

**FEATURES OF MOTIVATION AMONG PSU STUDENTS  
(BASED ON QUESTIONNAIRE AND T. I. ILYINA'S METHODOLOGY)**

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*This article reveals the methodology of sociological research of a case study among first-year students of Polotsk State University. The aim of this study is to identify the motivation for their learning. The results of the study are indicated and substantiated. They indicate that the main motives for obtaining higher education are related to the need for belonging, recognition and self-respect.*

The main goal of the university is to train future specialists. But scientific and technological progress and global socio-economic transformations lead to a change in the thinking and motivation of a person of the 21st century. And this must be taken into account when developing educational programs. Thus, student motivation requires deep reflection and systematic analysis. There are a large number of studies on student motivation issues. But many of them are not relevant now. Besides, the motivation of students from different universities can be different. The relevance of this study is that it was not conducted at PSU.

Survey is a common method of collecting information in communication research. This involves asking questions to a particular social group and fixing answers. Questions should be related to the purpose and objectives of the study. The main purpose of the survey is to obtain information about the state of public, group or individual opinion, as well as information about facts and events. The survey provides information on the internal motives of people, their motives, assessments and attitudes. This method is suitable for studying internal subjective assessments and probabilities. Subject to the stages and rules of the survey, the method allows to obtain reliable and reliable information. [1, c. 62].

The survey can be oral (interview) and written (questionnaire). The interview involves the personal interaction between the researcher and the respondent. It can be structured, semi-structured and unstructured. A survey is easier to organize than other ways to get information. Quick organization and simple implementation are the main advantages of this method. Other advantages are: concreteness, informativeness, and standardization of the information received. In addition, the information received is unique. Currently, there are a large number of survey methods. They are adaptive techniques of this method to the specifics of the object and subject of the study, as well as to the organizational resources of the study (financial, temporary, personnel) [1, p. 62].

The disadvantages of this survey include factors affecting the quality of the data: the influence of the respondent (level of education, culture, memory, psyche, attitude to the organization or people who conduct the survey, etc.); the influence of the researcher (quality of questionnaire development, professionalism of the questionnaire or interviewer); the influence of external factors (physical interference, unauthorized persons, unsuccessful time and place of the survey, poor organization of the procedure itself, etc.) [1, p. 66].

We have chosen the questionnaire method as the most appropriate way of collecting information. It is most consistent with the goals and objectives of the study. To this end we have developed our own questionnaire, which is based on the Abraham Maslow's motivation theory [APPENDIX A], and the methodology of T.I. Ilyina [APPENDIX B].

The methods used in this term paper do not include a number of issues related to socio-demographic indicators such as age, education, place of birth and / or residence of the respondents. This is due to the fact that these categories are not relevant in the framework of the study. The questionnaire created for this study contains 12 questions. This is the optimal number of questions. On the one hand it allows you to collect the necessary data, on the other hand it does not cause feelings of fatigue among respondents. The questionnaire has been developed on the basis of the theory of motivation created by A. Maslow. We have made an attempt to predict all possible answers and include them in the survey.

We have taken into account the following motivation factors:

meeting the need for security (as an opportunity to provide for oneself in the future), the need for belonging to a certain social group (self-identification with an educational institution, team), the need for respect, recognition and self-expression [APPENDIX A].

Our questionnaire does not contain modification questions, which are used in some scientific studies to verify the veracity of respondents' answers. All the questions for the respondents were placed in the strict logical sequence.

The introductory part of the survey contains its name. Emphasis is placed on the fact that the survey is anonymous and that full and honest answers are expected from respondents. The introductory part of the questionnaire contains a section that reflects recommendations for completion. Warm-up questions cover "Faculty", "Group", "Gender" fields. The "core" of the questionnaire contains closed-ended questions. The choice of this type of questions was due to the fact that they are easy to compare and process. Each of the proposed answer options suggests only one answer to the question. We made an attempt to avoid complex and incomprehensible terms and ambiguous question wording.

Another method of data collection used in this study is the methodology of studying the learning motivation at T.I. Ilyina's university [APPENDIX B]. It contains questions concerning three main groups of motives: "Acquisition of knowledge" (desire to acquire knowledge, curiosity); "Mastery of the profession" (desire to acquire professional knowledge and form professionally important qualities); "Getting a diploma" (desire to acquire a diploma with the formal assimilation of knowledge, desire to find workarounds for passing exams and tests). In addition, our questionnaire contains a number of background questions that are not further processed. In total, the questionnaire includes 46 statements and 4 open-ended questions.

T.I. Ilyina's methodology contains a "cap", which indicates the name of the questionnaire, reflecting the topic of the survey. In the introductory part of the questionnaire, general information is sent to interest the respondent, form an attitude for cooperation, and familiarize themselves with the filling technique. In addition, the importance of honest answers and the anonymity of the survey are emphasized. The questionnaire contains warm-up questions that suggest that the respondent needs to indicate their faculty, group and gender.

The methodology for filling out the questions requires careful familiarization with all proposed statements and the choice of those statements. This technique includes modifications of similar issues, but they are not located next to each other. In addition, the questionnaire contains four open questions (they should not be taken into account when analyzing and processing data, although these answers will be considered in the framework of this study). The prevalence of motives on the first two scales ("Acquisition of knowledge" and "Mastering a profession") indicates an adequate career choice by a student and satisfaction with it [APPENDIX B].

According to the recommendations, the printed version of the questionnaire should not exceed four pages. The questionnaires used in this work did not exceed one double-sided sheet of printed text.

The selection of respondents for this study was as follows. The PSU website has information about all first-year students registered with GoogleClassRoom - a free web service from Google. Currently, all students enrolled in Polotsk State University are registered on this platform. The information received was statistically processed. Thus, information was received about the entire population as a percentage [APPENDIX 1-3].

A total of 80 people were interviewed (48 guys and 32 girls). This number reflects the total number of first-year students of PSU, since 797 people were enrolled in the first year of Polotsk State University in 2018-2019 (318 girls and 479 guys) [ANNEX IN No. 1-2]. The number of first-year students of PSU by gender for the general population is equal to 39.9% of women and 60.1% of men. For the sample, the percentage ratio is 39.74% of women and 60.26% of men [APPENDIX No. 3].

According to the method of conducting this questionnaire, it was provided directly to the respondent to fill out. When conducting the survey, we tried to avoid a situation that could affect the responses of the respondents. Therefore, the goals and objectives of the study were explained to the respondents orally - this limited the contact of the researcher with representatives of the sample. Sample participants could take the survey at any time convenient for them, and then the data was "collected" automatically (sent to the docs.google.com platform). Thus the degree of participation of the questionnaire was minimized, and the survey participants filled out the questionnaire in his absence. The survey was conducted from April 8 to April 21, 2019.

We list the advantages of the chosen method in comparison with a personal interview or a survey in the presence of the person. Firstly, many people more easily perceive information in written rather than verbal form. Secondly, the possibility of the questionnaire influence is minimized. Another advantage was that respondents could fill out questionnaires at any time convenient for them (which reduces the possibility of physical interference or people around them).

The final stages of the survey were analysis, data processing and preparation of the final report.

Our own questionnaire included 12 questions. Two of them, "Your gender" and "Indicate faculty" [APPENDIX A] were necessary to control the representativeness of the sample. The correspondence of the characteristics of the sample to the characteristics of the general population was noted above.

The majority of respondents (28.6%) gave the answer: "The role played a passing score" to the question "Why did you decide to enter PSU?" The second place was shared by the options "They give a high-quality education at the university", "I chose (a) this university by friends'/relatives' advice" and "The specialty that interests me is only at PSU" - each option was chosen by 14.3% of respondents. The least popular answer options turned out to be the following options: "The university is located close to home," "Acceptable price for tuition," and "My friends entered/study at PSU". Thus two main motives for admission are traced among the first year students. They are: to get diploma and to obtain quality knowledge.

Question "Why did you choose exactly the specialty that you entered?"

The majority of respondents - 41.3% chose the answer option "I am interested in this specialty and the related field of activity". This explains that almost half of the first year students really have motivation for learning due to their interest and desire for self-realization.

As a variant of factors stimulating freshmen to attend classes, the leading place was taken by the "Mandatory of attending classes" option. It was chosen by 34.9% of all respondents. 30.2% respondents answered: "Knowledge acquisition". The least popular option was "Parental Pressure".

As follows, most first-year students have opted their own free will for higher education. The main motives for attending classes is the requirement for compulsory attendance and the desire for knowledge.

The main motive for obtaining high marks (41.3% of all respondents) is "increasing scholarships/lowering wages". 27% of respondents answered that knowledge is more important than assessment. For 14.3%, good grades are directly related to self-satisfaction.

Thus, there is a tendency when "commitment" ("you will not strive to get a good grade - you will not increase the scholarship/do not lower the tuition fees") slightly outweighed the moment of personal interest and desire for self-realization.

46% of respondents rated the dependence of a high income on the availability of higher education on 4 (out of 5 possible) points. 28.6% believe that without higher education a high cash income is impossible and emphasize the close relationship of these variables. From this we can conclude that the relationship between higher education and future income is very strong.

Almost half of all respondents identified the relationship between higher education and useful contacts as strong enough: 4 out of 5 possible points. 33.3% of respondents believe that the variables "higher education" and "useful contacts" are connected, but not strongly. Thus, there is a strong rather than average relationship between the variables.

Almost the same number of answers scored the options "rather yes than no" (38.1%) and "yes" (36.5%) to the question about the relationship between higher education and the realization of their ambitions.

46% of respondents believe that obtaining higher education is important for the realization of their own talents and abilities. 25.4% believe that although these two variables do not significantly affect each other. 17.5% replied that the relationship between self-realization and higher education is very strong. This indicates that most students see the possibility of self-realization as a part of their studies at a university.

According to respondents the main goal of participating in extracurricular activities is the realization of their own talents (43.3%), the communication factor (30%), the desire to belong to a social group. Bonuses from participation in extracurricular activities attract only 16.7% of all respondents. The direct connection between the extracurricular activities and the educational process (10% of respondents) is not a key factor stimulating participation in these activities.

The main reason why most first year students (60% of respondents) do not take part in extracurricular activities is lack of time due to their studies. In addition, more than ¼ of the respondents (27.5%) indicated that they had no interest in participating in extracurricular activities.

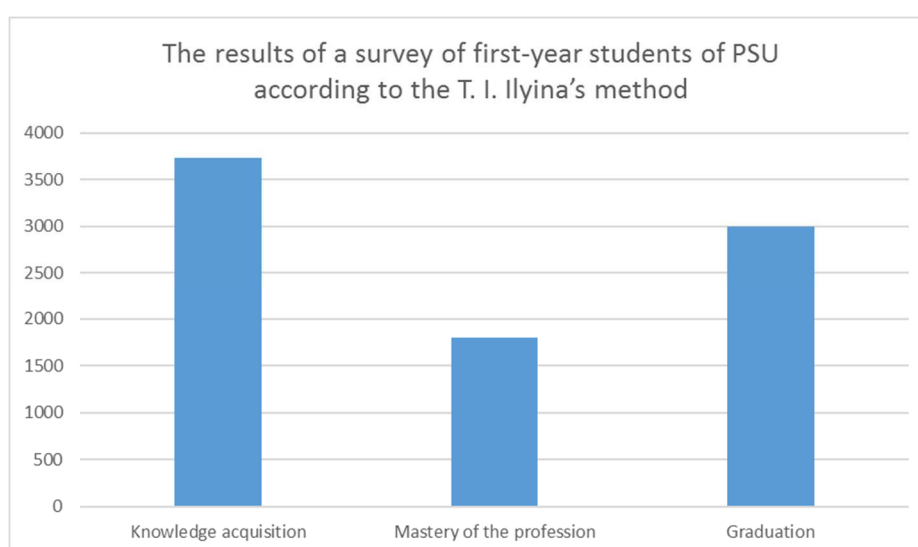
28.6% of respondents say that if they could influence the curriculum, they would not change anything. 27% said they would like to increase the number of laboratory and practical exercises. The options "Reduce the number of lecture classes" (15.9%), "Reduce the number of practical classes" (14.3%), "Increase the number of hours for consultation" (11.1%) scored an approximately equal number of answers. The most unpopular (3.1%) answer was "Increase the number of lectures". This confirms the idea that partly the motive of students is to obtain a diploma of higher education, partly the real mastery of the practical skills necessary for the future realization of oneself as a specialist.

The question about students' free time gives us the following information: 34.9% of the respondents chose the answer "preparation for the upcoming classes", 28.6% - "chatting with friends and relatives", 15.9% - "idleness". The remaining answer options were not popular.

Based on the results of the questionnaire, the following conclusion can be drawn: first-year students of PSU see their main motives for study as the desire to obtain a diploma and the desire to actually master the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge in order to further realize oneself as a specialist. In addition, most first-year students see the university as a place for their creative talents (almost 50% of respondents participate in extra-curricular activities, of which 43.4% see this as an opportunity for self-realization), their own ambitions and creating networking (gaining useful connections).

Processing the obtained data according to the method of T.I. Ilyina made in accordance with the guidelines (the so-called "key"). Such a "key" implies the existence of three scales: "acquisition of knowledge", "mastery of the profession" and "obtaining a diploma". In each of the categories, the value of the response (that is, the total score accrued for consent / disagreement with the statement) changes. Questions No. 5, 13, 30, 39 are neutral and are not included in the processing. The prevalence of motives on the first two scales indicates adequate choice of a profession by a student and satisfaction with it [Appendix B].

Since T.I. Ilyina's method suggests individual study of each questionnaire, the results of the processed questionnaires were summarized.



*\* the column on the left reflects the amount of points accrued for each category*

Figure 1. – The results of a survey of first-year students of PSU according to the T. I. Ilyina's method

Source: Own development based on [2].

It can be seen from this diagram that two scales 'Acquisition of knowledge' and 'Obtaining a diploma' are dominant.

According to T.I. Ilyina's guidelines, this situation does not indicate adequate choice of the student of the profession and satisfaction with it. However, these indicators confirm the data already obtained from our own questionnaire: the main motives that currently prevail among residents of Belarus who decide to pursue full-time higher education include the desire to become a specialist in a certain field (scale "Getting knowledge") and get the benefits associated with having a diploma of graduation (scale "Getting a diploma").

As a result of processing the survey by the method of distributing questioning on the basis of a self-developed questionnaire and Ilyina's methodology among first-year students of Polotsk State University, the following data were obtained: the two main motives that prevail among freshmen at PSU are the desire to obtain a diploma and the desire to acquire knowledge.

Thus, the main motives for obtaining higher education lie at the top of the Maslow pyramid and are associated with the need for belonging, recognition and self-respect. The need for belonging and recognition is expressed in the desire to obtain higher education for the sake of obtaining a diploma. The need for recognition and self-esteem is directly related to the "knowledge acquisition" scale. Dominant aspirations are connected, because they are based on motives for public recognition, the need for self-esteem and self-realization, which are often closely related.

## REFERENCES

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2. Forms [Electronic resource] - 2017-2019 // Google Forms URL: <https://docs.google.com/forms/> (accessed: 05/19/2019).
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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

## Questionnaire

Dear Respondent! We ask you to take part in the survey and answer the questionnaire. Carefully read each question and possible answers to it. In each question, select only one answer. Please respond sincerely and work independently. Answers will be used in a generalized form. You don't need to indicate your last name.

1. 1) female 2) male

2. Faculty \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Why did you decide to enter PSU? (choose one answer)**

- 1) The university is located close to home.
- 2) They provide high-quality education at the university.
- 3) I chose a university on the advice of friends, relatives.
- 4) The university has a specialty that interests me.
- 5) An acceptable tuition fee.
- 6) My friends entered / studied at PSU.
- 7) The role played a passing score.
- 8) Another reason (what?) \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Why did you choose your specialty?**

- 1) Parents insisted on entering this specialty.
- 2) This specialty will help to get a well-paid job.
- 3) I chose a specialty on the advice of friends.
- 4) There is less competition for this specialty.
- 5) For this specialty it was easier for me to pass the CT.
- 6) I am interested in this specialty and the related field of knowledge.
- 7) Another reason (what?) \_\_\_\_\_

**5. What motivates you to attend classes?**

- 1) Chatting with friends
- 2) An interesting presentation of the material at lectures / practical classes
- 3) gaining knowledge
- 4) Parental pressure
- 5) Compulsory classes (for example, they are noted for them, you have to pay for studies, etc.)
- 6) Another reason (what?) \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Do you strive to get the highest grades possible?**

- 1) Yes, for the sake of increasing scholarships / lower tuition fees
- 2) Yes, it pleases my parents
- 3) Yes, getting good grades, I feel my own worth
- 4) For me, the knowledge gained is more important than assessment
- 5) Yes, I do not want my ratings to be worse than the ratings of my friends
- 6) No, because I'm not interested in the learning process
- 7) Yes, for the sake of honors / diploma marks
- 8) Another reason (what?) \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Does higher education matter to achieve the following life goals**

	YES	YES, BUT IMPORTANT	NO
High income	1	2	3
Useful contacts	1	2	3
Realization of ambitions	1	2	3
Realization of talents	1	2	3

**8. Do you participate in extracurricular activities of the university?**

- 1) Yes (go to the next question and skip question 10)
- 2) No (skip one question)

**9. Why do you participate in extracurricular activities?**

- 1) Because it is directly related to study
- 2) My friends and acquaintances participate there, and this allows you to make new acquaintances
- 3) I am interested in developing my skills and talents
- 4) Extracurricular activities allow me to receive certain bonuses (exemption from couples / increasing scholarships / lowering tuition fees / the like)
- 5) Another option (what?) \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Why do you not participate in extracurricular activities?**

- 1) I'm not interested
- 2) It takes me a lot of time to prepare for classes
- 3) Because my friends are not involved in this
- 4) Another option (what?) \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Would you like to:**

- 1) Increase the number of lectures
- 2) Reduce the number of lectures
- 3) Increase the number of laboratory and practical exercises
- 4) Reduce the number of laboratory and practical exercises
- 5) Increase the number of hours for teacher counseling
- 6) Not change anything
- 7) Own option (what?) \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Most of your free time is spent on ...**

- 1) Preparation for upcoming classes
- 2) Study additional information on your profession
- 3) Chatting with friends and family
- 4) part-time job
- 5) Active social activities (volunteering, etc.)
- 6) Another option (what?) \_\_\_\_\_

Source: in-house development

**APPENDIX B****Ilyina's methodology about the studying's motivation of learning at the university**

Dear Respondent! We ask you to take part in the poll. First fill out general questions about yourself, and then carefully read each of the suggested answers and select all that apply. Please respond sincerely and work independently. Answers will be used in a generalized form. You don't need to indicate your name and last name.

**Questionnaire**

Faculty \_\_\_\_\_ Group \_\_\_\_\_ M/F \_\_\_\_\_

**Instruction:** Mark your agreement with the "+" sign or disagreement with the "-" sign with the following statements.

1. The best atmosphere of classes is the atmosphere of free speech.

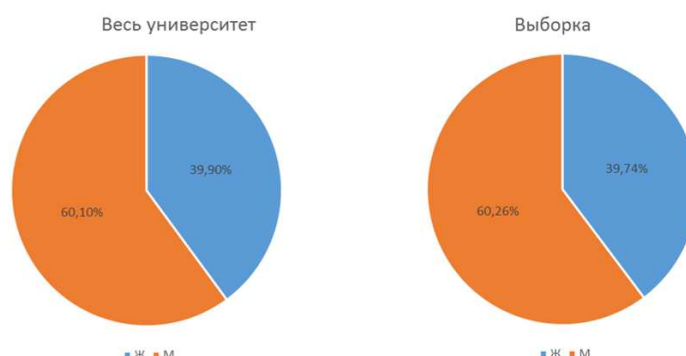
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Education, Social Studies, Law, Gender Studies

2. I usually work with a lot of stress.
3. I rarely have headaches after experiencing unrest and trouble.
4. I myself study a number of subjects, in my opinion, necessary for my future profession.
5. Which of your inherent qualities do you value most? Write the answer next.
6. I believe that life should be devoted to the chosen profession.
7. I enjoy viewing difficult issues in class.
8. I do not see the point in most of the work that we do at the university.
9. Great satisfaction is given to me by the story of my acquaintances about my future profession.
10. I am a very average student, I will never be quite good, and therefore it makes no sense to make efforts to become better.
11. I believe that in our time it is not necessary to have a higher education.
12. I firmly believe in the correct choice of profession.
13. Which of your inherent qualities would you like to get rid of? Write the answer next.
14. Whenever possible, I use auxiliary materials (notes, cheat sheets) for exams.
15. The most remarkable time of life is the student years.
16. I have an extremely restless and intermittent sleep.
17. I believe that to fully master the profession, all academic disciplines should be studied equally deeply.
18. If possible, I would go to another university.
19. I usually take on easier tasks at first, and leave the more difficult ones for later.
20. It was difficult for me to choose one of them when choosing a profession.
21. I can sleep soundly after any troubles.
22. I am firmly convinced that my profession gives me moral satisfaction and material prosperity in life.
23. It seems to me that my friends are able to learn better than me.
24. It is very important for me to have a diploma of higher education.
25. For some practical reasons, for me it is the most convenient university.
26. I have enough willpower to study without a reminder of the administration.
27. For me, life is almost always associated with extraordinary stress.
28. Exams must be taken with a minimum of effort.
29. There are many universities in which I could study with no less interest.
30. Which of the qualities inherent in you most hinders learning? Write the answer next.
31. I am a very addicted person, but all my hobbies are somehow connected with my future profession.
32. Concern about an exam or work that is not completed on time often prevents me from sleeping.
33. High salary after graduation is not the main thing for me.
34. I need to be in a good mood to support the group's overall decision.
35. I was forced to enter a university in order to occupy the desired position in society, to avoid military service.
36. I am learning material to become a professional, not an exam.
37. My parents are good professionals, and I want to be like them.
38. For career advancement, I need to have a university degree.
39. Which of your qualities helps you learn? Write the answer next.
40. It is very difficult for me to force myself to study properly disciplines that are not directly related to my future specialty.
41. I am very worried about possible setbacks.
42. I do best when I am periodically stimulated, spurred on.
43. My choice of this university is final.
44. My friends have higher education, and I do not want to lag behind them.
45. To convince the group of something, I have to work very intensively myself.
46. My mood is usually even and good.
47. I am attracted to the convenience, cleanliness, ease of my future profession.
48. Before entering a university, I had long been interested in this profession, I read a lot about it.
49. The profession that I receive is the most important and promising.
50. My knowledge of this profession was sufficient for a confident choice.

# APPENDIX C №1

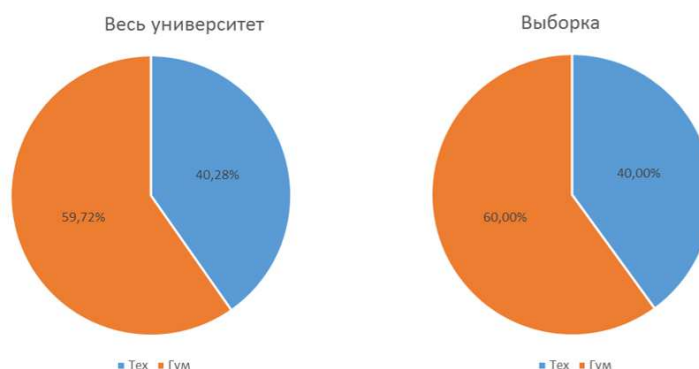
Comparative characteristics of the percentage by gender in the general population and in the sample



Source: in-house development based on [3]

# APPENDIX C №2

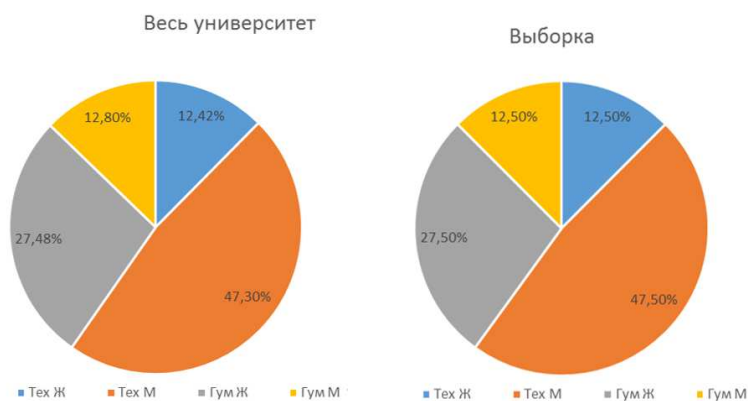
Comparative characteristics of the percentage of specialty orientation (technical or humanitarian) in the general population and sample



Source: in-house development based on [3]

# APPENDIX C №3

Comparative characteristics of the percentage ratio by gender and specialty direction (technical or humane) in the general population and in the sample



Source: in-house development based on [3]