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## Preventing the problem behaviour: the case with Ukrainian vocational high school students

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### ABSTRACT

The paper's **purpose** is to identify the characteristics of deviant behaviour among Ukrainian vocational high school students using criteria based on quantitative data to determine the effectiveness of implementing targeted preventive social-pedagogical and psychological programmes. According to medical-psychological, educational, social (behavioural) and culturologically valuable criteria of predisposition to deviant behaviour, the most typical displays of deviant behaviour were defined: the use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco smoking; frequent cutting of classes, poor performance; committing of offences, crimes; low level of general and communication culture, inability to organize productive leisure. The programme of preventive work was compiled based on principles of personification, motivation, informed social choice of action, positive realization of an individual in a group. Its effectiveness was proved by the defined criteria. The number of students in the experimental group with: high level of predisposition to deviant behaviour decreased by 17.6%; average – increased by 8.1%; low – increased by 9.5%.

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## Introduction

Complicated socioeconomic situation in Ukraine has led to an increase of deviant displays among the population, the student youth in particular. Nowadays the percentage of offences committed by juveniles in Ukraine is around 25% of the total number (Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine, 2017). According to 2017 statistics, 30 162 juveniles committed criminal offences in Ukraine. Of them, approximately 38% (11 498) were the students of vocational educational establishments. Statistics by age confirms that juvenile delinquency takes forms of crimes directed against property and human life (Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine, 2017). Recently crimes providing for criminal liability, previously peculiar to adults, become widely spread among the adolescents: drug trafficking, robbery, cybercrimes, cyberbullying, intimidation directed to classmates or acquaintances often causing psychological trauma, even suicides (Murynets, 2016). Dzhuzha, Vasylevych, and Hida (2011), Udalova (2002) define factors of deviant behaviour formation in adolescents: (1) society social-economic instability; (2) specific family situation and unfavourable household environment; (3) poor educational environment; (4) low level of leisure organization; (5) negative influence of asocial formations.

State Statistics Service of Ukraine (2017) proves that 8.4% of vocational school students come from single-parent families, 5.5% – low-income families, 1.9% – disadvantaged families, 4.4% – are children-orphans.

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Along similar lines, Maksymova, Moroz, and Yakovenko (2005), Naboka (2001) argue that these students: have had serious educational-behavioural problems in a secondary school; cannot adapt to the learning process; cannot adapt to residing outside a family; lack moral behaviour because of inappropriate system of social adaptation in vocational schools; experience early professional self-determination, formation of life perspective and desire for independence; have no formed system of self-control; demonstrate emotional instability, inadequate self-esteem, contradictory psychological aspirations and value systems. All of it generates resistance, which is a direct way to conflict interaction. Deviant behaviour patterns in an educational environment include: substance, drug and alcohol abuse, aggression, violence, bullying, cruelty, reporting late for classes, classes skipping, promiscuity, vandalism, use of abusive language, theft (Torrente & Vazsonyi, 2012).

Morozov and Morozova (2000) develop the claim that to overcome juvenile problem behaviour it is necessary to combine punitive measures with social adaptation providing preventive programmes.

The **purpose** of the paper was to identify the characteristics of deviant behaviour among Ukrainian vocational high school students using criteria based on quantitative data in order to determine the effectiveness of implemented targeted preventive social-pedagogical and psychological programmes. The study was based on assumption that these programmes were effective at preventing asocial behaviour under the following conditions: (a) correctional and educational effects are seen in the students' personality through their involvement in socially and personally valuable activities; (b) vocational high schools staff and parents receive scientific and methodical training.

We used the following **research methods**: (i) theoretical methods: analysis of scientific sources and documentation for the systematization and generalization of available data, defining of the essence of basic concepts, identification of the current state of the problem under consideration and possibilities for its solution; pedagogical experiment; (ii) empirical methods: questionnaires and testing; conversations, instructions, individual and group interviews; observation of students' behaviour; analysis of students' performance, sociodrama; socially directed games; social-psychological trainings; public opinion, etc.

To define the most typical displays of deviant behaviour among the students of vocational high schools by **medical-psychological, educational, social (behavioural) and culturologically valuable criteria**, as **diagnostic methods** we used questionnaires on diagnosing of: (i) predisposition to different types of dependence, psychoactive substances addiction, deviant behaviour, aggressiveness; (ii) psychological conditions of educational and closest environment; (iii) personality of maladapted adolescents, their well-bredness, informal relationships, attitude towards law.

## Social adaptation of vocational high schools students

In the context of our study, we define social adaptation of students as a process of adapting to new society conditions, requirements and norms of an educational institution, so they can develop: positive attitude to their new status; fruitful inclusion in the new system of interpersonal relationships; abilities for healthy lifestyle.

Blazhievskaya and Volchelyuk (2013) define the following main problems of social adaptation of students:

- (1) Entering the new (socially) heterogeneous group. Adaptation process depends on: psychological climate in a group; interaction, intensity and quality of communication with classmates and educators; personal development level (values, motivational aspirations, self-awareness), etc. Each group member participates in the forming of its characteristics, behaviour rules and norms, having the opportunity to express oneself, to gain the authority and respect among the classmates. Behaviour, communication style, and professional abilities are the criteria for personality expression.
- (2) Timely adaptation to learning. It can become the support point, but also can lead to degradation in student's behaviour, learning, and communication. Even the first failure can

lead to frustration, loss of perspective, alienation, passivity. In the process of social adaptation, a group forms microgroups with the leading microgroup within microgroups. It is this leading microgroup, its orientation, cohesion, moral standards and the system of interpersonal relationships that directs the whole group development.

- (3) Lack of awareness of the profession chosen, its importance, positive and negative factors – makes the learning process unproductive with social adaptation carried out with much difficulty.
- (4) Inability to organize everyday life and self-care (to manage leisure, money), communication problems, low level of culture of intergender relations, especially when moving to hostel condition, etc. – lead to psychological problems, affecting communication with classmates and educators.

Klochan (2009) puts forward the view that social adaptation of students of vocational schools should be considered not simply as a process and result of students' adaptation to the conditions of an educational institution (mastering of professional knowledge, practical skills, increase of self-esteem), but is to take into account the social environment of their previous social development as an active acceptance of values of new social environment, the development of social responsibility to vocational training and activities, formation of prosocial professional behaviour, as well as optimization of positive forms of self-motivation in the student's personality.

According to Ivanova (2003) social adaptation of adolescents involves the introduction of a system of comprehensive preventive measures undertaken to identify and eliminate the causes that adversely affect health and development. Its content is disclosed in the implementation of the system of purposeful measures that ensure the effectiveness of social norms in all spheres of society (Greenwood & Turner, 2009; Henggeler & Schoenwald, 2011; Kivivuori & Bernburg, 2011; Lipsey, 2009).

Scientists distinguish between prevention: social (Shakurova, 2004), psychological (Dubrovina, 1991), medical (Korolev, 1992), criminological (Alekseyev, Gerasimov, & Sukharev, 2001), victimological (Kosenko, 2004), etc. In addition, they distinguish: (i) General prevention – a set of measures aimed at creating of favourable social-economic, social-cultural and social-pedagogical conditions that support: a family in fulfilling its functions on educating of physically-socially healthy children; general education establishments and vocational-technical high schools to implement educational functions to ensure the development of students' interests and abilities. (ii) Special prevention – correction and rehabilitation measures, involving psychological-pedagogical support for the juveniles, social and legal assistance, protection from cruelty, violence and negative impact of social environment. It is carried out in close cooperation with schools, family, informal groups, various social institutions and public organizations.

Motunova (2014) considers that in the environment of vocational high schools, social-pedagogical prevention is based on the timely detection and correction of negative informational, pedagogical, psychological and organizational factors that determine the inconsistency of mental and social development of adolescents, their behaviour, health, organization of lifestyle and leisure.

Lynnyk (2006) states that, on the one hand, social-pedagogical prevention is aimed at preventive formation of positive life settings, values, social experience of adolescents, and, on the other hand, the object of its attention is an adolescent with negative life experience and socially dangerous life situations. Thus, depending on the degree of social norms violation, measures are taken in social-pedagogical work to prevent or suppress the deviant behaviour.

Lyakhova (2001) and Antonenko (2012) note that a significant role here is given to educators, who by applying the methods of social-educational work help the adolescents to: adapt to new environment; reduce anxiety; form positive educational motives; nurture emotional culture; refocus from norms and values of children to those of adults; establish and maintain student's social status in the new team; establish positive psychological climate in a student group and in an environment based on respect and trust; develop self-awareness, self-confidence, self-criticism, responsibility, ability to

behaviour self-regulation; distract attention from asocial behaviour and educate humanity, spirituality, ability to empathize.

Zdanevich (2005) grounds the assumption that in order to promote successful social adaptation and provide the preventive work, social-educational work in vocational schools should be carried out in the following directions: (1) organizational – to organize students' activities; (2) social-adaptational – to mitigate the adaptation period in new learning and life conditions; (3) educational-methodical – to implement activities of organizational-educational work according to students' interests and needs; (4) social-cultural – to widen social-cultural knowledge and skills; (5) individual – to solve urgent problems of a particular student in overcoming of learning difficulties, conflict situations, etc.

The discussed finding lend support to the claim that there is a need for social-pedagogical provision of the process of students' social adaptation, aimed at deliberate co-work of a social pedagogue/worker with teachers, parents, social institutions' representatives directed on coordination and consolidation of educational efforts of the social environment.

Current requirements for the educational process in vocational schools demand further researching on the developing of effective practical methods for social adaptation and prevention of problem behaviour of vocational school students seen as developing of a new lifestyle. Undoubtedly, preventive work with students of vocational high schools is carried out in Ukraine. However, it is not sufficiently purposeful and systematic. There is no clear preventive work programme and comprehensive diagnostics of deviation tendency is not provided. This actualizes the problem under consideration.

## Research results and their discussion

### *Participants*

In 2016 vocational educational establishments of Ukraine enrolled 55 020 students, which is 16.7% of the total number of the 9<sup>th</sup>-grade school graduates. In 2016 16 vocational schools enrolled 1624 students in Transcarpathian oblast of Ukraine to provide complete secondary education and vocational training (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2016).

We conducted our research in vocational high schools of Transcarpathian oblast with students enrolled in 2016, of approximately the same age and reported to have disadvantaged social status. Nineteen parents of students, 11 representatives of vocational high schools staff, 3 representatives of Social Work Department and 1 representative of General Pedagogy and Pedagogy of Higher School Department, 1 representative from Psychology Department of Uzhhorod National University agreed to join the research at different stages. We carried out the experimental work in stages from September 2016 until May 2018.

At the first stage (September – October 2016), based on motivational conversation we formed experimental group (EG) (84 persons, 65 boys and 19 girls) and control group (CG) (83 persons, 66 boys and 17 girls) of students willing to participate in the programme on deviant behaviour prevention. We involved EG students at all stages of the pedagogical experiment, while students from CG joined it at constatation and control stages.

EG included students trained within 3-year educational programmes (cooks; electro-mechanics; knitters of circuit cables and cords; locksmith-electricians; mounters of electronic equipment and devices; operators of machine tools; secretaries; tractor drivers; waiters): 25 boys and 2 girls from Mukachevo vocational high school № 3; 23 boys and 2 girls from Mukachevo vocational agricultural lyceum; 5 boys and 15 girls from Uzhhorod vocational high school of Trade and Food Technology; 12 boys from Velykyi Bereznyi vocational high school № 33. CG included students trained within 3-year educational programmes (accountants; carpenters; cooks; electro-gas welders; locksmith-electricians; mounters of electronic equipment and devices; plasterers; secretaries; sewers; tillers; waiters): 15 boys from Khust vocational lyceum; 14 boys and 5 girls from Mizhgyrya vocational lyceum; 10 boys and 6 girls from Perechyn vocational lyceum; 11 boys and 4 girls from Tyachiv vocational lyceum; 16 boys and 2 girls from Vynogradiv vocational high school № 34.

### ***Instrument and procedure***

At the second stage (November 2016–December 2016) of the pedagogical experiment, we defined displays of deviant behaviour of students having selected and adopted the criteria and indicators (Samoylov, 2016) for identifying the levels of students' predisposition to deviant behaviour (PDB) (Table 1).

Other diagnostic methods used at this stage: conversations, individual and group interviews with students, their parents, teachers, educators, psychologists, medical staff to identify students' predisposition to deviant behaviour; observation (direct and indirect) of students' behaviour during the learning process, various extracurricular activities, communication with peers and adults.

The thorough analysis of the content of responses received after the application of diagnostic methods enabled us to determine the quantitative indicators of students' predisposition to deviant behaviour by selected criteria and levels. The data were processed by SPSS Statistics Version 17.0 and the results were generalized (Table 2).

The processing of primary data demonstrated that the highest indicators of the high level of PDB were revealed by the educational criterion in both CG and EG, respectively – 41.0% and 41.7%. The majority of students was characterized by a high and average levels of PDB displayed in: skipping of classes; frequent use of drugs, alcohol; inability to present opinion; poor vocabulary; use of obscene words; desire to become a member of an informal destructive group; committing of offences; inadequate response to the remarks of parents, teachers, etc.

### ***The programme compilation***

At the third stage of the pedagogical experiment (January 2017), we compiled the programme of preventive work aimed at reducing students' PDB. It consisted of a series of mini-programmes recommended by the Ministry of Education and Sciences of Ukraine and National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine. It was based on the following principles:

- (1) Preventive work personification – directed on a specific person's needs, interests, value orientations, feelings and mood. Conditions for its implementation: studying the needs, interests and abilities of a student; identification of positive qualities of a student, reliance on them; establishing of favourable emotional background of interaction. At practice, this principle is reflected in the following requirements: the study of individual characteristics of a student should be of monitoring character, take place in conditions of interaction; positive emotions contribute to motivating of a student to a joint work.
- (2) Motivation – involves the student's inner motivation to participate in preventive activities. Conditions for its implementation: awareness of the purpose and importance of preventive activities; voluntary inclusion in the process; sequence and step-by-step solvable tasks. At practice, this principle is reflected in the following requirements: a student is taught personal significance, which is an organic part of an educational process; stimulating a student to the creative problem-solving.
- (3) Reasonable social choice – a student is to make a compulsory choice between acts, decisions in the course of preventive process. Conditions for its implementation: inclusion of students in solving various social problems in real or simulated situations of moral choice accompanied by a volitional effort. At practice this principle is reflected in the following requirements: a student is to be able to substantiate personal choice.
- (4) Positive realization of an individual in a group – ensures availability of self-realization area for each student. Conditions for its implementation: knowledge of student's individuality; establishing of comfortable conditions for the interaction. This principle is reflected in requirements: pleasure and positive emotions from communication with peers.

**Table 1.** The criteria, indicators and levels of students' PDB.

Criteria	Indicators	Levels	Description	Diagnostic methods used for the defining of:
Medical-psychological	Use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco-smoking, gambling	High Average Low	Systematic Frequent Periodic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– predisposition to chemical dependency: questionnaire on assessing the predisposition to psychoactive substances addiction after Furmanov, Sizanov, and Hriptovich (2011, pp. 122 – 124); questionnaire on early detection by educators and parents of narcotic dependence in adolescents after Zmanovskaya (2004, pp. 252 – 254);</li> <li>– type of dependent behaviour: questionnaire on diagnosing the predisposition to different types of dependence after Lozova (Furmanov et al., 2011, pp. 124 – 127);</li> </ul>
Educational	Cutting of classes, poor education	High  Average  Low	<p>Classes are skipped systematically, often, purposefully; educational success is low; there are no subjects of interest</p> <p>Classes are often skipped spontaneously; subjects of interest are not skipped; educational success is generally low</p> <p>Classes are skipped periodically; many subjects are of interest to a student, but success on them is satisfactory, on others – low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– social and pedagogical neglect: complex express-diagnostics after Ovcharova (2001, pp. 220 – 234);</li> <li>– influence of a family on the displays of deviations: scheme of analysis of peculiarities and disadvantages of family upbringing after Ovcharova (2001, pp. 323 – 324);</li> <li>– challenges of school socialization: questionnaire on diagnosing the psychological conditions of school educational environment after Badina (Volnova, 2016, pp. 131 – 135);</li> </ul>
Social (Behavioural)	Committing of offences	High  Average  Low	<p>Systematic/conscious/purposeful; absolute non-response to the remarks of parents, teachers, etc.</p> <p>Episodic, but conscious/purposeful; selective response to the remarks of parents, teachers, etc.</p> <p>Episodic, often unconscious/sporadic; positive response to the remarks of parents, teachers, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– attitude to law: questionnaire on studying the attitudes towards law as a manifestation of legal consciousness after Beznosov (Pochebut, 2012, pp. 240 – 244);</li> <li>– predisposition to deviant behaviour: questionnaire after Orel (Ovcharova, 2001, pp. 255 – 261);</li> <li>– predisposition to aggressive behaviour: Bass-Dark questionnaire «Index of Aggressiveness» (Semenyuk, 1998, pp. 26 – 32);</li> </ul>

*(Continued)*

**Table 1.** (Continued).

Criteria	Indicators	Levels	Description	Diagnostic methods used for the defining of:
Culturological-valuable	Culture of communication, use of obscene words and expressions, ability to present oneself, membership in destructive informal groups, level of legal culture	High	Inability to present own opinion; poor vocabulary; using obscene and brutal words is considered as a norm; membership in informal destructive group; critically low level of general and legal culture; unproductive leisure time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– general determinants of deviant behaviour: questionnaire on studying the personality of maladapted adolescent and the closest environment after Klauberg (2001, pp. 119 – 124);</li> <li>– displays of being difficult: questionnaire on studying the well-bredness after Shilova (1982, pp. 64 – 65);</li> <li>– influence of a group on personality of adolescent: questionnaire on studying the informal relationships of an adolescent after Fitsula and Parfanovych (2008, pp. 359 – 361);</li> </ul>
		Average	Great difficulties to present own opinion; poor vocabulary; periodic use of obscene words in communication; striving to become a member of informal destructive group; low level of general and legal culture	
		Low	No difficulties to present own opinion; poor vocabulary; rare use of obscene words in communication; desire to become a member of informal destructive group; insufficient level of general and legal culture	

**Table 2.** Quantitative indicators of students' PDB at the beginning of experiment.

Criteria	Group	Level					
		High	in %	Average	in %	Low	in %
Medical-psychological	CG	32	38.5	42	50.6	9	10.9
	EG	30	35.7	41	48.8	13	15.5
Educational	CG	34	41.0	43	51.8	6	7.2
	EG	35	41.7	42	50.0	7	8.3
Social (Behavioural)	CG	33	39.5	41	49.4	9	10.9
	EG	33	39.3	40	47.6	11	13.1
Culturologically valuable	CG	34	40.1	38	45.8	11	13.3
	EG	30	35.7	44	52.4	10	11.9

- (5) Adequate self-assessment – involves the student's assessment of oneself. Conditions for its implementation: reasonable combination of encouragement and punishment; adequacy in the student's assessment. At practice, this principle is reflected in the following requirements: regular assessment of student's achievements; group discussion of results of joint activities; student's understanding of the significance of actions and actions of the others.
- (6) Reflexive position – means analysis conducted by a student of peculiarities of personal actions and actions of other people based on the system of values and moral principles. Conditions for its implementation: the development of a stable system of student↔surrounding social reality relations; formation of an adequate self-esteem. At practice, this principle is reflected in the ability to: analyse events; develop own volitional qualities; manage own emotional state; listen to the opinion of adults and peers.



- (7) Combining the general with the specific type of prevention of deviant behaviour. At practice, this principle is reflected in the following requirements: combination of general and partial; priority of general prevention; orientation in preventive work to all age categories.
- (8) Mediated effects of preventive measures. Conditions for its implementation: formation of active life position, of healthy lifestyle. At practice, this principle is reflected in the following requirements: any preventive effect should contribute to the formation of positive life skills in students; it is not expedient to use only the means of prohibitive-prescriptive influence; the priority influence in the preventive work is on the sphere of self-regulation of a juvenile and his/her volitional qualities.
- (9) Integration of actions of different educational institutions. Conditions for its implementation: the complex nature of the prevention process. At practice, this principle is reflected in the following requirements: educational establishments use own means while implementing joint goals and tasks; in the process of prevention a student should be provided with the assistance of various types: medical, pedagogical, psychological, legal.

The compiled programme took into account three components:

- (1) Educational: (a) specific – an idea of consequences to which certain displays of deviant behaviour lead to and how they affect the life of an individual; (b) non-specific – understanding of oneself, personal feelings and emotions, possible ways to cope with them.
- (2) Psychological – correction of psychological features leading to the displays of deviant behaviour; building of supportive climate in a group; psychological adaptation of risk-group students; work with feelings of guilty, fear, uncertainty, responsibility.
- (3) Social – assistance in social adaptation of a student to the surrounding conditions, mastering of communication skills, promotion of healthy lifestyle.

The programme was agreed to be implemented in close interaction with: parents of students and team of specialists from vocational high schools, namely:

- Teachers, educators: provide social-pedagogical and psychological assistance and support to a student; study the student's livelihood outside the educational institution; support parents of students raising their level of competence on the upbringing of children; follow the student's success in the development during the whole period of study.
- Psychologists: study the student's personality, relationships in a student group, with adults and peers; analyse the adaptation of a student in the environment; provide complex support on the basis of data of social-psychological, psychological-pedagogical and medical diagnostics of students and their parents.
- Medical staff: checks the physical and mental health of a student; interacts with medical institutions.

### ***Programme implementation procedure***

The fourth stage of the pedagogical experiment (February 2017 – April 2018) envisaged the implementation of the programme aimed at reducing students' PDB. Lessons were held once a week in the afternoon after the main classes.

We started with the programme (February 2017 – April 2017) for the prevention of problem behaviour of adolescents developed by Sergeieva (2016). It consisted of 8 themes studied during 11 lessons, held once a week with a duration of 3 hours. Lessons were conducted in 2 sessions of 1 hour 20 minutes with a 20-minute break in between (Table 3).

We continued with the programme (May 2017 – June 2017) for the prevention of problem behaviour of adolescents developed by Hidu (Abukhazhar et al., 2014, pp. 351–375). It consisted

**Table 3.** Programme for the prevention of problem behaviour of adolescents developed by Sergeieva.

Themes	Purpose	Number of lessons
Theme 1. Introduction to the programme. Acquaintance. Working out the rules of the group work	To get acquainted with the participants; to inform about the features and principles of the programme, to help each participant to be actively involved in it	1
Theme 2. Setting up individual goals and building long-term plans to overcome aggressiveness	To determine the achievable goal of participating in the programme for each participant, in particular to overcome personal aggressive behaviour; to provide understanding that changes of behaviour and one's life depend directly on them	1
Theme 3. The rights and responsibilities of adolescents	To provide information about rights, duties and responsibilities; to teach to distinguish the misbehaviour depending on its severity and the responsibility for the aggressive actions	2
Theme 4. Mechanisms of aggressive behaviour formation	To provide information on the factors that influence the development of aggressive behaviour; to develop the skills of recognizing the trigger mechanisms of aggression displays; to distinguish personal feelings and feelings of other people in a conflict situation	1
Theme 5. Development of skills of self-control of anger and aggression	To develop skills of self-control, of anger and aggression displays in relation to other people; to analyse conflict situations and determine personal role in solving them	2
Theme 6. Effective communication as an effective way to solve a conflict situation	To develop skills of effective communication to overcome aggressive behaviour	2
Theme 7. Formation of goals and perspective life plans	To strengthen the skills of building the short-term and long-term goals and plans, to check the success of the goal realization on overcoming personal aggressive behaviour	1
Theme 8. Summarizing the results of participation in the programme	To summarize the programme participation results	1

of eight themes provided during nine lessons, held once a week. The approximate duration of one lesson was 1–1.5 hours. The aim of the programme was to provide adolescents with the opportunity to realize the importance of acquiring social skills; actualization of social self-determination process; creation of conditions for the positive self-esteem formation; understanding of oneself as an individual and finding ways for the personal development of knowledge on internal-personality conflicts and tensions; formation of the ability to organize optimal communication, constructive conflict resolution in communication (Table 4).

We continued with the programme (September 2017 – November 2017) for the problem behaviour prevention of adolescents developed by Shostak (Abukhazhar et al., 2014, pp. 376–398). It consisted of 12 themes provided during 12 lessons, held once a week. The approximate duration of a lesson was 1 hour. The purpose of the training was to provide adolescents with the awareness of life responsibility and of the significance of each participant's individuality, to train participants to regulate personal emotions and feelings (Table 5).

We continued with the programme (December 2017 – February 2018) for the prevention of problem behaviour of adolescents developed by Zavarova and Lutsenko (Abukhazhar et al., 2014, pp. 432–455). The programme consisted of 10 themes provided during 10 lessons, held once a week. The approximate duration of a lesson was 1–1.5 hours. The purpose of the training was to seek for alternative (socially acceptable) ways to meet needs and interact with others. Techniques used during the training were aimed at: teaching adolescents to use direct denial from misbehaviour instead of the usual methods of aggressive response; teaching to assess social situations; reinforcement of inhibition and extinction of aggressive stereotypes of behaviour; forming of more adaptive behavioural patterns; strengthening and expanding productive behavioural reactions; minimizing of anxiety (Table 6).

The training was also conducted for students' parents based on the programme developed by Zvonovska (Abukhazhar et al., 2014, pp. 456–466). Its aim was to prevent causes leading to a decrease in the quality of family education and violations in the behaviour of children; to help

**Table 4.** Programme for the prevention of problem behaviour of adolescents developed by Hidu.

Themes	Purpose	Number of lessons
Theme 1. Rules of the group	To inform the group about the content of work, tasks, group norms; to determine the duration of classes; to set principles of group work; to form a calm, friendly atmosphere of openness, psychological comfort, mutual understanding	1
Theme 2. I and my social roles	To give an opportunity to: change personal behaviour in situations close to real; experience unfamiliar feelings, perceive new thoughts and ideas; take responsibility for the misbehaviour; accept emotions and feelings in conflict situations; set limits in complex interpersonal situations; be aware of individual behaviour motives; form empathy skills	1
Theme 3. Self-esteem	To support for positive self-esteem	1
Theme 4. Non-aggressive insistence	To identify common situations in which it is necessary not to aggressively insist on personal position; to define tactics of persuasion; to practice the skills of verbal non-aggressive insistence; to practice non-verbal skills of non-aggressive insistence	1
Theme 5. Getting to know ourselves	To separate the concept of «I am ideal», «I in the eyes of others», «I – the real»; to teach to trust each other, give and receive support; to understand internal conflicts; to look at oneself from the other side	1
Theme 6. Smoking, alcohol, drugs: myths and reality	To give the necessary information; to overcome commonly accepted myths and misunderstandings of the value of tobacco, alcohol, drugs	2
Theme 7. My world	To develop behavioural and emotional self-regulation skills	1
Theme 8. Sum up	To identify the attitude to the conducted lessons	1

**Table 5.** Programme for the prevention of problem behaviour of adolescents developed by Shostak.

Themes	Purpose	Number of lessons
Theme 1.	To create conditions for self-disclosure; to find out the priorities of the programme participants; to develop the ability to relax, listen to oneself, determine mood and emotional state of the group members	1
Theme 2.	To teach to present oneself; to draw attention of participants to the use of words in communication; to teach to regulate emotions and feelings; to teach how to relax with a smile, to eliminate fears	1
Theme 3.	To give an opportunity to feel the value of beliefs; to develop team interaction skills; to demonstrate that there should be more than two alternatives to decision-making; to familiarize with the algorithm of action in a situation when a refusal is necessary; to teach the skills of reasoned refusal to drugs	1
Theme 4.	To give an idea of the uniqueness of each person; to help to communicate and feel the mood without words	1
Theme 5.	To form skills and abilities that help to realize that every person is an individual; to determine the attitude to other people	1
Theme 6.	To encourage reflection on paying attention to personal future, self-disclosure; to work with the «I» image; to help to understand how disadvantages can become benefits	1
Theme 7.	To bring to the idea that duties should be carried out; to teach to express emotions adequately	1
Theme 8.	To draw attention to the positive qualities of character; to develop communicative skills	1
Theme 9.	To teach to express emotions, to pay attention to the emotional state of others; to help to realize the life value	1
Theme 10.	To teach to express feelings to other people tolerantly; to familiarize with main features of a tolerant personality; to give an opportunity to assess personal degree of tolerance; to teach constructive methods of getting out of conflict situations; to teach to find positive ways of life success achieving	1
Theme 11.	To update knowledge on character traits; to bring understanding of importance of positive traits in achieving success	1
Theme 12.	To provide information on the need for self-confidence; to promote self-awareness and develop the ability to cooperate; to define personal strengths and weaknesses; to develop adequate self-esteem; to promote positive character traits	1

parents to understand the impact they make on children in order to increase their ability to solve problems and conflicts that arise in their relationships with children. It combined elements of psychoprophylaxis, educational, advisory and corrective work. It consisted of four thematical lessons with an approximate duration of 1 hour each (Table 7).

**Table 6.** Programme for the prevention of problem behaviour of adolescents developed by Zavarova and Lutsenko.

Themes	Purpose	Number of lessons
Theme 1.	To get acquainted with the participants; to inform on the features and principles of the programme, to help each participant to be actively involved in it	1
Theme 2.	To raise self-confidence; to overcome the tension among the group members; to develop the skills of self-education, empathy	1
Theme 3.	To form the desire for cooperation, interaction, life changes	1
Theme 4.	To acquaint with emotions and feelings, verbal and nonverbal means of communication; to respond to negative experience on self-esteem formation	1
Theme 5.	To develop the skills for the self-control and self-regulation	1
Theme 6.	To work on internal personality conflicts	1
Theme 7.	To form an acceptable method of anger and aggressiveness overcoming, of reacting to negative emotions	1
Theme 8.	To develop positive climate and atmosphere of mutual trust; to demonstrate differences in the perception of another person	1
Theme 9.	To study the motives of personal aggressive behaviour; to teach to express emotions through the verbalization of feelings; to reconstruct positive experiences in the past through childhood memories and its integration with the present	1
Theme 10.	To demonstrate clearly what is contact and how contact of each participant affects the group as a whole	1

**Table 7.** Programme for the formation of psychological-pedagogical competence in parents developed by Zvonovska.

Themes	Purpose	Number of lessons
Theme 1. How do you educate your children	To set an emotional mood for working together, an atmosphere of mutual trust; to help parents in choosing a relationship strategy with their child	1
Theme 2. Punishment in the practice of family upbringing	To teach to avoid the negative effects of punishment in practice of family upbringing; to help to develop relationships that do not require repressive measures	1
Theme 3. Relationships with adolescents	To acquaint parents with peculiarities of the adolescence period; to find a way of understanding with their child	1
Theme 4. Unconditional love of parents	To help parents to realize the ways of correct expression of love; to set conditions for close and sincere relationships with children	1

The training was also conducted for educators based on the programme developed by Zvonovska (Abukhazhar et al., 2014, pp. 466–476). Its aim was to familiarize participants with the notion of conflict, its types; to promote teacher's motivation for self-improvement; to set a positive psychological climate in a pedagogical team. The programme consisted of a 2-hour lesson (Table 8).

To solve the set tasks and implement the preventive programme the following techniques have been used:

- Sociodrama – with dramatic improvisation the programme participants had the possibility to understand the changes in their inner world. Having put their past, present and future into it, based on personal experience, programme participants directly interacted with the past and the future. Thus, they changed their perception of a given situation and made their behaviour more meaningful and flexible in different conditions.
- Socially oriented games – the programme participants were given the opportunity to actively experiment with both realistic and unrealistic life roles, to formulate a strategy of behaviour with different role positions. They got the skills for stable but flexible behaviour.
- Social-psychological training – directed on the formation of effective communication skills and skills of interpersonal interaction. The programme participants understood psychological characteristics and a stable motivation to an independent life position; they got the ability to adequately assess personal actions, actions and acts of other people.

**Table 8.** Programme for the formation of psychological-pedagogical competence in educators developed by Zvonovska.

Themes	Purpose
Workshop opening	To familiarize with the theme and work plan
Defining the rules of work	To define the rules of work during the workshop
Getting to know each other	To unite the group members by finding out their individual and professional characteristics
Work in groups	To organize the group interaction and update personal motivation to participate in the workshop
Mini-lecture «Pedagogical conflict»	To provide participants with information about pedagogical conflict, its types, causes
Brainstorming «Styles of people's behaviour in conflicts»	To prompt as many opinions as possible on a given topic
Exercise «Situation»	To analyse the situation from the position of a student and a teacher; to suggest ways to resolve the conflict
Exercise «Put yourself in smb's place»	To develop the internal means of role-centeredness; to change the internal position of participants to a full-fledged dialogue
Exercise «I – statement»	On the basis of role playing the situation to use the method in verbal interaction and in the formation of positive attitudes in thinking
Exercise «Switch to the interlocutor»	To help a teacher to better understand the interlocutor
Exercise «Advertising of a teacher's profession»	To set on the positive content of realization of a person as a teacher; to promote the friendly, creative atmosphere in the pedagogical team
Exercise «Heat of our hands»	To give participants the opportunity to express personal wishes
Summing up	To receive feedback from the seminar participants

- Creation of various experimental situations, making possible to reveal a real attitude of students to themselves, other people, material and spiritual values, norms of behaviour.
- Case-method – discussion of specific cases of behaviour displays (examples from real life, periodicals, TV), expressing own vision of the problem, suggesting ways to solve it.
- Public opinion – supports the striving for the approval of morality norms; activates the student group; makes the best samples of behaviour to become the gains for the team.

### **Comparing the results before and after the experimental work**

At the fifth stage of the pedagogical experiment (March 2018–May 2018), we checked again the students' PDB. Thus, after completing the experimental work on the prevention of deviant behaviour of vocational-technical high school students in EG, we found significant positive changes in all indicators, while relatively insignificant positive changes occurred in CG. Significant changes took place by educational and social (behavioural) criteria. Accordingly, by these criteria, the number of students in EG with: high level of PDB decreased by 25% and 27.4%; average level of PDB increased by 13.1% and 16.7%; low level of PDB increased by 11.9% and 10.7%. In general, the percentage of students with PDB in EG according to the criteria set, with high level decreased by 17.6%, with average level increased by 8.1%, with low level increased by 9.5% (Table 9).

**Table 9.** Quantitative indicators of students' PDB at the end of experiment.

Criteria	Group	Level					
		High	in %	Average	in %	Low	in %
Medical-psychological	CG	32	38.6	39	47.0	12	14.4
	EG	22	26.2	41	48.8	21	25.0
Educational	CG	29	35.0	42	50.6	12	14.4
	EG	14	16.7	53	63.1	17	20.2
Social (Behavioural)	CG	29	35.0	41	49.4	13	15.7
	EG	10	11.9	54	64.3	20	23.8
Culturologically valuable	CG	33	39.8	40	48.2	10	12.0
	EG	23	27.4	46	54.8	15	17.9

**Table 10.** Changes in the levels of students' PDB.

Groups	Level					
	At the beginning of experiment			At the end of experiment		
	High	Average	Low	High	Average	Low
Control group	33	41	9	31	40	12
	39.8%	49.4%	10.8%	37.1%	48.8%	14.1%
Experimental group	32	42	10	17	49	18
	38.1%	49.7%	12.2%	20.5%	57.8%	21.7%

### The generalized results of experimental work

Let us consider the generalized results of experimental work allowing defining changes in the levels of PDB in CG and EG. Indicator of individual level of PDB of  $i$ -student is calculated by the formula:  $PDB_i = MP_i + E_i + S(B)_i + CV_i$ , (1), where  $MP_i$ ,  $E_i$ ,  $S(B)_i$ ,  $CV_i$  – the normalized values of corresponding medical-psychological, educational, social (behavioural), culturologically valuable components. The defining of levels of PDB formed is evaluated by the following scale (maximum 4 points): high level – 2.71–4 points, average – 1.31–2.7, low – 0–1.3. The dynamics of lowering of PDB levels is presented in Table 10.

Statistical processing of results of diagnostic cuts in CG and EG is conducted by the scheme: (1) by the criterion  $\chi^2$  for independent samples, we prove that the levels of CG and EG students' PDB did not differ significantly at the beginning of experiment; (2) by the criterion  $\chi^2$  we demonstrate that the levels of CG and EG students' PDB significantly differ after the experiment.

1. Based on the data from Table 2 we check the null hypothesis  $H_0: p_{1i} = p_{2i}$  ( $i = 1, 2, 3$ ), with the alternative hypothesis  $H_1: p_{1i} \neq p_{2i}$  for at least one of three categories. To test this hypothesis, the calculation of values of statistics of  $\chi^2$  criterion is carried out by the formula:  $\chi^2 = \frac{1}{n_1 \cdot n_2} \cdot \sum_{i=1}^c \frac{(n_1 \cdot O_{2i} - n_2 \cdot O_{1i})^2}{O_{1i} + O_{2i}}$ , where  $n_1$ ,  $n_2$  – dimensions of samples,  $O_{1i}$ ,  $O_{2i}$  ( $i = 1, 2, 3$ ) –

frequency of CG and EG by categories. Let us determine the calculated value of statistics  $\chi_p^2$ :  $\chi_p^2 = \frac{1}{83 \cdot 84} \cdot \left( \frac{(83 \cdot 32 - 84 \cdot 33)^2}{33 + 32} + \frac{(83 \cdot 42 - 84 \cdot 41)^2}{41 + 42} + \frac{(83 \cdot 10 - 84 \cdot 9)^2}{9 + 10} \right) = 0,07$ .

For  $\alpha = 0,05$  and the number of degrees of freedom  $\nu = c - 1 = 2$ , the critical value of the criterion  $\chi_K^2 = 5,99$ . Since  $\chi_p^2 < \chi_K^2$ , in accordance with the rule of decision-making, the results obtained do not give grounds for the rejection of the null hypothesis. In other words, the level of students' PDB of CG and EG at the beginning of the experiment did not differ significantly.

2. Based on the data from Table 9 we check the null hypothesis  $H_0: p_{1i} = p_{2i}$  ( $i = 1, 2, 3$ ), with the alternative hypothesis  $H_1: p_{1i} \neq p_{2i}$  for at least one of three categories. To test this hypothesis, the calculation of values of statistics of the criterion  $\chi^2$  is carried out by the formula. Let us determine the calculated value of statistics  $\chi_p^2$ :

$$\chi_p^2 = \frac{1}{83 \cdot 84} \cdot \left( \frac{(83 \cdot 17 - 84 \cdot 31)^2}{31 + 17} + \frac{(83 \cdot 49 - 84 \cdot 40)^2}{40 + 49} + \frac{(83 \cdot 18 - 84 \cdot 12)^2}{12 + 18} \right) = 6,19.$$

For  $\alpha = 0,05$  and the number of degrees of freedom  $\nu = c - 1 = 2$ , the critical value of the statistic criterion  $\chi_K^2 = 5,99$ . Since  $\chi_p^2 > \chi_K^2$ , according to the rule of decision-making, the null hypothesis with a probability of 0.95 is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is adopted. In other words, the levels of students' PDB of CG and EG differ significantly after the experiment. Thus, the results of statistical data processing prove the reliability of this study's results.

### Conclusions

Students of Ukrainian vocational high schools comprise the significant proportion of adolescents with PDB. Their social adaptation in conditions of vocational schools is a complex, multi-faceted,

synthetic, and dynamic process. Family, educators, social pedagogues/workers, psychologists are to play an important role in the initial process of students adapting to new lifestyle and learning. Their special training developed preventive work programmes and comprehensive diagnostics of deviation tendency accelerate the process of students' social adaptation and prevention of problem behaviour.

The results of the findings indicate that there is a significant positive effectiveness from implementing targeted preventive programmes directed on the lowering of PDB of vocational high school students. The programmes include educational, psychological and social components, based on principles of personification, motivation, informed social choice of action, positive realization of an individual in the group, gaining of adequate self-esteem and reflexive position, combination of measures of general and social prevention, mediated influence of preventive measures.

We see the opportunities for applying the research findings in domestic and foreign systems of social-pedagogical work with adolescents.

One of the possible limitations for a broader use of research findings is the amount of time needed to be dedicated to the organization of the proposed learning procedure.

We see future perspectives for the research in the further analysis and improvement of the content and forms of prevention of problem behaviour among adolescents.

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