



Российское студенческое волонтерство в достижении целей устойчивого развития: ограничения и условия для развития

О. В. ЗИНЕВИЧ, Е. А. МЕЛЁХИНА

АННОТАЦИЯ

Введение. Актуальность проблемы участия студентов Российских вузов в волонтерской деятельности в целях устойчивого развития (ЦУР) обусловлена потребностью в воспитании традиционных ценностей через участие студентов в инициативной совместной деятельности, направленной на решение экологических и социальных вопросов. В российской научной литературе недостает систематических исследований, подтверждающих, что волонтерское движение в студенческой среде способствует достижению ЦУР.

Цель исследования – определить ограничения и условия развития волонтерства среди студентов российских вузов как важного вида деятельности для достижения ЦУР.

Материалы и методы. Эмпирические материалы исследования включают вторичные данные социологических опросов, проведенных в российских вузах и описанных в научных публикациях, а также документы и материалы, размещенные на веб-сайтах университетов, государственных организаций и на порталах некоммерческих организаций. Анализ источников проводился в контексте социокультурного и институционального подходов.

Результаты. Ограничивающими факторами для развития студенческого волонтерства являются: 1) недостаточное внимание руководства университетов к ЦУР при формировании программ развития; 2) развитие университетов на принципах предпринимательства, вследствие чего волонтерство рассматривается как часть стратегии получения материальной или нематериальной выгоды; 3) государственное регулирование программ развития университетов как фактор сдерживания инициативы «снизу»; 4) влияние коммерциализации образования на мотивацию волонтеров.

Условиями для роста студенческого волонтерства являются: 1) стратегия развития университетов на выполнение миссии социально-экономического и культурного развития региона и страны; 2) горизонтальная коммуникация и благоприятная экосистема формирования ответственных граждан; 3) образовательная и воспитательная деятельность на основе ценностей, мотивирующих к волонтерской деятельности.

Заключение. Несмотря на то, что третья миссия университетов предполагает активную вовлеченность университетов в решение социальных проблем города и региона, реализация ЦУР не включена в приоритетные направления развития вузов. Студенческое волонтерство может стать действенной силой в решении социальных и экологических проблем при создании в вузе соответствующей экосистемы.

КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА

студенческое волонтерство, цели устойчивого развития, ценности

Для цитирования: Зиневиц О. В., Мелёхина Е. А. Российское студенческое волонтерство в достижении целей устойчивого развития: ограничения и условия для развития // Перспективы науки и образования. 2025. № 4. С. 57–70. <https://doi.org/10.32744/pse.2025.4.4>

Поступила: 21.02.2024 | Одобрена: 27.04.2025 | Опубликовано: 31.08.2025



Лицензия «С указанием авторства — С сохранением условий». Позволяет перерабатывать, исправлять и развивать произведения при условии указания авторства и лицензирования производных работ на аналогичных условиях.



Russian university students volunteering for attaining sustainable development goals: limitations and conditions for development

O. V. ZINEVICH, E. A. MELEKHINA

ABSTRACT

Introduction. The relevance of the study of Russian university students' volunteering for attaining sustainable development goals (SDG) is ensured by the need for fostering traditional values through the initiative participation of students in collective joint activity aimed at settling ecological and social issues. In Russian scientific literature, there is a shortage of publications about systematic research demonstrating that organization of volunteering in a university environment makes it possible to direct that kind of activity at attaining the SDG. Thus, *the aim of the study* is to define limitations and conditions for development of volunteering among Russian university students to achieve the SDG.

Materials and methods. The empirical research materials include secondary data of sociological surveys carried out in Russian universities and described in research articles. The main sources of information were documents and materials from the web-sites of the government, universities and non-profit organizations. The analysis of data was carried out within the context of sociocultural and institutional approaches.

Results. The limitations influencing the development of university students' volunteering for attaining the SDG are the following: 1) insufficient universities' attention to the SDG at planning the programs of strategic development; 2) the development of universities on entrepreneurial principles, with volunteering being the part of the strategy for gaining material or non-material benefits; 3) state regulation of universities as a factor of excessive bureaucratization deterring the 'grassroots' initiative; 4) the commercialization of education influences the volunteers' motivation who prefer target-event volunteering with some material awards to the solution of acute social problems.

The conditions for growth are: 1) universities' strategy to fulfil the mission of social, economic and cultural development of a region and the country; 2) horizontal communication and favorable ecosystem for fostering responsible citizens; 3) education and upbringing on the basis of values motivating to volunteering

Conclusion. In spite of the key message of the University 3.0 mission to be actively involved into community service of the city or the region, the attainment of the SDG is not included into the basic lines of development strategies of most Russian universities. University students' volunteering can become the powerful force in solving social and ecological problems when appropriate ecosystem is created at universities.

KEYWORDS

students' volunteering, goals of sustainable development, values

For Citation: Zinevich, O. V., & Melekhina E. A. (2025). Russian university students volunteering for attaining sustainable development goals: limitations and conditions for development. *Perspektivy nauki i obrazovaniya* = *Perspectives of Science and Education*, (4), 57–70. <https://doi.org/10.32744/pse.2025.4.4>

Received: 21February 2025 | Approved: 27 April 2025 | Published: 31 August 2025



This is an open access article distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike International License (CC-BY-SA 4.0) that allows others to share the work with an acknowledgement of the work's authorship and initial publication in this journal

INTRODUCTION

Over the last decades, the global concept of sustainable development and its application to higher education has been one of the key issues on the agenda of international summits and conferences. United Nations agencies, the international community and scientists have developed the international understanding of sustainable development. With the higher education system seen by the UNESCO as a key driver of sustainable development, universities are focused on developing sustainable leaders for national economies through engagement with both regional and global actors involved into providing sustainable future for further generations [44]. Russian universities' programs of strategic development also aim at solving such critical international and local problems as 'industry, innovation and infrastructure', 'peace, justice and strong institutions', 'zero hunger', 'climate action', 'good health and well-being' [45]. These issues remain on the top of the agenda under conditions of unipolar world and global management crisis [13].

It is increasingly evident that there are a number of common globally recognized problems (e.g. ecological problems) which cannot be solved locally by one country alone. Even one local ecological disaster can lead to the consequences going far beyond one region and one country. And on the contrary, the global problems all countries are confronted with should be alleviated at a local level. Currently, the major global problems of sustainable development of the humanity and nature not only remain relevant but are gaining new acuteness. They include environmental damage; growing social inequality; social disaffection; internal nationalism; job redundancy; strengthening of conservative attitudes and beliefs; revival of superstitions; international conflicts; terrorism; diseases and pandemic. People should be educated to be aware of such problems and take responsibility for their solutions worldwide, which can be done through volunteering.

The role of education is defined by J. Son and J. Wilson as a prominent one in the theory of volunteering, that treats volunteering as a 'form of human capital enabling people to perform unpaid work for those in need, for organizations to which they belong or that they wish to support, and for causes in which they believe' [37, p. 831]. Education provides people with the sense of control over their lives which is beneficial for their involvement into the process of volunteering. All over the world, universities undertake volunteering initiatives and design volunteering programs for their students to develop more ecologically conscious behavior. Russian universities also have their ways in contributing to education for sustainable development.

In the situation of global turbulence and Russia's isolation from participation in international projects there appears a part of skepticism about necessity to pursue the goals of sustainable development (SDG) on the national level as far as those goals are founded on liberal globalists' ideas which do not coincide with traditional values of the Russian society. More often the authors of research publications emphasize that 'currently notional and conceptual complex 'sustainable development' is incorporated into the theoretical framework of conceptualization of the liberal globalization decline' [21, p. 273].

The known values of western democracy and capitalism, based on the ideas of private property, social contract and liberal ethics understood as freedom in combination with individualism and pragmatism, are no more universal. The process of globalization under the banner of universalized values of western democracy is being in decline. The reverse process that can be called national and cultural localization is taking place. On the one hand, nations declare their own civilizational way of development, on the other hand, the civilizational values of a nation seem to be the foundation for uniting countries and peoples. In this regard, one of the recent ideological innovations of the Chinese leadership introducing the concept of 'global human community with common destiny' can be considered as an example [16, p. 5].

In the face of oncoming world economic crisis, geopolitical confrontation, growth of nationalist resurgence and religious intolerance it is vitally important to address the issue of global cooperation for building the foundation for preservation of bio- and noosphere of the Earth and providing conditions for the well-being of further generations of people on the basis of the concept of sustainable development adopted by the majority of the world countries. There remains the necessity to solve global problems with the view of universal values such as life preservation, security and justice [19]. And the SDG strive for establishing balance of various economic, ecological and social interests on local and global levels and attaining optimal conditions for co-existence of various economic paradigms and social and cultural structures.

The contribution of higher education institutions to pursuing the SDG is documented in multiple international reports and research publications emphasizing positive impact of such activity both for community and participating individuals [4, p. 97]. Universities are taking responsibility for the provision of theoretical and practical training of their students and personnel to acquire sustainable lifestyles, to foster values and beliefs based on respect for human rights and nonviolence [2]. By doing so universities focus on 'developing all three educational missions – teaching and learning, scientific research, and community service' [24], which is often provided through students' volunteering.

The studies on students' volunteering activities are mostly focused on experiential discourse [6], with theoretical consideration of sustainability being insufficient in publications by Russian scientists, who theorize on pedagogical aspects of volunteering [46] or its role in developing prosocial behavior [14]. Thus, the aim of this article is to define limitations and conditions for developing Russian university students' volunteering as an important activity for attaining the SDG. Special attention is paid to the necessity of adopting special volunteering attitude based on the combination of universal and national values.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In explaining the term 'volunteering' researchers identify three characteristic features of that kind of activity: it should be done without financial gain; it should be undertaken according to the individual's free will; as a social activity it should be beneficial for society. According to the International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences 'volunteerism is a form of helping in which people actively seek out opportunities to assist others in need, make considerable and continuing commitments to provide assistance, and sustain these commitments over extended periods of time, often at considerable personal cost' [12, p. 16308-16311].

As a social phenomenon volunteering has been known over centuries but the start of the modern history of the volunteerism development can be dated back to the beginning of the 21st century when the United Nations declared the World Year of Volunteers in 2001. The concept of volunteering formulated by the UN General Assembly in 2001 is defined as 'an important component of any strategy aimed at poverty reduction, sustainable development and social integration, in particular overcoming social exclusion and discrimination' [43]. One of the reasons for attaching such a significant importance to volunteering was the analysis of the possibilities of joint efforts of governments of various countries to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals [43].

It is the volunteering as non-for-profit involvement in municipal and regional events with social participation mission that demonstrates to the highest degree such universal human values as life preservation, safety and justice, which underlie the needs of a man for belonging to society, respect and acceptance. These values are universal because they recognize the importance of basic (related to species) principles of human existence as of biological and social creatures. At the same time these values are specific and full of meaning related to the place of living – its landscape, technological and economic development as well as traditions and culture codes passed on from generation to generation.

According to K. Smith et al. volunteering initiatives of young people are closely related with educational institutions through such education-based programs as "service learning" or "community service" which can be optional or mandatory [36]. Their research findings prove that 'students who volunteer are active both within their university and in the wider community' [36, p. 78] and stakeholders should recognize and measure their volunteering contributions.

Volunteering can be considered to be the means of evoking and cultivating the feeling of solidarity and unity through joining efforts and collaboration based on charity. Thus, the Executive Order of the President of the Russian Federation N809 'On approving the Fundamentals of State Policy to Preserve and Strengthen Traditional Russian Spiritual and Moral Values' as of 09.11.2022 aims at preserving such traditional values as 'life, dignity, human rights and freedoms <...> humanism, charity, justice, collectivism, mutual assistance and mutual respect, historical memory [5].

As reported by E.E. Ruslyakova, E.M. Razumova and E.Yu. Shpakovskaya, university students engaged in volunteering have stronger motivation for social contacts and experience less fear of

being rejected by other people than those students who do not participate in the volunteer activities. The researchers have proved that most volunteers are motivated by achievement and gain positive emotions from communication [29].

The positive impact of university students' volunteering on relieving the psychological tension caused in the Philippine society by the pandemic is reported in the article by S. Toquero and K. Talidong. Under the guidance of teachers, students of the University of Mindanao posted on Facebook information from the World Health Organization about the characteristics of the coronavirus and measures to prevent the spread of infection, created infographics and maintained communication in a virtual environment under conditions of limited 'real' communication [41].

In explaining Australian universities students' positive attitudes and outcomes of volunteering practice for sustainable development, R.H. Scott and E. van Etten underline that such practice is consistent with core principles of education for sustainable development, namely:

- *transformation and change* – participation in volunteering helps to gain practical skills and hope for the possibility of change;
- *education for all and lifelong learning* – by interacting with people of various ages and backgrounds representing local community students acquire understanding of the two-way character of the process of learning which can take place not only in the classroom but in real life situations outside educational institutions;
- *systems thinking* – volunteering enhances understanding of the inter-disciplinary character of sustainability;
- *envisioning a better future* – collaboration with people sharing the same views on sustainable future makes students adopt positive attitude towards sustainable life;
- *critical thinking and reflection* – participating students are required to reflect on their volunteering practice with the purpose to relate the gained experience with their future profession, thus assuming responsibility for taking care of natural resources of the local area;
- *partnerships for change* – the volunteering practice is a means both for students and university to be involved into the life of the local community and establish professionally important connections and networks [31].

The case of Chinese university students volunteering for one-year teaching in distantly located rural areas describes two motivational 'push' and 'pull' factors influencing the decision to volunteer: push factor – to gain admission to master's programs in top universities, pull factor– to take advantage of an important learning opportunity for enhancing competences and career prospects [51]. The author of the case-study research underlines that students involved into volunteering by the one of the factors can develop the needs related to another factor that is students' decision to volunteer is shaped by coexisting factors.

In the study of factors influencing students' motivation to environmental volunteering, N.A. Rahman identifies such factors as the opportunity of personal development in terms of acquiring knowledge and skills important for a future job and as the occasion to cope with negative emotions, while the most important values of environmental volunteering are egoistic, biospheric, altruistic, and religious ones [26]. It is worth noting that according to the author 'university students play a crucial role in inspiring others to participate in environmental volunteering' [26, p. 177] in Malaysia which is in line with the SDG.

Russian scientists emphasize that university's activity on attaining the SDG is defined by its mission, which stipulates the intention to be open to external challenges and to function in the interests of the region and/ or city, and to become a sustainable university. The domestic researchers carry out the studies on universities' experience in working towards the SDG, particularly the ones dealing with ecology. In the publications about international and national practice of universities' sustainable development, the following key factors of success are discussed:

- involvement of considerable amount of participants from students and stakeholders;
- effective interaction of university teaching staff and administration;

- goal-setting with taking into account the real needs of people and developing criteria of achievement;
- understanding of the importance of the SDG and voluntary participation in the process of their achievement;
- efficient system of material and non-material stimulation by university administration [8];
- cross-curricular ecological education;
- launching ecology-based programs, such as engineering ecology and management of resources; policy and management of natural resources; ecological technologies, and other programs [18];
- service learning as a new area of pedagogical practice in Russia [22].

However, the issue of the role of students' voluntary activity in accomplishing the third mission of universities has not yet been properly considered. Undoubtedly, the state regulation and financing of the programs of universities' development establishes organizational and legal framework for attaining the SDG and building up sustainable universities (e.g. creating 'green' campus or designing open educational platform). But for successful SDG implementation it is necessary to adopt a complex approach of environmental and social management with involvement of various stakeholders acting in the interests of sustainable development. In reality, organization of such voluntary activity relies on creating an ecosystem allowing involving into executing sustainable development programs as many actors as possible initiatively and voluntarily [40].

The reviewed literature allows to conclude that there are various factors influencing university students' decision to engage into volunteering. The universities should pay more attention to students' motives in this activity and become more proactive in volunteering to achieve the SDG.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses socio-cultural and institutional approaches. The sociocultural approach examines the influence of social and cultural environment on personality development. In this regard volunteering as a social and cultural phenomenon is beneficial both for individuals (volunteers or other individuals) and society at large.

The institutional approach focuses on higher educational institutions to explain universities involvement into achieving the SDG. It is based on the belief that universities volunteering practice is influenced by the external institutional environment on regional and national levels.

The results of research on volunteering are analyzed retrospectively, which allows understanding students' motives for volunteering and the values they cherish in regards to the SDG. Empiric material has been taken from secondary sources and includes statistical data and results of sociological surveys carried out in Russian universities and described in research articles published in nationally and internationally recognized journals as well as in conference proceedings. The main sources of information on volunteering for sustainable development were: the UN and UNESCO documents and reports; the documents issued by the Russian Federation government; materials posted on universities' websites as well as on non-profit organizations' portals, such as Rospatriotcenter.ru and Dobro.ru.

RESULTS

The received results fall into two broad categories of limitations influencing the attainment of sustainable development goals through university students' volunteering and conditions for development.

Limitations

1. In spite of the fact that Russian universities organize various activities and events with the help of volunteers (Table 1), with students being part of volunteering movement, volunteering for the SDG cannot be considered self-sustained institution. More often than not it is incorporated into volunteering activity of society at large or is included into universities' development programs along with the SDG as one of the ways to accomplish the third mission of universities. Volunteering at universities seems to be optional supplement to other (financed and obligatory) kinds of activity. As reported by Yu.A. Skokova, I.I. Krasnopol'skaya and I.E. Korneeva, the most popular and highly demanded areas of volunteering among young people are occasional target-event volunteering, social volunteering and volunteering in the field of preserving historical and cultural heritage [35].

Table 1

Areas of university students' volunteering activity

Areas of university students' volunteering activity	Types of events and activities
Social care	Adaptation of first-years students to university environment [15]; charity: Donation of blood and Charity festivals 'White cane'; Humanitarian aid giving campaigns [15]; care of elderly people and disabled children; promotion of healthy lifestyle; [20];
Culture	Care of historical monuments and memorial places; organizing quizzes about local history and culture for children [20]; help in libraries - organization of excursions for customers, help with sorting out library collections [26];
Animal welfare	Charity fundraising for animal shelters [20];
Target-event	Help in organizing big sport and cultural events; cultural events: 'Museum Night', 'Library night', 'Music night' [26];
Ecology	Separate collection of waste [34]; occasional cleaning of university campus and keeping it in order [19];
Patriotism	Organization of events commemorating Great Patriotic War; activities for providing humanitarian aid and medication for soldiers participating in the special military operation [27];
Pandemic	Information and social support of elderly or disabled people; digital support of teachers in online teaching; [34; 37]

The results of the study on volunteering initiated by the Rospatriotcenter [27] demonstrate how university students who participated in the on-line survey ranked the areas of volunteering which in their opinion needed more active involvement of volunteers (Table 2).

Table 2

The areas of volunteering demanding more attention (university students' opinion)

Area of volunteering activity	% of answers
Health care	12,5 %
Ecology	11,1%
Animal welfare	9,9 %
Social care	9,7%
Education	9,5%
Local community issues	1,7%

As for the areas of volunteering the students would like to participate, they fell into four categories, which have very little in common with the SDG (Table 3).

The survey results show that students are not interested in such volunteer activities as protecting civil and political rights (2%) and help to homeless people (1.6%) [27].

2. Developing in accordance with business enterprise model, a university supports volunteering as a part of the strategy for making profit, such as grants, public image enhancement, recruiting applicants, establishing partnerships with government and business structures. As a result, the possibilities of developing students' volunteering for the SDG are reduced by the fact that it is carried out within the context of business processes and its utmost goal is not voluntary unpaid contribution to public welfare. Researchers emphasize that majority of young people do not display 'sustainable' environmental behavior and correlate environment protection with their personal life. On the one hand, students are not ready to take any responsibility for the state of the environment; on the other hand, university administrations do not support students' sustainable volunteering initiatives opposing them to the importance of educational process [23]. As stated in the report on the results of the survey undertaken by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation in 2023 only one third of Russian universities included courses on volunteering into their programs on optional basis, but only 38% of responding students knew about it, and 40% of students found it difficult to answer. 36% of students had taken such courses, while 53% of respondents would like to study volunteering [48].

Table 3

The areas of volunteering the students are ready to participate

Area of volunteering activity	% of answers
Animal welfare (help to animal shelters)	9,4%
Help to orphaned children	9%
Ecology (improvement of the territory)	8,9%
Sport events	8,6%
Education	9,5%
Local community issues	1,7%

3. The direct governmental control over universities is the deterring factor for volunteering. Undoubtedly, state regulation and financing of universities' development programs impose required organizational and legal regulations for achieving the SDG and creating sustainable universities ('green campus' or open educational platform). At the same time excessive 'bureaucratization' in organizing various activities stifles 'grassroots' initiative.

According to the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings 2024, Russian universities sustainability performance is assessed as rather modest – only 50 have been included into the list of institutions 'fostering a collective commitment to building sustainable campuses for the future' [42]. The top positions on the list hold two universities: RUDN – 22nd rank and Siberian Federal University – 69th rank. Other universities are positioned below one hundredth position.

4. Commercialization of education influences volunteers' motivation (e.g. expectation of gratification, self-promotion). The dominant number of students surveyed (67%) chose target event volunteering such as participation in sports, cultural and leisure events. Only 33% of respondents expressed interest in social volunteering. The interest in target-event volunteering is explained by financial support of such events from state or local governments as well as by the opportunity for students to gain professional skills and expand social connections [46]. It can be assumed that university volunteers are not always motivated by ideas of achieving the SDG in the long run. The result 'here and now' cannot be understood within the vision of the future of humanity.

Conditions for development

1. University students tend to be more self-motivated for volunteering than students of secondary or vocational schools and colleges, which can be explained by their orientation towards social efficiency and need for personal self-realization stimulated by educational environment of universities offering various forms of volunteering training and activities [34]. That is why one of the main conditions for developing students volunteering for the SDG is the revision of the university baseline strategy in terms of its involvement into community orientated activity. The accomplishment of the

university's third mission through contributing to society and territory development is described by means of various typologies of basic behavioral strategies. In compliance with the typology of basic behavioral strategies proposed by V.V. Akberdina and E.V. Vasilenko [1] the leading strategy for Russian universities is 'university managed by the government'. The same is relevant to the situation with Russian students' volunteering because it is oriented to the needs of the state [24]. To become more effective in volunteering Russian educational system needs implementing the strategy 'university managed by the government plus 'grassroots initiative', which could stimulate students' initiative extracurricular activity [1].

2. New possibilities for students' volunteering are offered by horizontal communication and ecosystem creation which on voluntary basis contribute to improving ecology and promote social equity. Such platform as Dobro.ru provides free on-line courses, informs about projects, competitions and best practices. Anyone can join the community of concerned citizens on Dobro.ru. One of the areas for volunteering practice can be found in inclusive education because inclusive volunteering forms axiological basis in the structure of a personality. Inclusive volunteering aims to provide individual assistance to disabled people and persons with health limitations, ensuring the development of moral values and professionally significant values in the structure of students' personal qualities [30].

3. Motivation for the SDG volunteering is based on sharing the values connected with ecology (environmental preservation) and social problems (poverty and other types of inequality, pandemics, treatment of disabled people, etc.). That is why, it is necessary for universities to provide conditions for developing 'volunteer's motivation' on the basis of universal human and national values through the following provisions:

- designing special courses on philosophical anthropology, history of volunteering in western and eastern secular and religious traditions, Russian volunteering, Russian philosophy, specificity of the SDG volunteering;
- incorporate service learning into educational programs [32, p. 45];
- promoting volunteering practice of inclusive education;
- fostering values and motivation for the SDG volunteering as an integrated part the strategy of upbringing volunteers' worldview among Russian university students.

DISCUSSION

Volunteering is one of the key instruments in solving many social and ecological problems facing the humanity, and universities as educational institutions preparing highly qualified specialists that are responsible for the well-being of future generations tend to incorporate volunteering into strategic plans of their development.

The goal of achieving sustainable development was implicit in the national development programs of Russian universities (Project 5-100) and other two successively launched by the Russian government programs for the development of the country's universities: the program of financial support and development of Flagship universities (2016-2021) and the Priority 2030 program (launched in 2021). According to the 'Territorial and Sectoral Leadership' track, the priority is the university's contribution to the comprehensive development of the region: the university in cooperation with business, governmental organizations and civil society structures, becomes the leader in the development of the region, which gives rise to the development of such qualities as consistency and sustainability. As for the Russian programs of the development of the system of higher education they make provisions for universities to incorporate the SDG into the strategies of development for the benefit of regions and universities themselves, with volunteering being one of the instruments of achieving those goals.

The period of university studies is considered to be the best time to start a career of volunteer because students go through various stages of socialization, cultural development, broadening social experience, conforming to social norms, assuming new social roles and forms of communication. For a good reason J.E. Francis says that university students are an 'especially important segment in

the volunteering context <...> because the potential career-related benefits are particularly aligned with the needs of students' [7, p.4]. In this regard one cannot but agree with C. Holdsworth and J. Quinn who say that university students' volunteering is beneficial for the following reasons: students acquire new skills and extend their employability profile; universities improve relations with local communities and organizations; the recipients of volunteering activities get access to additional or enhanced services and conveniences [10].

The same impact of volunteering on students is achieved in Russian universities which is discussed by Yu.V. Shosina, who emphasizes that students' volunteering during the COVID-19 pandemic gained new social relevance as it necessitated the revival of such moral and ethical values as altruism, mutual assistance and support, charity, help to those who find themselves in difficult situations. In the period of isolation during the pandemic time students (small minority of the total number of Russian university students) delivered products and medication to elderly or disabled people, which was beneficial, both for the students in terms of personal development and for the elderly people in terms of reducing the feelings of loneliness and isolation [33].

In spite of the fact that students' volunteering deals with various aspects of social life the most popular activity among university volunteers is assistance in organizing cultural, sports, and scientific events, which is in line with M.A. Maznichenko and G.S. Papazyan, who write about mass volunteering participation of students in big sport or social events. The authors confirm that event-target volunteering experience gained in such events as Olympic games or III Russian Investment Forum stimulated students' personal development in terms of 'communication skills, responsibility, stress resistance, social activity, hard work, leadership qualities, initiative' [17, p. 89]. The volunteering students also found new life motives and meanings, started to pursue the values and goals, which they had not set before participating in the projects [17].

It is not surprisingly that occasional sport and culture target-event volunteering seems very attractive for most students because of the rich program of the events and involvement of diversified multicultural population. And it is in agreement with the study of K. Smith et al. who say that 'tertiary education students <...> prefer occasional participation in volunteering' [36, p.77], while volunteering for the SDG requires time and persistency in solving social or ecological problems for the benefits of future generations. So far the concept of sustainable development has not been on the agenda of students' volunteer organizations, although the focus on the SDG could deepen students' understanding of the strategic goals of environmental and social volunteering [52].

As far as social volunteering is concerned it is not very popular among Russian university students because it is emotionally engaging and involves empathy, compassion, willingness to help on the side of volunteers. That fact correlates with the findings of A.C. Ariza et al. who say that young people understand the importance of social volunteering, but most of them do not participate actively [2]. Social volunteering is based on traditional historically formed universal values, such as mercy and charity that correlate with Russian national values and lays the foundation of collectivism, patriotism, public consciousness, and humanism. University students need to be educated to share those values and beliefs through volunteering, and it is in agreement with F. Gil et al. who write that the benefits of social contribution are manifold and behaviors that involve giving to others are 'linked to healthy psychological, behavioral, and physical profiles' of volunteers [9, p. 2582].

To become ready to more actively participate in social volunteering students need to be not only more informed about volunteer activities but also psychologically prepared and recognized for the engagement. That is why I. Williamson et al. focused their research on psychological support for student volunteers with the purpose to raise their adaptability, grow as personalities, develop communicative competence, stress resistance, form a value-semantic sphere, and enhance leadership qualities [49]. Moreover, students need recognition for the volunteering engagement on the part of their university community – peers, teachers and authorities, which can become an intensifying factor in building a more engaged society [28].

When speaking about fostering sustainable values and beliefs in university students through volunteering practice it is necessary to note that much depends on the leaders of university volunteers' organizations who, according to Y. Wu and L. Xu, could 'in a sincere manner pass on the values and beliefs of volunteer service to volunteers' and ensure the stimulating climate of the volunteer's organization [50, p. 860]. And those leaders of university volunteers who organize events commemorating the Great Patriotic War or activities for providing humanitarian aid and medication

for soldiers participating in special military operation greatly contribute to fostering and preservation of traditional Russian values among the students, who now demonstrate insufficiently developed altruistic qualities and readiness to give to others.

It seems reasonable that volunteering should become an integrated part of university ecosystem. Ecosystems cover three main areas of organizational activity -environmental, economic and social. While the concept and practices of sustainable development are mainly focused on the role of social institutions (government, business, and civil society institutions) in maintaining sustainability, the ecosystem approach concerns the joint (coordinated) activities of institutions and individuals to create networks of human-centered educational systems that maintain balance with the natural environment. These networks of 'interconnected and diversified agents participating in the process of learning / education / life-long development' are positioned at the center of developing ecosystem [38]. Ecosystems represent flexible networks with horizontal non-hierarchical structures promoting innovative ideas and attracting motivated actors, especially from students' communities, who are ready to participate in various eco-projects.

CONCLUSION

In Russian universities, the concept of sustainable development is not on the top of the agenda for strategic development. Most of 'sustainable' activities of a university are undertaken at municipal or regional levels with the focus on environmental and social issues, organizing urban space, and creating an ecosystem for the university itself. However, the mission of achieving the SDG is still of vital importance. It is consistent with the third mission of the university in terms of social participation, aimed at promoting social justice and solving environmental problems. One of the demanding tasks of a modern university is to invest into the development of society and it can be accomplished on motivated non-commercial voluntary basis.

University students' volunteering has the potential to solve many acute social and ecological problems and to stimulate formation of traditional universal values and development of civic engagement and public spirit. It is volunteering that is one of the most important institutions of civil society functioning through numerous volunteer practices. And many universities design courses on volunteering and introduce practice of giving to those who are in a difficult situation. But the areas of students' volunteering are focused mostly on animal and orphaned children care, and target-event volunteering like music festivals or sport championships, though volunteering for sustainable development such as help to homeless people, solving ecological problems and ensuring inclusion remains unpopular.

To increase students' involvement into volunteering for sustainable development universities should assume social responsibility as one of the key goals of their strategic development and concentrate more attention on fostering traditional universal and national values in students. The creation of university ecosystems, in which volunteers are equal agents, provides a stimulating environment assigning to volunteering meanings correlating with both universal values and cultural codes of Russian society. Thus, the role of students' volunteering in achieving the goals of Sustainable Development may increase, which gives way to further research.

REFERENCES

1. Akberdina V. V., Vasilenko E. V. The University as a Participant of the Regional Innovation Ecosystem: A Typology of Basic Behavioral Strategies. *University Management: Practice and Analysis*, 2022, vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 9–26. DOI: 10.15826/umpa.2022.02.009 (in Russ.)
2. Ariza A.C., Garcia E.G., Magaña E.C., Sanches-Rivas E. Volunteering in the University Context: Student Perception and Participation. *Education Sciences*, 2020, no. 10(12), p. 380. DOI: 10.3390/educsci10120380
3. Berchin I. I., de Aguiar Dutra A. R. and Guerra J. B. S. O. A. How do higher education institutions promote sustainable development? A literature review. *Sustainable development*, 2021, no. 6(29), pp. 1204–1222. DOI: 10.1002/sd.2219
4. Caputo F., Ligorio L., Pizzi S. The Contribution of Higher Education Institutions to the SDGs – An Evaluation of Sustainability Reporting Practices. *Administrative Sciences*, 2021, vol.11, no. 3, p. 97. DOI: 10.3390/

- admsci11030097
5. Executives Order of the President of the Russian Federation of November 9, 2022 No. 809 'On Approving the Fundamentals of State Policy for the Preservation and Strengthening of Traditional Russian Spiritual and Moral Values'. Available at: <http://en.kremlin.ru/acts/news/69810> (accessed 17 December 2024)
6. Flud N.A., Dashkevich P.M. Contribution of the volunteering to the achievement of sustainable development goals. *Sustainable Development: Ecological, Economic and Social Aspects. Collection of Scientific Articles*, Saint Petersburg, 2021, pp. 218-229 (in Russ.)
7. Francis J.E. The functions and norms that drive university student volunteering. *Journal of Philanthropy and Marketing*, 2011, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 1-12. DOI: 10.1002/nvsm.390
8. Gavrilyeva, T.N., Sugimoto, A., Fujii, M., Yamanaka, P., Pavlov, G.N., Kirollin, D.A. Sustainable Development of Universities: International and Russian Practices. *Higher Education in Russia*, 2018, vol. 27, no. 7, pp. 52-65. DOI: 10.31992/0869-3617-2018- 27-7-52-65 (in Russ.)
9. Gil F., Sharon B., Shlomi H., Tirtzha C., Lilach B. M., Ariela G., Yossi H. F., Riki T. After school: Volunteering in community emergency services and substance use among Israeli adolescents. *Psychology in the Schools*, 2023, no. 60, pp. 2579–2591. DOI: 10.1002/pits.22878
10. Holdsworth C. and Quinn J. The Epistemological Challenge of Higher Education Student Volunteering: "Reproductive" or "Deconstructive" Volunteering? *Antipode*, 2012, vol. 44, no. 2, pp. 386–405. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-8330.2011.00844
11. Hui L. Let the Idea of a Human Community with a Common Destiny Illuminate the Whole World! *Far East Studies*, 2019, no. 1, pp. 4-12 (in Russ.)
12. International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2001, pp. 16308-16311. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/B0080430767013711> (accessed 17 December 2024)
13. Ivanov I.S. What Are the Core Benefits of Multilateralism at the Present Stage? / Speech at the 11th Beijing World Peace Forum, July 3, 2023. Available at: <https://russiancouncil.ru/en/analytics-and-comments/analytics/what-are-the-core-benefits-of-multilateralism-at-the-present-stage/> (accessed 17 December 2024)
14. Kislyakov P. A., Shmeleva E. A., Gowin O. Contemporary volunteering in the formation of prosocial behavior of a person. *The Education and Science Journal*, 2019, vol. 6, no. 21, pp. 122–145. DOI: 10.17853/1994-5639-2019-6-122-145
15. Kozilova L.V., Chvyakin V.A. Student volunteering: traditions, promising directions, experience. *National Association of Scientists*, 2021, no. 73, pp. 38-41. DOI: 10.31618/nas.2413-5291.2021.4.73.508 (in Russ.)
16. Li H. Let the Idea of a Human Community with a Common Destiny Illuminate the Whole World! *Problems of the Far East*, 2019, no.1, pp. 4-12. DOI: 10.31857/S013128120004580-9
17. Maznichenko M.A., Papazjan G.S. Upbringing potential of student event-target volunteership. *Russian and Foreign Pedagogy*, 2019, vol. 1, no. 6(63), pp. 80–97. DOI: 10.24411/2224-0772-2019-10045
18. Mazurov Yu.L., Bancheva A.I. Higher Environmental Education in Japan: Social Mission and National Peculiarities. *Higher Education in Russia*, 2021, vol. 30, no. 5, pp. 138-149. DOI: 10.31922/0869-3617-2021-30-5-138-149 (in Russ.)
19. Momdzhyan K.Kh. On the problem of universal values. *Voprosy Filosofii*, 2020, vol. 3, pp. 25–41. DOI: 10.21146/0042-8744-2020-3-25-41 (in Russ.)
20. Moskvina I.V. Volunteer activity as a means of moral education of future teachers. *World of Science. Pedagogy and psychology*, 2022, no. 10(3): 10PDMN322. Available at: <https://mir-nauki.com/PDF/10PDMN322.pdf> (accessed 17 December 2024) (in Russ.)
21. Nekrasov S.N. Sustainable Development – a New Life for the Old Concept of Liberal Ideology of Globalizers. Social Processes in Modern Russian Society: Problems and Prospects. *Proceedings of the IV All-Russia Scientific Conference with International Participation, Irkutsk*, 2020, pp. 271-275 (in Russ.)
22. Nikolskiy V.S. Service Learning in Russia: Scoping Review. *Higher Education in Russia*, 2023, vol. 32, no. 12, pp. 9-28. DOI: 10.31992/0869-3617-2023- 32- 12-9-28 (in Russ.)
23. Nyatina N.V. Volunteering in student assessments: advantages and barriers. *Society: Sociology, Psychology, Pedagogics*, 2022, no. 3, pp. 30–33. DOI: 10.24158/spp.2022.3.4 (in Russ.)
24. Owens T.L. Higher education in the sustainable development goals framework. *European Journal of Education*, 2017, no. 52, pp. 414–420. DOI: 10.1111/ejed.12237
25. Pevnaya M.V., Drozdova A.A. Cultural Volunteering of University Students: Assessment of Participation Experience and Potential for Development. *Higher Education in Russia*, 2022, vol. 31, no. 8-9, pp. 41-57. DOI: 10.31992/0869-3617-2022-31- 8-9-41-57 (in Russ.)
26. Rahman N.A. Values Orientation Towards Intention to Sustain in Environmental Volunteering: Views from University Students. *International Journal of Education*, 2022, no. 14(3), pp. 169-180. DOI: 10.5296/ije.v14i3.20106
27. Report on the survey of the potential for the development of volunteerism in the Russian Federation. Rospatriot Program. Available at: <https://rospatriotcentr.ru/upload/report.pdf> (accessed 17 December 2024)
28. Resch K., Knapp M., Schritteser I. How do universities recognize student volunteering? A symbolic interactionist perspective on the recognition of student engagement in higher education. *European Journal of Higher Education*, 2022, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 194-210. DOI: 10.1080/21568235.2021.1919170
29. Ruslyakova E.E., Razumova E.M., and Shpakovskaya E.Yu. Social and psychological aspects of volunteer activity of psychology students. *Perspektivy nauki i obrazovania = Perspectives of Science and Education*,

- 2019, no. 37 (1), pp. 301-315. DOI: 10.32744/pse.2019.1.22 (in Russ.)
30. Salavatulina L.R., Shabalina A.A., VasilenkoYe.A. Didactical toolkit for forming readiness for inclusive volunteering in future teachers. *The Herald of South-Ural state Humanities-Pedagogical University*, 2021, no. 3, pp. 128-144. DOI: 10.25588/CSPU.2021.163.3.008 (in Russ.)
 31. Scott R. H. and van Etten, E. University student volunteering alignment with sustainability principles. *Proceedings of the 13th International Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) Conference, Sydney, Australia, 2013*. Available at: <http://www.acts.asn.au/index.php/2013-conf/conference-proceedings/> (accessed 17 December 2024)
 32. Service Learning: Study Guide. Eds. Reshetnikov O.V., Tetersky S.V. Moscow, ABC Publ., 2020, 216 p. (in Russ.)
 33. Shoshina Yu.V. Student volunteering in context phenomenon of self-organization of Russian youth. *Mission confessions*, 2020, vol. 9, no. 5 (46), pp. 547-551 (in Russ.)
 34. Shuklina E. A., Pevnaya M. V., Minchenko D. V. The impact of education on youth volunteer practices in conditions of the general formalisation of the system: the case of the Sverdlovsk Region. *Bulletin of the Institute of Sociology*, 2023, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 92-113. DOI: 10.19181/vis.2023.14.2.6 (in Russ.)
 35. Skokova Yu.A., Krasnopskaya I.I., Korneeva I.E. Universities' practices supporting student volunteer activities during the pandemic. Available at: https://ioe.hse.ru/sao_volunteers (accessed 17 December 2024)
 36. Smith, K., Holmes, K., Haski-Leventhal, D., Cnaan, R. A., Handy, F., Brudney, J. L. Motivations and Benefits of Student Volunteering: Comparing Regular, Occasional, and Non-Volunteers in Five Countries. *Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research*, 2010, no. 1(1), pp. 65-81. DOI: 10.22230/cjnser.2010v1n1a2
 37. Son J. and Wilson J. Education, Perceived Control, and Volunteering. *Sociological Forum*, 2017, vol. 32, no. 4, pp. 831-849. DOI: 10.1111/socf.12377
 38. Spencer-Keyse J., Luksha P., Cubista J. Learning Ecosystems: An Emerging Praxis For The Future Of Education. School of Management SKOLKOVO and Global Education Futures. Available at: <https://learningecosystems2020.globaledufutures.org> (accessed 17 December 2024)
 39. Sukharkova M.P. Life Priorities of Volunteers of Mega Sport Events in the BRICS Countries. *Sociological Science and Social Practice*, 2022, vol. 10, no 3, pp. 159-175. DOI 10.19181/snsp.2022.10.3.920 (in Russ.)
 40. Sukharkova M.P. Olympic volunteering in the system of sustainable development goals. *Managing Sustainable Development*, 2021, no. 2(33), pp. 69-77 (in Russ.)
 41. Toquero C.M., Talidong K.J. Socioeducational implications of technology use during COVID-19: A case study in General Santos City, Philippines. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2021, no. 3, pp. 194-198. DOI: 10.1002/hbe2.214
 42. UI GreenMetric World University Rankings 2024. Available at: <https://greenmetric.ui.ac.id/rankings/overall-rankings-2024> (accessed 27 December 2024)
 43. United Nations General Assembly Resolution, Recommendations on support for volunteering, 2001. Available at: <https://www.un.org/webcast/events/iyv/a56288.pdf> (accessed 17 December 2024)
 44. UNESCO: Education for sustainable development. Available at: <https://www.unesco.org/en/education-sustainable-development/> (accessed 11 December 2024)
 45. Universities of the Project 5-100 contribute to the attainment of the UN sustainable development goals. Available at: <https://sovetrektorov.ru/novosti/2021/universitety-proekta-5-100-vnosyat-vklad-v-realizatsiyu-tseley-ustoychivogo-razvitiya-oon/> (accessed 17 December 2024)
 46. Vasilkovskaya M.I., Ponomarev V.D. Volunteering as a social and cultural phenomenon of modernity. *Bulletin of the Kemerovo State University of Culture and Arts*, 2022, no. 59, pp. 228-234. DOI: 10.31773/2078-1768-2022-59-228-234 (in Russ.)
 47. Voronova R.B. Motivation for student participation in volunteer activities as a self-realization factor. *World of Science. Pedagogy and psychology*, 2023, no. 11(1). Available at: <https://mir-nauki.com/PDF/27PSMN123.pdf> (in Russ.)
 48. Who Are These People? The Results of the Unprecedentedly Large-Scale Study of Student Volunteering. Dobro. Available at: <https://dobro.press/articles/kto-eti-ludi-rezultaty-samogo-masshtabnogov-istorii-issledovaniya-studencheskogo-dobrovolchestva> (accessed 17 December 2024)
 49. Williamson I., Wildbur D., Bell K., Tanner J. and Matthews H. Benefits to University students through volunteering in a health context: A new model. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 2017, vol. 66(3), pp. 383-402. DOI: 10.1080/00071005.2017.1339865.
 50. Wu Y., Xu L. The effect of authentic leadership and organizational climate on the volunteering behavior of college students: A moderated mediation model. *PsyCh Journal*, 2022, no. 11(6), pp. 852-862. DOI:10.1002/pchj.555
 51. Xu S. Chinese university student volunteering for schools in distant locations. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 2021, vol. 70, no. 3, pp. 323-343. DOI: 10.1080/00071005.2021.1960266
 52. Zinevich O.V., Melekhina E.A. Russian University Students' Volunteering within the Framework of Sustainable Development Goals and Values. *Higher Education in Russia*, 2024, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 104-125. DOI: 10.31992/0869-3617-2024-33-3-104-125 (in Russ.)

Авторы

Зиневич Ольга Владимировна

(Россия, г. Новосибирск)

Доцент, доктор философских наук, заведующий кафедрой международных отношений и регионоведения
Новосибирский государственный технический университет

E-mail: ozinevich@gmail.com

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-2065-3020

Scopus Author ID: 57359313500

Мелёхина Елена Анатольевна

(Россия, г. Новосибирск)

Доцент, кандидат педагогических наук, заведующий кафедрой иностранных языков гуманитарного факультета, декан факультета гуманитарного образования
Новосибирский государственный технический университет

E-mail: melexina@corp.nstu.ru

ORCID ID: 0000-0001-7502-9949

Scopus Author ID: 57195975751

Authors

Olga V. Zinevich

(Russia, Novosibirsk)

Associate Professor, Dr. Sci. (Philos.), Head of the Department of International Relations and Regional Studies
Novosibirsk State Technical University

E-mail: ozinevich@gmail.com

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-2065-3020

Scopus Author ID: 57359313500

Elena A. Melekhina

(Russia, Novosibirsk)

Associate Professor, Cand. Sci. (Educ.), Head of the Department of the Foreign Languages (Humanities Programs), Dean of the Faculty of the Humanities
Novosibirsk State Technical University

E-mail: melexina@corp.nstu.ru

ORCID ID: 0000-0001-7502-9949

Scopus Author ID: 57195975751

Вклад авторов

Зиневич О. В.: концептуализация, методология, проведение исследования

Мелёхина Е. А.: проведение исследования, верификация данных, создание рукописи и её редактирование, визуализация

© Зиневич О. В., Мелёхина Е. А., 2025

Авторы заявляют об отсутствии конфликта интересов

Author's contribution

Olga V. Zinevich: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation

Elena A. Melekhina: Investigation, Validation, Writing - Review & Editing, Visualization

© Olga V. Zinevich, Elena A. Melekhina, 2025

The author's declared no conflicts of interest