

## PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES

### FORMATION OF GENDER COMPETENCE OF STUDENT YOUTH: VALUES THAT WE NEED

**Tetiana Kostina<sup>1</sup>**

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-126-8-30>

In 2013–2014, changes took place in Ukraine. The Revolution of Dignity updated the question of the values of Ukrainian society. Ukrainians have declared their desire to live in a democratic state and adhere to the fundamental democratic principles – freedom, equality and respect for human dignity. It is worth noting that the driving force of the Revolution of Dignity was the student youth, who were looking for changes and demanded it from Yanukovich's government. It was the youth who, with their activity, courage, and confidence, were able to initiate changes and lead others. Let us recall the first revolution in Ukraine – the student revolution on granite in 1990, which was also started by young Ukrainians. Thus, the youth of Ukraine is the driving force for changes.

Young people are the bearers of values that determine the further formation of the country. This means that the further development of our state will depend on whether the youth of Ukraine will adhere to democratic values or whether they will be necessary for their personality. The role of changing value orientations in changing generations is described in the works of the American sociologist and political scientist Ronald Inglehart («The Silent Revolution», 1977) [8]. Therefore, working with student youth is an essential step for Ukraine, which must be implemented. Ukraine's Silent Revolution must strengthen the state on the path to democracy and gender equality.

One of the essential functions of the university is to form the worldview of a young person. There must be an appropriate environment in which a person can feel safe, be free in their manifestations and able to realize themselves. The university environment should be free of gender stereotypes and gender discrimination.

Ukrainian universities are in the early stages of gender education and gender competence of participants in the educational process. There is a tolerant attitude to gender inequality in the higher education system. For example, the manifestation of inequality is a significant gender imbalance:

---

<sup>1</sup> Hryhorii Skovoroda University in Pereiaslav, Ukraine

only about 10% of rectors are women [3]. According to sociologist Dr. Tamara Martseniuk, there are also no rules in Ukrainian higher education institutions to fight sexual harassment [2]. We see a different approach in US universities: each participant in the educational process must be trained in a program to prevent sexual harassment [7]. The leadership of American universities is also working to establish a gender balance. Gender equality is a fundamental condition for creating a favorable psychological climate in student groups and university teams.

Gender competence is a necessary condition for forming a person who can make responsible and conscious decisions, work for the benefit of their community, protect vulnerable groups, and prevent gender-based violence. Unfortunately, we see manifestations of a low level of gender competence even at the level of deputies of the Verkhovna Rada: the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence) has not been ratified in Ukraine so far due to the words «gender» in it [1].

Besides, today in Ukrainian society, returning to «traditional» values (patriarchal system) is becoming more acute. The forces present in the media space (including at the level of deputies) are trying to discredit democratic values and return the country to another pole [5]. Gender equality has also been the target of such discrediting. Such processes need to be responded to by statesmen, public activists, representatives of the scientific and educational community as soon as possible. This situation shows the urgency of the development of gender competence of the population and implementation of gender education. We see such interaction as the most effective through cooperation with higher education institutions, first of all, with student youth.

Studying at the university, meeting new people, building friendly relations, going beyond the parental family create conditions for expanding the social activity of a young person. However, existing stereotypes, social expectations about gender roles, «hidden curriculum» can block a young person in his/her activity, in the disclosure of their own identity and in the desire to realize themselves in a particular profession [6; 9].

That is why the formation of the gender competence of young people is crucial. Gender education will enable young people to realize the negative impact of gender stereotypes and prejudices. It will allow them to interact with others based on the principles of respect and equality. It is also important to remember that a successful professional in today's world is a gender-competent professional. That is why introducing a gender approach, and the formation of gender competence of student youth is a vital task.

The basis of gender competence is knowledge of gender issues (the cognitive component). Values and respect for another human's

personality outside of gender stereotypes (emotional component). Introduction of knowledge and values in practice, adherence to the principles of gender equality in action – this is a behavioral component of gender competence.

The introduction of a course to increase the gender competence of students should promote gender equality among student youth. Training exercises, lectures, and discussions that will reveal gender stereotypes and their negative impact on the interaction between people will facilitate the ability of young people to recognize the manifestations of gender discrimination.

### References:

1. Baranovskaia M. (2020) Strasty po henderu: chto meshaet Ukraine ratyfytsyrovat Stambulskuiu konventsiyu [Gender passions: what prevents Ukraine from ratifying the Istanbul Convention]. *Deutsche Welle*. Retrieved from: <https://p.dw.com/p/3cXOU>
2. Hora O. (2019) Domahannia v universytetakh: Ukraina i SSHA [Harassment in universities: Ukraine and the USA]. Retrieved from: <https://studway.com.ua/domagannya-v-uni/>
3. Kohut I. (2014) Chym vidrizniaiutsia zhinky i choloviky: pro hendernu (ne)rivnist u vyshchii osviti [What is the difference between women and men: about gender (in) equality in higher education]. *Analitichnyi tsentr CEDOS*. Retrieved from: <https://www.cedos.org.ua/uk/articles/chym-vidrizniaiutsia-zhinky-i-choloviky-pro-hendernu-ne-rivnist-u-vyshchii-osviti>
4. Kurna O. (2017) Koly choloviky zverkhu, abo «skliana stelia» ukrainskoi vyshchoi osvity [When men are on top, or the «glass ceiling» of Ukrainian higher education]. *Hender v detaliakh*. Retrieved from: <https://genderindetail.org.ua/season-topic/osvita-i-prosvita/koli-choloviki-zverhu-abo-sklyana-stelya-ukrainskoi-vischoi-osviti-134076.html>
5. Rzhetska L. (2020) Skasuvaty «hender». Chomu ukrainski deputaty vzialysia zakhyshchaty tradytsiini tsinnosti [Cancel «gender». Why Ukrainian deputies undertook to defend traditional values]. *Deutsche Welle*. Retrieved from: <https://p.dw.com/p/3WaPd>
6. Iarskaia-Smyrnova E. (2000) Hendernoe neravenstvo v obrazovanii: poniatye skrytogo uchebnogo plana [Gender inequality in education: the concept of the hidden curriculum]. *Hendernye yssledovaniia*, 5, 295–301.
7. Harassment Prevention Training Courses. Stanford University. Retrieved from: <https://harass.stanford.edu/training>
8. Inglehart, R. (1977) *The Silent Revolution*, Princeton University Press.
9. Jackson, P.W. (1968) *Life in Classroom*. N.Y.: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.