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Media Center as a Resource for the Development of General Competencies of College Students

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Abstract

Until recently, the role of general competencies of students of professional educational organizations (PEO) was underestimated. The prospects for technological modernization, the informatization of society and digital transformation make new demands on future employees from employers. In this regard, this article is aimed at revealing the capabilities of the media center in the development of students' general competencies. The leading method of studying this problem was the method of sociological survey, conducted among 2,321 SSE students. The article proposes a definition of the main activity of the "media center" in the understanding of his students and revealed the attitude of the respondents to the creation of a media center as a public association of students. Authors when organizing a sociological study and writing this article were forced to use the already established Russian-language concept of "media center" because it has a familiar and well-established meaning, used today in the higher education system. At the same time, the authors had in mind the concept of "media education center", in the Russian-language meaning used as the "center of media education".

The article is carried out within the framework of the topic of the State task RANEPА № 11.2 "Analysis of additional education of youth in the context of state youth policy" for 2022 r. The work was carried out jointly with the Institute of Secondary Vocational Education named after K. Ushinsky Moscow City Pedagogical University in 2022 and was based on the quantitative methods of sociological research.

Keywords: information society, media and information literacy (MIL), media education, media center, critical thinking, youth policy, secondary vocational education, digital transformation.

1. Introduction

Changes taking place in our country in recent years, could not but affect public life, professional and social values, as well as the system of vocational education. The State emphasizes the need for compliance of professional training of graduates PEO development employee competencies as the needs of the economy, society, so is separate personality. Development of general competencies of college graduates to a greater extent due to the dynamic nature of changes in working conditions, when the requirements for effective communication skills come to the fore, creativity, teamwork, the ability to learn and creative approach the solution of tasks.

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General competencies, along with professional, are the most important educational outcomes identified in federal state standards. They include a wide range of cognitive, social and personal skills, being a source of personal development and self-realization as a necessary condition for social inclusion and active citizenship. The issues of the formation of common competencies among students, taking into account modern requirements and the development of technologies, are becoming increasingly important and require coordination of efforts of all interested parties.

One of the possible ways to form and develop common competencies is the use of information and communication technologies aimed at creating effective interaction of subjects of the educational space. It is possible to unite students, teachers and all participants in the educational process and the process of education in the mode of constant dialogue by creating a media center on the basis of an educational organization, which will become a single media and information platform for uniting active and creative youth of students, for example, in different branches of one educational organization or various educational organizations united by a common profile of training with the participation of a number of external factors – specialized institutions of civil society and business structures, mass media, libraries in their smart model and a number of others. The media center can become an effective infrastructural element – a resource for the successful socialization of young people, the development of their information, legal and general culture, the culture of information security of the individual. The involvement of young people in the work of the media center may be due to their active participation in the process of digitalization, the use of modern media technologies, activity in social networks and in the Russian-speaking segment of cyberspace as a whole. It will be especially important to create an own media center for village youth, for whom there are certain restrictions to a number of resources that are available to urban youth.

When preparing and conducting a sociological study, as well as when writing this article, the authors were forced to use the already established Russian-language concept of "media center" because it has at least some familiar and well-established definition in the understanding of the education system, which is more suitable for the higher education system and is in circulation by the journalistic community and student journalists, as well as bloggers. At the same time, the authors had in mind the concept of "media education center" in the definition – "media education center" or "center of media education". At the same time, the latter seems more appropriate when put into circulation in the system of general and secondary vocational education, as sufficiently tested, put into circulation and already used (Demidov 2014, 2016).

In the process of designing the tools for conducting a sociological study, the authors tested the concepts of "media center" and "center media education" on a small focus group of fifteen students and three teachers at survey.

The authors proceed from the fact that the most widely used concept is "media center", as a kind of often informal association in an organization, the purpose of which is to inform the target audience through accessible types of media (radio, television, newspaper, Internet) it does not fully cover the subject and goals of media education. At the same time, the media center itself often acts precisely within the university, at best, as a corporate media, a kind of educational entity applicable to the practice of education of student journalists, and also performs the function of informing the audience about the activities of the university, forms corporate culture, manages it and serves as a feedback channel. At the same time, the existing model of the media center practically does not affect the formation of critical thinking, the culture of personal information security, the development of understanding of the essence of film education and media pedagogy, which is especially necessary today for pedagogical colleges, colleges of culture, and other structures, involved in the training of personnel in the system of secondary vocational and additional vocational education for work in the digital transformation and information security industry.

The authors of the sociological study and this article came to an understanding of the need to use the concept of "media center" at the first stage, with the possibility of replacing it with the concept of "media education center" in the future.

Returning to the topic of the introduction to the study of the problem under consideration, it seems necessary to note the fact that a significant role in the development of the ideology and policy of media pedagogy, as the main part of media education, as well as the problem of the need for a critical increase in media resources as high-quality content used in the educational process was emphasized and promoted by the staff of the Center for Economics of Continuing Education of the RANEPa, acting in tandem with profile structures – first of all, with the Association of Film

Education and Media Pedagogy of the Russian Federation, universities and centers for the development of media education, scientific publications and business structures. Media education issues are discussed annually within the framework of the international conference "Secondary Vocational Education: Practice and Management". In February 2022, the Center for the Economics of Continuing Education, together with the Association of Film Education and Media Pedagogy of the Russian Federation and other partner structures, organized and conducted an expert seminar "Media education in the system of educational coordinates". Experts in the field of education, culture, communication, youth policy represented the majority of federal districts of the Russian Federation. The participants of the seminar were representatives of various structures – from kindergarten to the federal executive authority, from the school film club to the Yalta Film Studio, specialized commercial organizations and civil society institutions, scientific and analytical centers, universities and colleges, mass media and digital transformation structures representing almost all sectors of the real economy of the country. The main speakers at the above-mentioned event spoke representatives of specialized organizations in Moscow, the Republic of Crimea and the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), operating in the field of media education, film education and media pedagogy from the preschool segment of animation development to RSUC and the A.P. Chekhov Taganrog Institute, acting as leading methodological centers for the development of media education in Russia (Media ..., 2022).

Quite often the issues of interdepartmental and intersectoral interaction of specialized structures were considered, aimed primarily at creating conditions for the effective implementation of the instructions of the President of the Russian Federation (item 5 of the List of Instructions dated 23.01.2021 No. PR-77) in terms of the development of film education at school, as well as the implementation of a number of provisions of the legislation on education, other relevant strategic, conceptual and regulatory legal acts. According to leading domestic and foreign experts, it is the means and methods of media education that can become serious tools today in the development of media and information literacy, the formation of critical thinking and a culture of information security of the individual, primarily children and youth, in the conditions of ongoing information wars and developing digital transformation.

Honorary President of the Association of Film Education and Media Pedagogy of the Russian Federation, Editor-in-chief of the journal "Media Education" (WoS), UNESCO expert A.V. Fedorov identified the first and main problem – the lack of a regulatory and legal definition of media education in the legislation of Russia (Fedorov, 2017). Professor Fedorov also noted a high level of readiness of the professional community of the country at the municipal and regional levels of a significant number of subjects of the Federation to fully launch systematic work on the development of media education (Fedorov, 2007).

E.V. Kutsenko, Deputy Director of the Crimean Film Media Center and Yalta Film Studio, film teacher, member of the Board of the Association of Film Education and Media Pedagogy of Russia, speaking about the film Media center, outlined its main activities and functional load, including: the creation of training programs for the formation of audiovisual culture and the basics of media literacy for teachers; the use of electronic resources for information and communication support of the process of introducing media education and dissemination of the best teaching experience; organization of various forms of non-formal (additional) education together with representatives of culture and arts; involvement in cooperation of editorial offices of mass media – television, radio, editorial offices of printed publications, Internet resources; organization of teachers and students to participate in media competitions.

The head of the Scientific and Educational Center "Media Education and Media Competence" (SEC), acting in the structure of the A.P. Chekhov Taganrog Institute, I.V. Chelysheva, outlined the main tasks of the SEC in the field of media at the present stage of development of society and digital technologies, which are increasingly actively entering the field of vocational education during the pandemic (Fedorov, 2020).

The development of universities and colleges as drivers of socio-economic, cultural and educational development of territories has become a new vector of activity of the RANEPa Center and its partners in the field under consideration. On March 4, Cent organized and held an expert seminar on the topic "University as a driver of territory development", which was attended by leading Russian experts working at the intersection of urbanism, smart city, development of science and education centers from Veliky Novgorod, Moscow, Rostov-on-Don, St. Petersburg, Taganrog, Tomsk, Tyumen, Yakutsk and other cities and settlements, from megacities to district

and rural centers representing the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia, regional ministries of Education, Science and Youth Policy, structures of the education system, science, culture, communications, digital transformation, logistics, specialized institutions of civil society and business community (University ..., 2022).

The seminar presented a monograph of the researcher of the SESE RANEPА S.E. Novikova "Universities in the socio-cultural space of the city: sociological aspects". Speaking at the seminar, the director of the SEC "Humanitarian Urban Studies" of Yaroslav the Wise NovSU S.S. Avanesov noted the relevance of the study, identifying a number of problems of the conceptual apparatus, the need to solve the tasks of coordinating work in the field under consideration with the authorities and focused on the question of the place and role of universities and colleges as drivers of the development of the territory of small, medium-sized cities and settlements of Russia. Chairman of the Board of the Foundation "The Moscow Center of Urban Studies "City", the author of a number of works in such areas as sociology of management, urban studies, analysis of social networks, including the collection "University City – Architecture of Meanings" published in 2021, A.V. Raskhodchikov also noted the relevance of the topics submitted by the RANEPА Central Research Center for discussion by the expert community.

Developing the subject under consideration, the Taganrog Institute of Management and Economics (TIME) and the RANEPА Central Research Institute held the annual XXIII National Scientific Conference with international participation "Modernization of Russian Society and Education: new economic guidelines, Management strategies, law enforcement and training issues" in Taganrog on 15-16 April 2022, within the framework of which organized and conducted "Universities as an anchor structure of cultural clustering and socio-economic development of the territory" (National..., 2022). One of the results of the event was a statement on the need to coordinate efforts primarily of colleges operating on the territory of villages and small towns as cluster centers of socio-economic development of the territory. At the same time, the media centers of colleges and technical schools should become the main infrastructure element of the clusters being created. The Faculty of SSE TIME in cooperation with the RANEPА Central Research Center and partners initiated the development of this model.

Thus, it can be concluded that the media center of an educational organization can and should be aimed at improving the quality of life in the information space today. As a result of the work of the media center, the extracurricular activities of students will be intensified, including project, research activities, and the development of volunteerism. Students and teachers, jointly creating videos and other media for the educational organization's website, will become active participants in the media space, which will enhance the image of the college.

2. Materials and methods

The issues of the development of general competencies of college students in the conditions of the creation and functioning of the media center became the object of this study conducted by the authors in March 2022. It included one wave of a questionnaire survey among students of 1-4 courses of the K.D. Ushinsky SSE of the Moscow State Pedagogical University, the number of respondents was 2,321 people. The survey was conducted in such a way that approximately the same number of interviewed students participated in the study in order to obtain objective information. Thus, the share of first-year students who participated in the survey was 23.7 %, the share of second-year students was 29.8 %, the third – 28 % and the fourth – 18.5 %. The study was aimed at determining the willingness of young people to participate in the creation of college media content and considering opportunities to work in a media center for the development of general competencies. The research was based on the methods of classification, generalization, interdisciplinary literature review, the method of sociological survey, the method of expert assessments.

3. Discussion

One of the directions of the implementation of youth policy is the involvement of young people in the work of mass communication media (youth media, however, the coverage of students of the vocational education system by this type of activity remains insignificant, although positive dynamics is observed. So, in 2017, the share of young people employed in the work of youth media was only 2 % of the total number of young people, in 2020 this figure has already amounted to 4.1 %, i.e. it has increased by 2 times, but in fact it is quite small).

On the one hand, the maximum possible conditions for self-realization are being created for young people, including digital resources of educational organizations. On the other hand, there is a low activity of young people in the manifestation of their creativity. Figure 1 clearly shows that only 4.9 % of students are ready to participate in the work of the college media center, 15.8 % are inclined to work in student media, but 29.6 % of young people consider it unacceptable for themselves to participate in the public extracurricular life of an educational organization.

And here there is a clear contradiction between the opportunities provided for self-realization and the low level of their demand and media activity of young people, which many authors pay attention to (Bazalgette, 1992; Buckingham, 2013; 2015; Camarero, Varona, 2016; Demidov, 2021; Fedorov, 2007; Gálik, 2020; Gálik, Oprala, 2021; Kačínová, 2019; Kosheleva, 2011; Lomteva, Vorobyeva; Ostrivnaya, 2018; Vrabec, Bôtošová, 2020; Zotto, 2016). This can be explained by several reasons. Firstly, young people may be poorly informed about the benefits of modern media for creative self-development. Secondly, a large academic load leaves little time for additional classes, and some students can engage in additional general educational programs, this was stated by 33.4 % of students.

Thus, at the beginning of the media center's activity, teachers and activists from among students should take the leading role. In this case, the media center will become an experimental platform for the introduction and promotion of promising digital technologies and multiplatform media content (Palfrey, Gasser, 2008). At the stage of sustainable functioning of the media center, conditions will be created to motivate students interested in their own development. The formation of the media educational space of the college should be based on certain approaches that should not be limited only to technical and technological support (Bondarenko, 2009; Grigorov, 2013; Rogaleva, 2015). It is necessary for students to be able to engage in educational, research, and project activities in the digital media space of an educational organization integrated into the external media environment (Buchatsky et al., 2013). It will be much more effective if the media center plays a certain role in the process of education and upbringing, where students will be able to develop general competencies in the field of media literacy, media competence, media culture, media security, etc.

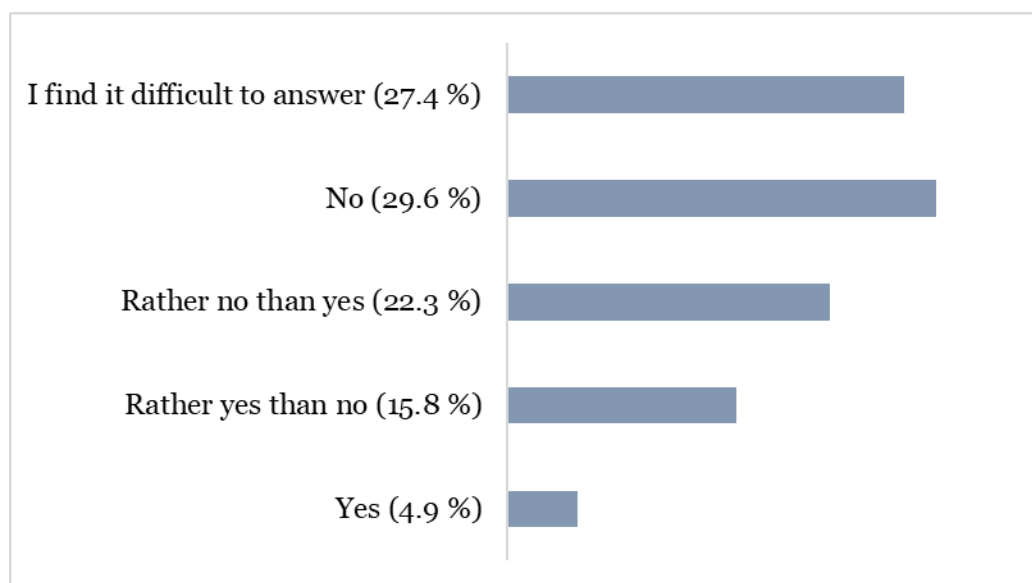


Fig. 1. Survey results “Would you like to participate in the media center at your college?”

General competencies include a fairly wide range of cognitive, social and personal skills that are constantly used by young people both in professional activities and in everyday personal life. Their development is a necessary condition for the social inclusion and active life position of young people. The general competencies approved in the federal state educational standards are of an activity nature. A.V. Khutorskoy was offered a "list of general crucial competencies: value-semantic; educational-cognitive; information; communicative; social and labor; personal self-improvement competencies" (Khutorskoy, 2002). Currently, the main direction of training is set by the "competence approach, which is based on the task not just to give knowledge within the

framework of academic subjects, but to allow the student to learn useful skills (useful competencies)" (Arkhipova, 2020).

With the development of digital technologies, we can say that one of the ways to form the general competencies of students of secondary vocational education has become the use of information and communication technologies implemented in an electronic information and educational environment. The Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" reveals the concept of an electronic information and educational environment, as including, in addition to electronic educational resources, telecommunications technologies. However, the problem remains – "electronic information and educational environments of educational organizations are a complex of separate, independently studied electronic educational and methodological complexes reflecting the content of individual disciplines, which limits the possibilities of professional training of students, including the formation of general competencies" (Prensky, 2001; Vinnik, 2018).

It should be noted that not so many works have been devoted to the development of general competencies of students of professional educational organizations in the pedagogical literature. Development issues of general and professional competencies were engaged in S.A. Bashkova (Bashkova, 2016), I.V. Turchina (Turchina, 2014), A.A. Yavorskaya (Yavorskaya, 2013). In their writings, they emphasized that both professional and general competencies are formed during the entire training period, only professional competencies are within certain disciplines, and general competencies do not depend on the subjects taught. Therefore, we can say that the creation of a structural unit of the college, the purpose of which is to create a single communicative space, will more than help solve the issue of the development of general competencies outside of training sessions. Thus, M.V. Kruchinin (Kruchinin, 2015), I.V. Robert (Robert, 2010) and many others considered the issues of improving approaches to the development of the vocational education system based on information and communication technologies (ICT). In the works of most researchers on the formation of general competencies based on ICT, a number of contradictions have been identified, manifested in the insufficient development of pedagogical technologies in the field of ICT, the inefficient use of ICT in the educational process; the difficulty of implementing the development of information and communication competencies of students in the study of individual disciplines. At the same time, the question arises whether the general competencies of students in an educational organization are formed in the conditions of employment in a media center. This was the subject of the study.

4. Results

The survey of students of professional educational organizations was conducted in accordance with the purpose and objectives of the study – to determine what, in the understanding of young people, is the main goal of creating a media center and to show that working in a media center has a positive effect on the development of general competencies.

One of the main questions of the questionnaire was "What, first of all, in your opinion, should the activities of the media center at the college be aimed at?". The responses were distributed as follows. The majority of respondents (39.4 %) believe that the task of the media center is to inform students, teachers and guests of the college about student life, 30.9 % called the main task the development of students' ability to see interesting things in the daily life of the college, and 21.7 % – the creation of media products that illuminate the life of students (see Figure 2). For young people living in the world of information and making decisions, including on the basis of data provided by the media, and not only based on personal experience, information plays a significant role in life. Thus, students want to present their educational organization as a media environment with multiple channels of information. In addition, the respondents' answers identified the main task of the media center as the development of cooperation skills, as well as the promotion of the college in the media space.

Of course, in various educational organizations, a media center can be created on the basis of different approaches. In one case, the initiators of the creation may be teachers, in another students, in the third it may be a media circle, in the fourth – a smart college library, but in any case, a more effective model will be the creation of a center with the participation of all subjects of the educational process and stakeholders - social partners, parents, youth, applicants, etc.

The reason for the discussion is the response of the students, who named the promotion of patriotic feelings and positive moral qualities as the task of the media center. It should be noted that patriotic education is quite important for young people, since 16 % of respondents answered this way.

Perhaps this is due to the events taking place in the country; perhaps it is the result of educational work at the college, which is now receiving considerable attention from the education authorities.

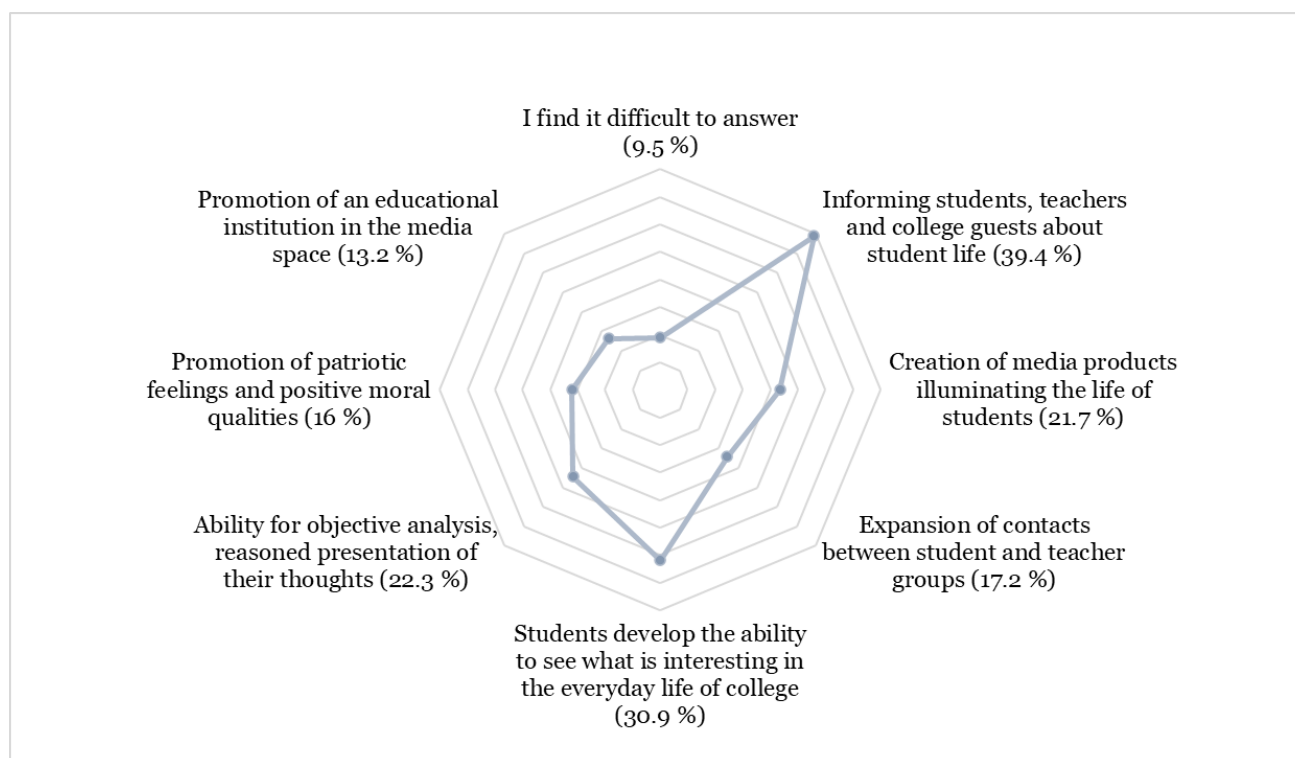


Fig. 2. Survey results “What, first of all, in your opinion, should the activities of the media center in college be directed?”

Speaking about the form of participation in the activities of the media center, the majority of respondents stated that they are attracted to work in video production (40.6 %) or the creation of text materials and photo reports (46 %) (see Fig. 3). In our opinion, students who have a tendency to sociability, observation, objectivity, the ability to analyze large amounts of information, as well as to tell the truth, chose this work option. Such a high proportion of those wishing to engage in this type of activity suggests that these are young people, refers to the visual type of sensory system, when the visual information processing system dominates. Therefore, based on the results of the survey, we can say that for the majority of young people, digital media education is focused on the audiovisual perception of information (Monastyreva, 2010; Nim, 2013; Yudina, 2005; Zubanova, 2008).

Young people who have chosen a job in the field of radio journalism (29 %) have a tendency to such qualities as the ability to support any conversation, a high level of communication, a rich vocabulary, efficiency. All young people who have chosen employment in the media center are characterized by non-conflict and the ability to work in a team.

A very small proportion of respondents (0.2 %) noted that they are ready to shoot videos and promote a positive image of an educational organization in social networks.

Figure 4 shows the results of a survey of students on the formation of general competencies. The majority of respondents (46 % of students) noted that employment in the media center has a positive effect on the development of such competence as the development of critical thinking. It should also be especially noted that critical thinking is a universal skill that reflects a person's personal qualities and belongs to soft skills. Critical thinking is also included in the four key competencies that make up the "4C" model – critical thinking, creativity, communication skills, coordination. In this model, coordination is understood as ability to work in a team, distribution and control of tasks, etc. In our case, coordination can most likely mean mobility, as stated by 48.5 % of respondents and independence, the development of which was expressed by 47.5 % of respondents.

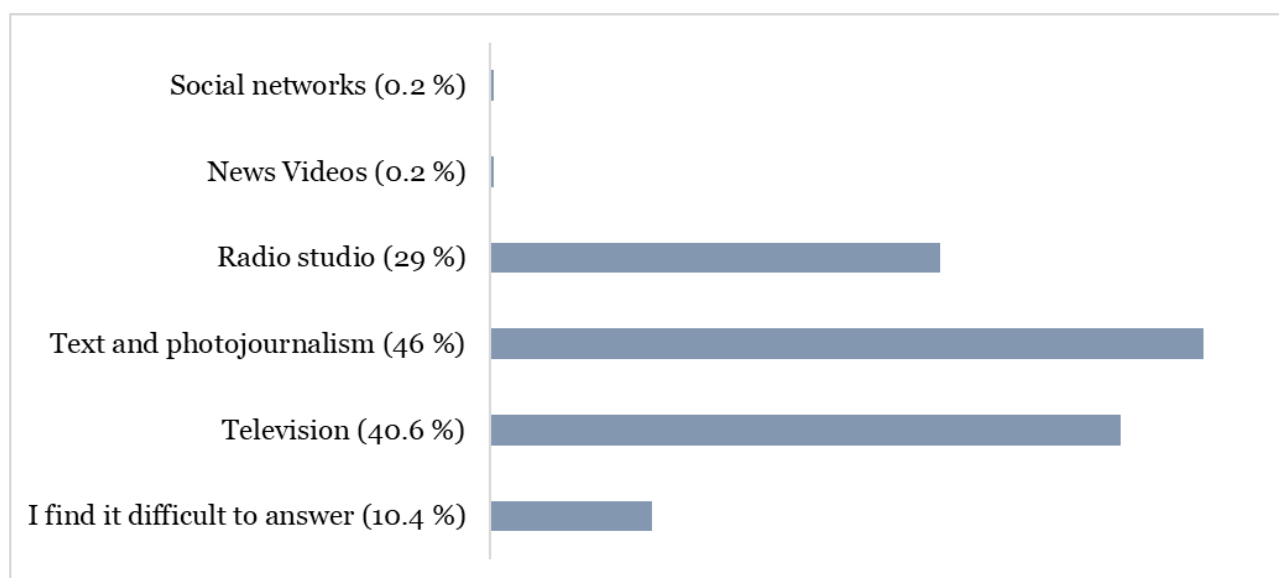


Fig. 3. Survey results “What form of activity when working at the college media center is closer to you?”

Figure 4 shows that a fairly large proportion of respondents named sociability as general competencies, the development of which is influenced by media activity, 79.4 % of respondents answered this way, and creativity – 79 % of respondents (since respondents had the opportunity to choose several answer options, in the end we do not get 100 % in total).

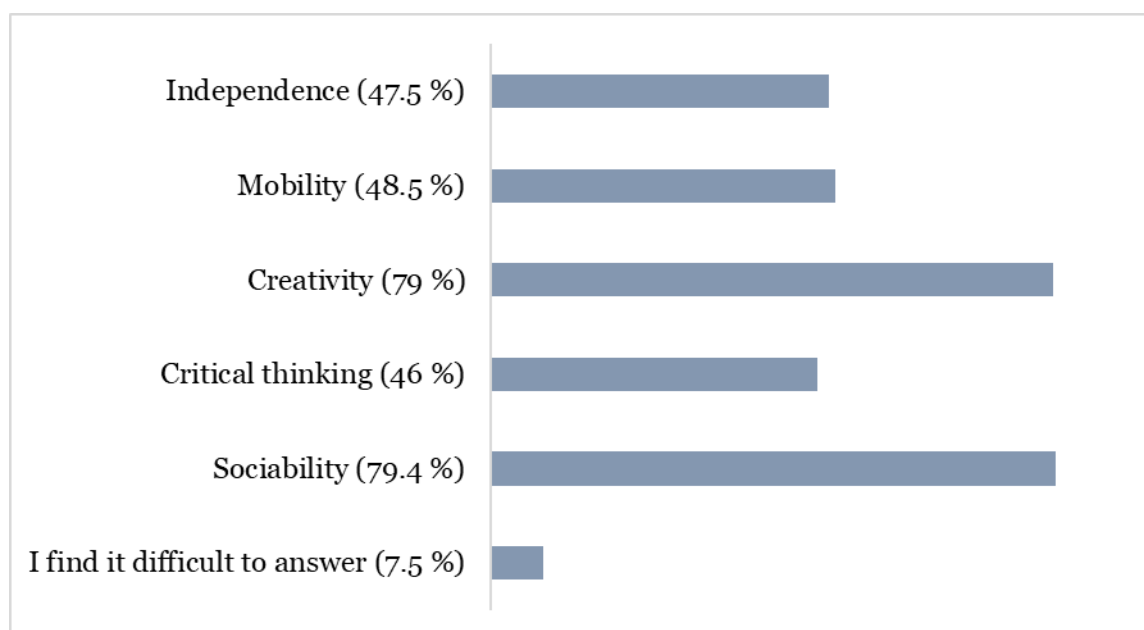


Fig. 4. Survey results “What qualities, in your opinion, develop work in the media center?”

Summarizing the above, we can say that by creating a media center as a structural unit of a professional educational organization, we solve several important tasks, including:

1. The formation of a unified communicative space aimed at the openness of the educational organization in the media environment, which makes it possible to cover the events of the college and make them accessible to all interested parties, including solving the problem of increasing the mass of high-quality content in the Russian-speaking segment of cyberspace.
2. Popularization of the college in society, increasing its image and attractiveness for applicants, their parents and social partners.

3. Educational and developmental functions. The participation of young people in the creation of a media product makes it possible to improve life skills in the information space and in the development of digital transformation, which is a necessary condition for socialization and effective self-realization. Students' activity in creating a media product allows them to increase their involvement in public life, develops competencies related to the ability to work in a team, creativity, critical thinking and other necessary general skills that are necessary in the conditions of building a successful professional trajectory.

5. Conclusion

The conducted sociological research allowed us to obtain the following results. A survey of college students in Moscow showed a low interest of young people to participate in the work of the student media center. This can be attributed, on the one hand, to their low awareness of the goals and objectives of the media center, as well as working with media content in general. On the other hand, this may be due to the lack of free time and the absence of such a structural unit in the educational organization. The study revealed that the majority of respondents consider the main task of the functioning of the media center to be the coverage of student life and all events taking place at the college, as well as the creation of a positive image of an educational organization, which is one of the conditions for competitiveness. It was found that the vast majority of young people involved in the work of the media center are ready to work in a team and prefer employment either in the field of TV journalism or photo reports, which rather indicates a lack of understanding by students of the importance of media education, caused in turn by a misunderstanding of the importance of this topic from the education, science, culture, communication and information, national security and even healthcare. More than half of the respondents noted that during the production of media products, general competencies such as sociability, mobility, socialization, critical thinking develop. It is difficult to imagine the organization of purposeful development of students' general competencies without the use of digital technologies. The media Center has already proved to be an effective optimal platform for the implementation of the process of forming common competencies in the implementation of active, creative work of students. The ability of students to self-development depends on how well formed flexible, supra-professional skills are today, as well as this process is a positive motivation for future professional activity, opportunities for professional growth and development.

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