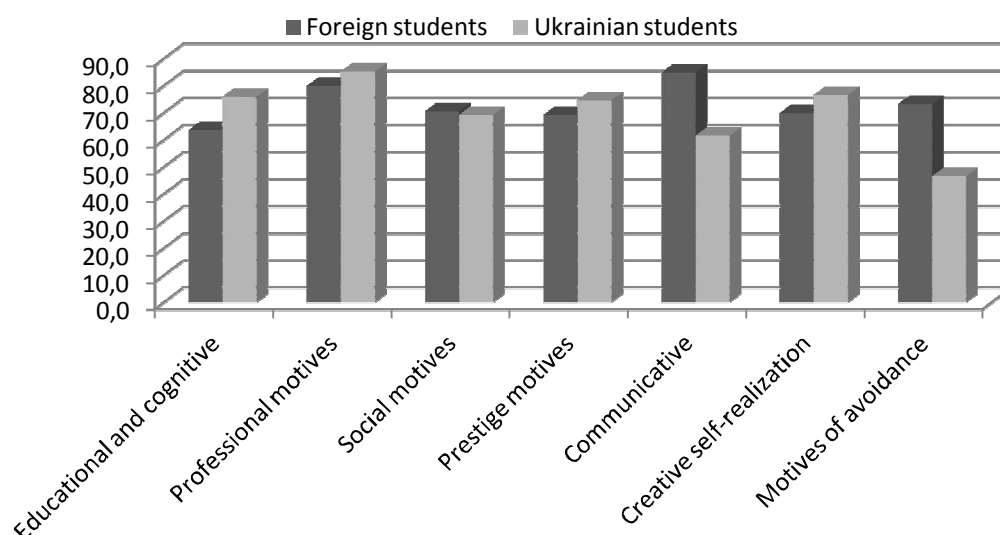


Fig. 2. Comparative analysis of motives of foreign and Ukrainian students of 1 year of study

At the first course for foreigners the motives of communication take the first place, while for Ukrainians the professional orientation of motivations is inherent. This is easily explained by the fact that the first years for foreign students are still adaptive, it is important for them to maintain.

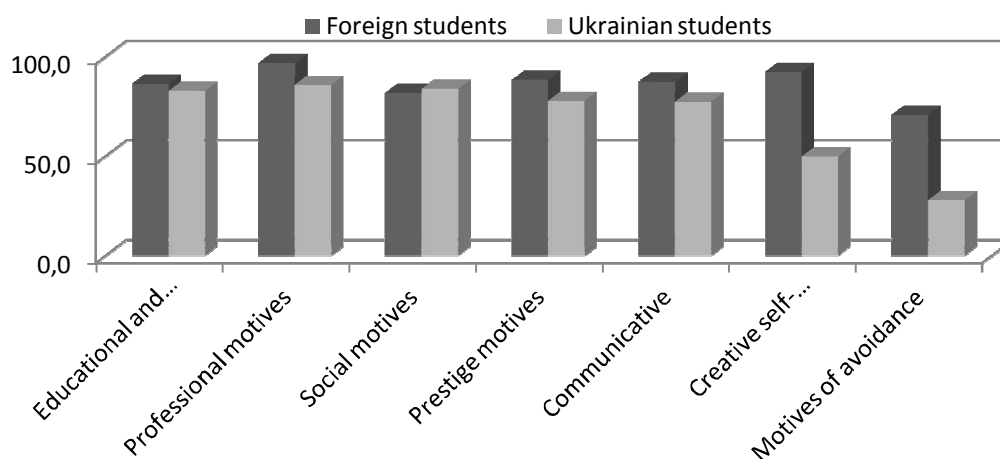


Fig. 3. Comparative analysis of motives of foreign and Ukrainian students of last year of study

Unity with their friends, learning they perceive as a way to become established in a team, knowledge gives them confidence. Although, as well as for Ukrainians of this age, foreigners have a high level of professional motivation, and a high motivation point indicates a meaningful choice of specialty.

By the last course, the situation is changing on some positions. So, for foreign students the most important motive in getting education is professional (97 %) and motive for self-realization (92.5 %). These indicators are higher than the same for Ukrainian students and this deserves additional research. Probably, Ukrainian students are no longer able to see the opportunities of satisfying their internal needs through a chosen profession.

The prestige of their chosen profession is significant enough for foreign students (88.5 %), which is also higher than that for the Ukrainian ones and is probably due to the fact that in general the higher education in the native countries of the students has greater importance and weight.

The conducted research allows us distinguish the following two groups of students: with high level of educational motivation and medium or low level of motivation.

1 group of students - with a high level of educational motivation (47 % of foreign students and about 35 % of Ukrainian students) - for these students is characteristic: the focus on educational activities, the need for creative self-realization, self-education. They tend to carefully plan their lives by setting specific goals. The high need to preserve their own personality, the desire to preserve the uniqueness, originality of their own personality, their views and beliefs, their lifestyle, the desire to be as less as possible to be influenced by mass tendencies. They seek to achieve tangible and concrete results in any kind of activity, or more precisely in educational activities.

2 groups of students - with a moderate or low level of educational motivation. For this group, the professional sphere does not yet have the meaning that they have for hobbies. Students rarely think about their future, professional life is obviously something unappealing to them and unknown to them. They are much more comfortable with carefree and more familiar student life, in which learning competes with their favorite occupations. Future plans do not have real support in the present and are not backed up by personal responsibility for their implementation. This is due, in our opinion, to the fact that students are still in a stage of self-determination.

**Conclusions.** Formation of educational motivation for foreign students differs from that for their Ukrainian groupmates and takes place in a new socio-cultural and psychological situation for them, characterized by another language environment; other mentality, cultural and political environment; other interpersonal environment and communication norms; other traditions of learning. A survey of students both foreigners and Ukrainians, allowed us to formulate the following conclusions about the development and dynamics of their motivational sphere. In general, the motivation of foreign students is slightly higher than Ukrainian ones. High importance for the first ones is played by the motives of professional, creative self-realization, communicative, educational – cognitive motives. It is known that the more optimum is motivational complex (the balance of motives), the more active students are motivated by the content of vocational training, the desire to achieve certain positive results in it.

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