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Trust Development in One’s Self and in Others of University Students Engaged in Innovative Activity

Anna Simacheva, Olga Krasnoryadseva, Tatiana Vaulina & Eleonora Shcheglova *

National Research Tomsk State University, Lenin Str. 36, Tomsk 634050, Russian Federation

Abstract

The article is designed to investigate the trust/distrust phenomenon of students who have different rates of innovative activity and different experiences of participation in innovative activity. Innovative activity refers to a qualitative personality characteristic that shows orientation towards creativity, innovation, creation of new knowledge (product, service) and its implementation into life. It is expected that students who have different rates of innovative activity would show varying degrees of trust. It was found that development of trust in others in young people with high levels of innovative activity contributed to group cohesion, team building and teamwork, they trust others in distinction from the students with low level of innovative activity. Actualization of trust in one’s self in young people who do not take part in innovative contests was shown to aid one in uncovering personal potential and increasing innovative activity.

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1. Introduction

The deficit of humanitarian technologies has become increasingly evident at present time. These technologies allow for the revealing, actualizing, and promoting of the development of innovative potential of young people who are focused on the work in the real sector of economy and business in the modern social practice.

For several years, the research projects that have been developed by the Psychology Department of Tomsk State University have enabled the gathering of materials that demonstrate that student-age youth who are trying to immerse

* Corresponding author. E-mail address: tatvaulina@gmail.com
themselves into innovative activity have genuine educational demands which they formulate as a necessity to satisfy young people’s psychological deficits. These deficits include the problem of personal identity and the lack of intrinsic availability for innovative activity, the lack of self-confidence, the problem of effective team work in innovative activity, insufficient development of communicative competences and presentation skills, physical and psychological overloads connected with disregard for rest and inability to switch from one task to another in the process of work, and the deficit of a system of values and meanings as part of original entrepreneurial culture (Krasnoryadtseva & Malkova, 2010; Sidorenkov & Sidorenkova, 2011). It makes more important the issue of the actualization of personal resources that will increase the innovative activity and make one more effective.

Recent research illustrates that when forcing the situations of vagueness, economic instability, and crisis, young people experience many psychological difficulties and problems, try to find new opportunities in themselves and in the world, and explore aspects of effective solutions (Galazhinsky, Klochko & Krasnoryadtseva, 2010) The search for a personal optimal level of trust in one’s self is important for every individual because the idealization of trust or distrust in one’s self has been found to lead to choosing ineffective strategies as well as leads to negative destructive behavior (Skripkina et al, 2006; Kupreichenko et al, 2013; Ilyin, 2013). Furthermore, innovative conditions can lead to contradictions between what is necessary and what is possible. Due to obtaining more information about their potential (i.e., the rise of trust in one’s self), successful conflict resolution will influence the rise of the potential to adapt in the situation of changes (Klochko & Galazhinsky, 2009).

2. Procedure

2.1 Participants

This study was conducted with 209 students (121 men and 88 women) who ranged from 17 years old to 30 years old in age. These participants represented five distinct groups of students. The first group consisted of participants U.M.N.I.K. (SMART) program. The aim of this program is to find young scientists who want to fulfill themselves with the help of innovative activity and to stimulate them to take part in scientific-technical events and innovative activity by means of organizational and financial support of innovative projects. The second group consisted of students who studied innovative entrepreneurship in Lyceum for Innovators. The participants of the Lyceum for Innovators were from several different Siberian towns: Tomsk, Barnaul, Krasnoyarsk, Byisk, Shadrinsk, Novosibirsk, and Lesosibirsk. All of these participants took part in the competition BIT Siberia, which is a real-life opportunity for graduate students, innovators, and entrepreneurs to transform their ideas into real commercial projects and to meet with investors to receive financial support for creation and development of a company of their own. The third group consisted of participants from Tomsk State University who worked on a business project in the university students’ business incubator Druzhba (Friendship) in Tomsk and young entrepreneurs working in the Web Art design studio in Tomsk. The fourth group consisted of participants who did not participate in innovative contests for youth (i.e., the students of Tomsk and Krasnoyarsk Higher Educational Institutions). Lastly, the fifth group consisted of participants from the Novoye Pokoleniye (New Generation) business camp.

2.2 Measures

Trust was assessed using the Method of Assessment of Personal Trust and Distrust in Other People (Kupreichenko, 2008). This measure was used to examine the characteristics of trust and distrust in other people or groups of people. This tool allows for the identifying of the main indicators of trust/distrust in other people such as: confidence, unity or knowledge, tendency to replace the trust to believe or prudence, and the intensity of ambivalent attitude towards other people. The respondents had to evaluate 20 statements about attitudes towards a person the respondent trusts the most and to the person who lost the respondent’s trust using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from fully disagree to fully agree (Kupreichenko, 2008). To obtain information about “cognitive aspects of trust”, Unfinished Story (Golub, 2004) was utilized. This measure allows for the investigation of the individual nuances of trust and was modified according to the age of the participants. Analysis of the results was based on content analysis. The Method of Study of Trust-Based Status of Members of the Group was utilized to assess “trust between group members” (Sidorenkov & Sidorenkova, 2011). The “trust in group” variable was assessed by the Method of Study of Interpersonal Trust in the
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