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**ANTI-MOTIVATION IN THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS**

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**Abstract**

The article presents the results of empirical research aimed at studying the characteristics of anti-motivation in the educational activities of children of elementary school age. As the main method for obtaining and interpreting empirical data, the authors used the content analysis of essays on the topic "Why don't some children like to study?". The choice of this method was conditioned by the lack of valid and reliable methods for studying anti-motivation in the educational activities of Russian elementary school students. The authors compared anti-motivation in educational activities from the point of view of elementary school teachers and students as the main subjects of education. According to the results of the study, it was found that, from the position of teachers, a greater number of anti-motivational factors were associated with the content of educational activities and students had a more pronounced personal attribution of anti-motivation in education. Both respondent groups believed that grade-related factors did not play a significant role in providing anti-motivation for the educational activities of elementary school students. Organizational and interpersonal anti-motivational factors had similar average indicators in both groups of respondents. The study made it

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possible to highlight a set of educational activity anti-motives for their further inclusion in a special questionnaire on the study of anti-motivation of the educational activities of elementary school students.

### **Keywords**

Motivation – Anti-motivation – Anti-motive – Educational activity – Elementary school student

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## Introduction

The current federal state educational standard of elementary education in Russia indicates the formation of motivation for learning and gaining knowledge as one of the most important personal results of an elementary school graduate.

The importance of this requirement is not to be doubted, since it is at the elementary school age that the foundation of educational motivation is laid, which largely determines its further development.

The problem of motivating the educational activities of elementary school students has been researched in many aspects of the psychological and pedagogical studies performed by scientists from different countries.

Research has been done on the influence of educational motivation on the academic achievements of elementary school students<sup>1</sup>. The dynamics of the development of educational motivation during the period of elementary school age have been studied by various scholars<sup>2</sup>. Other scholars have identified factors that influence the development of motivation for the educational activities of elementary school students<sup>3</sup>.

Some studies have been dedicated to the features of the educational motivation of elementary school children studying in different educational programs and various

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<sup>1</sup> F. N. Apish, *Psikhologo-didakticheskie osnovy razvitiya uchebnoi motivatsii mladshikh shkolnikov sredstvami tekushchego kontrolya*: PhD thesis (Maykop: Adyghe State University, 2000); Yu. M. Zhavoronkova y I. A. Kilmasova, "Motivatsiya uchebnoi deyatel'nosti u detei mladshogo shkol'nogo vozrasta", *Sankt-Peterburgskii obrazovatel'nyi Vestnik* Vol: 3 num 7 (2017): 18-23; B. Lv; L. Lv; P. Wang; L. Luo, "A person-centered investigation of math motivation and its correlates to math achievement in elementary students", *Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology* Vol: 13(e24) (2019); A. K. Markova, "Puti issledovaniya motivatsii uchebnoi deyatel'nosti shkol'nikov", *Voprosy psikhologii* num 5 (1989): 47-59; M. V. Matyukhina, *Motivatsiya ucheniya mladshikh shkol'nikov* (Moscow: Pedagogika, 1984) y M. Miserandino, "Children who do well in school: Individual differences in perceived competence and autonomy in above-average children", *Journal of Educational Psychology* Vol: 88 num 2 (1996): 203-214.

<sup>2</sup> S. V. Gani, *Razvitie motivatsii v mladshem shkol'nom vozraste*: PhD thesis. Adyghe State University (Moscow: Moscow City Psychological and Pedagogical University, 2009); N. I. Gutkina y V. V. Pechenkov, "Dinamika uchebnoi motivatsii uchashchikhsya ot pervogo ko vtoromu klassu", *Vestnik prakticheskoi psikhologii obrazovaniya* Vol: 4 num 5 (2005): 16-22; A. E. Gottfried; J. S. Fleming y A. W. Gottfried, "Continuity of academic intrinsic motivation from childhood through late adolescence: A longitudinal study", *Journal of Educational Psychology* num 93 (2001): 3-13; M. R. Lepper; J. H. Corpus y S. S. Iyengar, "Intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations in the classroom: Age differences and academic correlates", *Journal of Educational Psychology* Vol: 97 num 2 (2005): 184-196; A. K. Markova, *Formirovaniye motivatsii ucheniya v shkol'nom vozraste: Posobie dlya uchitelya* (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1983) y R. M. Ryan y E. L. Deci, "Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions", *Contemporary Educational Psychology* Vol: 25 num 1 (2000): 54-67.

<sup>3</sup> O. V. Bulatova y E. S. Solyanova, "Vzaimosvyaz obshchei sposobnosti k ucheniyu i motivatsii v mladshem shkol'nom vozraste", *Vestnik YuGU* Vol: 3 num 18 (2010): 66-69; E. N. Volkova; A. V. Miklyaeva y S. A. Bezgodova, "Psikhologicheskie vozmozhnosti pedagogicheskoi otmetki", *Vestnik Mininskogo universiteta* Vol: 6 num 4 (2018) y T. A. Pomerantseva, "Osnovnye komponenty sotsializatsii i individualizatsii mladshikh shkol'nikov v sovremennom sotsiokulturnom obshchestve", *Vestnik Mininskogo universiteta* Vol: 6 num 3 (2018).

educational institutions (public and private)<sup>4</sup>. Variable diagnostic tools have been developed to study the educational motivation of elementary school students<sup>5</sup>.

Despite a significant amount of research on the problem of motivation for educational activities of elementary school students, almost all of them are focused on the analysis of motives that encourage learning activities and do not consider motives that have a negative valency concerning educational activities and can be called their anti-motives. Meanwhile, as E.V. Karpova aptly notes, it is the ratio of the severity of the positive motivation of educational activities and their anti-motivation that determines the general attitude to learning<sup>6</sup>. In some works, anti-motivation (amotivation, demotivation) is considered as an important construct that is part of educational motivation<sup>7</sup>. However, in general, the problem of anti-motivation of the educational activities of elementary school students has practically not been studied and requires special consideration. The relevance of the problem under consideration determined the purpose of our study: the study of the characteristics of anti-motivation in the educational activities of elementary school students.

## Materials and methods

In our study, we base our understanding of the meaning of anti-motivation in educational activities on the definition of E.V. Karpova<sup>8</sup>. We interpret anti-motivation in educational activities as a motivational subsystem of the individual, represented by the

<sup>4</sup> E. N. Bicherova y E. M. Feshchenko, "Osobennosti uchebnoi motivatsii mladshikh shkolnikov, obuchayushchikhsya po raznym obrazovatelnykh programmam", Rossiiskii psikhologicheskii zhurnal num 4 (2016): 117-136; N. P. Petrova, Razvivayushchie programmy D. B. Elkonina-V. V. Davydova kak faktor izmeneniya uchebnoi motivatsii i kreativnosti mladshikh shkol'nikov: PhD thesis. (Pskov: Pskov State Pedagogical University named after S.M. Kirov, 2001) y S. Rufini; J. Bzuneck y K. Oliveira, "The quality of motivation among elementary school students", Paidéia (Ribeirão Preto) Vol: 22 num 51 (2012): 53-62.

<sup>5</sup> S. V. Gani, Razvitie motivatsii v mladshem shkolnom vozraste: PhD thesis. Adyge State University. (Moscow: Moscow City Psychological and Pedagogical University, 2009); F. Guay; J. Chanal; C. F. Ratelle; H. W. Marsh; S. Larose y M. Boivin, "Intrinsic, identified, and controlled types of motivation for school subjects in young elementary school children", British Journal of Educational Psychology num 80 (2010): 711-735; N. V. Elfimova, Diagnostika i korrektsiya motivatsii ucheniya u doshkolnikov i mladshikh shkolnikov: Uchebno-metodicheskoe posobie (Moscow: Izd-vo MGU, 1991); A. K. Markova, "Puti issledovaniya motivatsii uchebnoi deyatel'nosti shkolnikov", Voprosy psikhologii num 5 (1989): 47-59; R. M. Ryan y J. P. Connell, "Perceived locus of causality and internalization: Examining reasons for acting in two domains", Journal of Personality and Social Psychology num 57 (1989): 749-761 y S. Rufini; J. Bzuneck y K. Oliveira, "The quality of motivation among elementary school students", Paidéia (Ribeirão Preto) Vol: 22 num 51 (2012): 53-62.

<sup>6</sup> E. V. Karpova, Struktura i genezis motivatsionnoi sfery lichnosti v uchebnoi deyatel'nosti: PhD thesis. (Yaroslavl: Yaroslavl State Pedagogical University named after K.D. Ushinsky, 2009).

<sup>7</sup> T. O. Gordeeva; O. A. Sychev y E. N. Osin, "Vnutrennyaya i vneshnyaya uchebnaya motivatsiya studentov: ee istochniki i vliyaniye na psikhologicheskoe blagopoluchie", Voprosy psikhologii num 1 (2013): 35-45; W. Lens, "Motivation and de-motivation in secondary education: student Characteristics", Learning and Instruction Vol: 1 num 2 (1991): 45-159; R. J. Vallerand; M. R. Blais; N. M. Brière y L. G. Pelletier, "Construction et validation de l'Echelle de Motivation en Education (EME)", Canadian Journal of Behavioral Sciences num 21 (1989): 323-349 y E. V. Karpova, Struktura i genezis motivatsionnoi sfery lichnosti v uchebnoi deyatel'nosti: PhD thesis (Yaroslavl: Yaroslavl State Pedagogical University named after K.D. Ushinsky, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> E. V. Karpova, "Fenomen "antimotivatsionnogo pika" v protsesse shkol'nogo ontogeneza", Yaroslavskii pedagogicheskii Vestnik Vol: 2 num 55 (2008): 66-70.

totality of anti-motives in educational activities. By the anti-motive of educational activities, we understand a motive that has a reverse orientation for educational activities.

An analysis of modern psychological and pedagogical research shows that to date, the following diagnostic tools have been developed and are being effectively applied in different countries, aimed at studying anti-motivation in the educational activities of high school students and university students:

- CMS — complex motivation survey of an individual in the process of their educational activity<sup>9</sup>;
- AMS — academic motivation survey<sup>10</sup>;
- EMS — educational motivation survey<sup>11</sup>;
- SAM — scales of academic motivation<sup>12</sup>;
- survey on anti-motivation in the educational activities of pedagogical university students<sup>13</sup>.

It should be noted that some questionnaires on educational motivation for elementary school students fragmentarily mention anti-motives in educational activities:

- MSESS — motivation scale for elementary school students<sup>14</sup>;
- SML — Scale for the evaluation of motivation to learning for elementary school students<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> E. V. Karpova, "Fenomen "antimotivatsionnogo pika" v protsesse shkólnogo ontogeneza", Yaroslavskii pedagogicheskii Vestnik Vol: 2 num 55 (2008): 66-70.

<sup>10</sup> R. J. Vallerand; M. R. Blais; N. M. Brière y L. G. Pelletier, "Construction et validation de l'Echelle de Motivation en Education (EME)", Canadian Journal of Behavioral Sciences num 21 (1989): 323-349 y R. J. Vallerand; L. G. Pelletier; M. R. Blais; N. M. Brière; C. Sénécal y E. F. Vallières, "The Academic Motivation Scale: A measure of intrinsic, extrinsic and amotivation in education", Educational and Psychological Measurement num 52 (1992): 1003-1017.

<sup>11</sup> T. O. Gordeeva; O. A. Sychev y E. N. Osin, "Vnutrennyaya i vneshnyaya uchebnaya motivatsiya studentov: ee istochniki i vliyanie na psikhologicheskoe blagopoluchie", Voprosy psikhologii num 1 (2013): 35-45.

<sup>12</sup> T. O. Gordeeva; O. A. Sychev y E. N. Osin, "Oprosnik "Shkaly akademicheskoi motivatsii"", Psikhologicheskii zhurnal Vol: 35 num 4 (2014): 96-107.

<sup>13</sup> N. V. Ivanova; E. V. Minaeva; N. I. Lapin; O. V. Suvorova y Y. B. Mamonova, "Specifics of the dynamics of educational activity motivation and antimotivation in students of a pedagogical university", Revista Espacios Vol: 38 num 40 (2017) y E. V. Minaeva; N. V. Ivanova y A. B. Akpaeva, "Dinamika antimotivatsii uchebnoi deyatelnosti studentov pedagogicheskikh universitetov", Perspektivy nauki i obrazovaniya Vol: 3 num 33 (2018): 54-58.

<sup>14</sup> S. Rufini; J. Bzuneck y K. Oliveira, "The quality of motivation among elementary school students", Paidéia (Ribeirão Preto) Vol: 22 num 51 (2012): 53-62.

<sup>15</sup> E. R. C. Neves y E. Boruchovitch, "Scale for evaluation of motivation to learn for Elementary School Students (SML)", Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica Vol: 20 num 3 (2006): 406-413.

In our research, due to the lack of diagnostic methods for a detailed study of anti-motivation in the educational activities of elementary school students, we used the content analysis method based on the essay "Why don't some children like to study?" to obtain empirical information. To increase the validity of semantic units of content analysis, it was suggested that several experts evaluate the text. The experts (10 people in total) were teachers of the Department of Psychology and Pedagogy of Preschool and Elementary education at the Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education "Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University named after K. Minin". When determining the units of content analysis, the requirements of their unambiguous allocation in the text and of importance for the interpretation of the material were met. For statistical analysis of the data obtained, we used the  $\chi^2$  method (the Pearson criterion).

The study involved 168 elementary school teachers working in comprehensive schools in Nizhny Novgorod. In October 2017, we conducted a similar study with 145 elementary school students as respondents<sup>16</sup>. We considered it fundamentally important to study the opinion of elementary school teachers on the issue of anti-motivation in the educational activities of elementary school students and to compare the data with the results of the previous study. The conducted study fulfilled the following objectives:

- to highlight anti-motives in the educational activities of elementary school students as seen by elementary school teachers;
- to study the specifics of the distribution and representation of anti-motivational factors among the respondents;
- to identify the types of anti-motivational factors;
- to compare anti-motivational factors in two groups of the respondents (teachers and students);

to determine a list of anti-motives for the questionnaire on the study of anti-motivation in the educational activities of elementary school students.

## Results and discussion

The teachers were invited to write an essay on the topic "Why don't some children like to study?". The study used the method of content analysis. The following items were identified as semantic units for content analysis:

1. Volume of the text, number of words;
2. Reasons and factors of anti-motivation;
3. Presence of argumentation;
4. Attitude to the problem, personal involvement;

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<sup>16</sup> E. V. Minaeva; N. V. Ivanova; O. V. Suvorova; T. M. Sorokina y A. B. Akpayeva, "Examination of anti-motives in elementary school students with content analysis", *Astra Salvensis* num 6 (2018): 329-339.

5. Appeal to specific people and life situations;
6. Presence of suggestions for solving the problem.

In their essays, the respondents highlighted the following anti-motives in the educational activities of elementary school students:

1. Few gadgets are used in the educational process;
2. Children are overloaded at school and get too much homework;
3. Studying is hard;
4. Children have problems with following a routine;
5. Laziness;
6. Bad relationships with teachers;
7. Bad relationships with classmates;
8. Children don't like the school uniform;
9. Children already know a big part of their school curriculum having learned it at preschool or the so-called "early development groups";
10. Lack of motivation – children don't understand why they have to study;
11. Educational material is presented in a boring way;
12. Not interesting;
13. Afraid of parents;
14. Children want to play;
15. Bad self-organization;
16. Need to get up early;
17. Presence of personal gadgets at school;
18. Excessive workload in general;
19. Lack of help from parents;
20. Health problems;
21. Fear of getting a bad grade.

A comparison of the anti-motives highlighted by the elementary school students and teachers allowed us to state the similarity of the selected parameters, which made it possible to identify similar groups of anti-motivational factors:

- organizational (characterizing the organization of the learning process);
- content-related (related to the content of educational subjects);
- personal (containing personal characteristics of the respondents);
- interpersonal (revealing the nature of the relationship between the students themselves or between the students and their parents and teachers);
- grade-related (expressing the attitude towards the grade).

Thus, during the content analysis, the following content analysis units were identified:

1. Volume of the text, number of words;
2. Reasons and factors of anti-motivation (organizational, substantial, personal, interpersonal, grade-related);
3. Presence of argumentation;
4. Attitude to the problem, personal involvement;
5. Appeal to specific people and life situations;
6. Presence of suggestions for solving the problem.

The processing of primary data was carried out as follows: argumentation, attitude to the problem, personal involvement; appeal to specific individuals or life situations and suggestions for solving the problem were recorded as present or absent in the respondents' essays. To assess anti-motivational factors, we recorded the number of those factors mentioned by the respondents.

Let us review the obtained results. Below we will consider the features of the distribution of the content units of content analysis. Attitude to the problem and personal involvement was demonstrated by 96 respondents (57.1%). Appeal to specific individuals and life situations — by 36 participants (21.4%). The presence of argumentation was demonstrated by 24 participants (14.3%), the presence of suggestions for solving the problem — by 120 (71.4%).

These results show the uneven distribution of the content units of content analysis in the respondents' essays. The respondents were not inclined to argue their conclusions: only 14.3% attempted to explain their point of view. The conclusions presented by the respondents were quite general; only 21.4% relied on specific life experience. About half of the respondents (57.1%) demonstrated the personal significance of the indicated problem. A significant number of the respondents (71.4%) proposed solutions to the problem, which may indicate an active position of the respondents.

Counting the number of words in the works revealed the minimum and maximum values of 13 and 238 words respectively.

At the next stage, we calculated the number of anti-motivational factors in each group. The obtained results show a higher significance of the content-related, personal, interpersonal and organizational (6.5.5.4, respectively) anti-motivational factors for the respondents. This can indicate that these factor groups are of equal importance. The respondents paid little attention to grade-related factors (Table 1).

Parameters	Content units of content analysis				
	Organizational	Content-related	Personal	Interpersonal	Grade-related
Total	96	124	124	108	40
Average	0.57	0.73	0.73	0.64	0.23
Standard deviation	0.22	0.43	0.43	0.39	0.28

Table 1

Distribution of the counting units for anti-motivational factors, distribution parameters

The data mentioned in the table allow us to trace the characteristics of the manifestation of anti-motivational factors among the respondents. The highest value (124) was recorded in groups of personal and content-related anti-motivational factors. The second place in terms of representation was occupied by interpersonal and organizational factor groups (108 and 96, respectively). Significantly lower values were noted in grade-related anti-motivational factors.

When comparing the standard deviations of different anti-motivational factor groups, content-related, personal and interpersonal factors had values similar to each other. Organizational factors turned out to have the lowest values, which indicates a smaller scatter in the group of the respondents.

The results presented in Table 2 were analyzed for statistically significant differences. We used the  $\chi^2$  method (the Pearson criterion). The experimental value of  $\chi^2$  was 49.49. The critical value of  $\chi^2$  for the level of statistical significance  $p \leq 0.01$ , for the degree of freedom  $v=4$  equaled 13.28. The experimental criterion significantly exceeds the one mentioned in the table, which indicates the presence of statistically significant differences between groups of anti-motivational factors.

Parameters	Content units of content analysis									
	Organizational		Content-related		Personal		Interpersonal		Grade-related	
	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S
Total	96	104	124	142	124	247	108	56	40	90
Average	0.57	0.71	0.73	0.98	0.73	1.7	0.64	0.39	0.23	0.62

Standard deviation	0.22	0.82	0.43	0.8	0.43	1.3	0.39	0.8	0.28	0.84
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T — elementary school teachers, S — elementary school students.

Table 2

Distribution of the counting units for anti-motivational factors, distribution parameters

A comparison of the results presented in Tables 2 and 3 allowed us to formulate the following conclusions. Content-related, personal and interpersonal factor groups have the largest number of anti-motivational factors and the highest citation rate among the respondents. Organizational factor group occupied the second place both in terms of the number of selected factors and the number of citations. The smallest value in terms of the number of factors within the anti-motivational group and citations among the respondents was in the group of grade-related anti-motivational factors.

The next objective of the study was a comparative analysis of the results obtained in both respondent groups.

Content units of content analysis	Teachers		Students	
	Number of participants	Percentage	Number of participants	Percentage
Attitude to the problem, personal involvement	96	57.1%	145	100%
Appeal to specific people and life situations	36	21.4%	12	8.2%
Presence of argumentation	24	14.3%	83	57%
Presence of suggestions for solving the problem	120	71.4%	109	75%

Table 3

Distribution of the content units in content analysis

Comparative analysis of data presented in Table 3 allows us to make the following conclusions.

The content units of content analysis in both groups of the respondents are not presented uniformly. The nature of the distribution of the content units in the respondent groups differs between the groups.

An equally high percentage (71.4% and 75%) of both respondent groups expresses suggestions for solving the problem. In the group of the teachers, slightly more than half of the respondents (57.1%) demonstrate personal involvement in the indicated problem. Whereas the students, according to the value shown for this aspect, show a 100% result. Only 14.3% of the teachers provide argumentation for their answers. In the group of the students, this percentage is significantly higher (57%). Neither of the respondent groups is inclined to give specific examples based on real life; the percentage for this aspect is low. However, in the teachers' group this percentage is slightly higher (21.4% and 8.2% respectively). Quantitative indicators may indicate the importance of the problem of anti-motivation for the respondents of both groups and greater personal involvement in the problem among the students. The quantitative representation of anti-motivational factors in groups of the teachers and students is as follows: among the teachers: organizational — 4, content-related — 6, personal and interpersonal — 5 each, grade-related — 1; among the students: organizational — 3, content-related — 5, personal — 9, interpersonal — 6 each, grade-related — 1.



An analysis of the data suggests that the respondents from both groups highlighted a similar total number of anti-motivational factors (21 and 24), with a slight increase in the number of factors in the students. The teachers have a greater number of factors associated with the content of educational activities and the students have more pronounced personal attribution. Both respondent groups believe that grade-related factors do not play a significant role in decreasing the motivation for studies. Organizational, interpersonal anti-motivational factors had similar average indicators in both groups of the respondents.

For the teachers, the most significant factors turned out to be content-related and personal factors, while the students name personal anti-motivational factors as the most important ones. The scatter in the standard deviation values is presented to a greater extent among the teachers, while the standard deviation among the students in all groups of anti-motivational factors, except for organizational and personal ones, has similar values. Thus, the teachers demonstrate a greater variability in answers.

## Conclusion

An analysis of foreign sources showed that the study of educational anti-motivation in elementary school children is fragmentarily included in the study of motivation and is not an independent research subject. The correlation of educational motivation with the type of school (private, public), age of respondents and their ethnicity is currently being researched. The gender specifics of motivation are being reviewed. The relationship of motives, performance, cognitive development and achievement motivation with personal characteristics has been shown. The relationships between internal and external motivation are currently a subject of study. Emotions and behavioral characteristics of preschoolers have been highlighted as diagnostic indicators of motivation. The motivation levels have been described. The age dynamics of motivation for educational activities in general and specific academic subjects have been traced. In our work, we have attempted to make anti-motivation of the educational activities of elementary school students an independent study subject.

The identified problem of anti-motivational factors is important for the respondents. The teachers demonstrate their readiness to solve this problem, however, the generalized nature of conclusions and weak argumentation indicate a low awareness of the problem. The solution to the problem is more strategic than tactical.

The students showed greater personal involvement in the problem, which was reinforced by the argumentation for their own opinions.

Anti-motivational factors in educational activities identified by both groups of the respondents are similar in terms of characteristics and quantity. This can serve as the basis for the compilation of a questionnaire for studying anti-motivation in the educational activity for both elementary school students and teachers. The focus of the questions should be similar. The questionnaire should include questions related to content-related, personal, interpersonal, organizational and grade-related groups of anti-motivational factors. The greater significance of content-related, personal, interpersonal and organizational anti-motivational factors for the respondents, compared with the group of grade-related anti-motivational factors, may be the basis for highlighting a different number of questions on the study of different groups of anti-motivational factors in the questionnaire.

In the course of the study, a group of anti-motives in educational activity has been identified with the aim of their inclusion in a questionnaire to study the characteristics of anti-motivation in the educational activities of elementary school students. We see the development, testing and validation of this questionnaire as a promising direction for our research. The questionnaire on anti-motivation in the educational activity of elementary school students will allow to purposefully study a specific layer of the motivational sphere of students (its severity, dynamics and gender characteristics), which in turn will contribute to a more effective solution to the problem of the formation of educational motivation of an elementary school student and the implementation of the requirements of the federal educational standard.

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