

# Psychological Profile of Unsuccessful University Students

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**Abstract:** Nowadays higher education institutions train competitive, competent, and mobile professionals. One of the factors that influence the success of higher education students' educational activities is the degree of development of their volitional qualities. The aim of our work is to determine the general psychological profile of an unsuccessful student concerning volitional qualities. In order to achieve this goal, we used a specially developed questionnaire “Volitional and Involuntary Qualities”. The questionnaire consists of 25 volitional qualities (of goal-oriented, encouraging, self-regulating, self-organizing and morally-directed groups) and involuntary qualities (of not oriented on a goal, braking, not regulating, not organizing and antimoral groups). To identify gender differences, we conducted a survey of an equal number of males and females. Thus, 476 unsuccessful students (238 males and 238 females) participated in the scientific study. Unsuccessful students were determined according to the results of educational activity. The research was conducted in 10 Ukrainian higher educational institutions of humanitarian direction. It was determined that the volitional qualities of unsuccessful students mainly include the following indicators: a) a high degree of development of decisiveness, courage, and bravery; b) the average degree of development of valor and boldness; c) a low level of development of purposefulness, persistence, initiative, self-control, self-mastery, patience, organization, diligence and heroism.

**Keywords:** *volitional qualities; involuntary qualities; unsuccessful students.*

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## 1. Introduction

At the present stage, the Ukrainian education system does not guarantee the competitiveness and competence of a graduate of a higher educational institution. Since a) innovations are appearing; b) new professional branches are emerging; c) old branches are being modernized and merged; d) the requirements for specialists are being increased; e) there is the lack of competent specialists in the professional sphere; and there are the following problems of providing educational services in the educational sphere: a) the system of providing educational services is outdated; b) the methods, forms and means of training used are not always effective; c) the content of the educational component does not correlate with the requirements of practice; d) many higher education institutions are focused on training the professionals of “prestigious professions”; e) there is increased competition between higher education institutions concerning providing educational services, etc. Therefore, higher educational institutions need reforming by updating, modifying, and approximating the requirements and needs of certain professional activities (Voloshenko, Dzhezhik, & Azarkina, 2020; Zhurat, Davydyuc, & Olinynyk, 2019).

Nowadays the problem of the vocational orientation of young people is also urgent. When entering higher educational institutions, young people generally want to get a diploma of higher education rather than a degree of competence. Thus, higher education applicants' educational motivation does not always correspond to the main purpose of specialist training in a higher educational institution (Bartram, & Roe, 2005; Batilani, Belem, & Both, 2018; Herdem, 2019; Zelenskiy et al., 2018).

Therefore, in a general context, these problematic issues can be formulated as follows: professional activity is rapidly developing and it requires higher education institutions to have competitive, competent, and mobile professionals; at the same time, higher educational institutions are lagging behind in terms of content of training, forms and teaching methods, that causes students to become less motivated to educational training, frustrated and unwilling to study.

Many scholars (Pahud, Rammsayer, & Troche, 2018; Polyanskaya, Fisenko, & Kulakova 2018) considered the influence of various internal personal and externally conditioned factors on educational activity. Thus, in particular, the scientific works presented the results of the study of the proactive qualities (including volitional ones) of the personality of students of higher school of physical education and sports concerning different variables (Prontenko et al., 2019; Shkola et al., 2019; Tymoshenko et al.,

2019); the structure, variables, and interdependence of the factors of mental states of expectations in the educational and professional activities of students (Popovych, & Blynova, 2019); a selective review of the professional behavior of a personality (Tokar, Fischer, & Subich, 1998); academic performance of university students (Marín, Infante, & Troyano, 2001;).

Analyzing the scientific evidence, we found that the influence of the will on the studying process was investigated by many scientists (Ivannikov, 2006; Pânișoară et al., 2016; Tsilmak, 2015). Thus, in particular, K. G. Karahanyan (2016) believes that motivation and will are prerequisites for successful students' performance. T. G. Batilani, I. C. Belem, J. Both (2018) revealed the peculiarities of education of volitional qualities of young sportsmen as a key competence of a specialist in their scientific research. O. Tymoshenko et al. (2019) revealed the peculiarities of willpower training of a sportsman. K. Prontenko, et al. (2019) consider the will as a "process" of control over the action, that is, as a deliberate, self-regulating, directing, arousing, and supportive process.

I. A. Vasiliev, and Yu. Kul (2006) distinguish such types of students as harmonious, professional, academician, diligent, erudite, creative, average performer, lazy, etc. In our scientific research, we were interested in such type of the students' personality as the lazy one, which we named as "unsuccessful student" by the results of educational activity.

It should be noted that among the criteria that affect the success of higher education students, motivation, the type of higher nervous system, the type of character, attitudes, the level of intelligence, self-awareness, the degree of conation, willpower, volitional qualities are distinguished (Barel, & Tzischinsky, 2018; Gutierrez, & Padagas, 2019; Maciuszek, Polczyk, & Tucholska, 2019; Ren, Schweizer, & Xu, 2013).

We were interested in the volitional qualities of a personality since the will provides a person with the ability to control one's actions and behavior, mobilize one's internal reserves to overcome barriers, obstacles, and difficulties in achieving one's goals. Volitional qualities ensure activity and they are revealed during it. The stronger the degree of development and revealing of the volitional qualities of a person is, the more successful one's activity is, including an educational one.

**The aim** of scientific research was to define the general profile of an unsuccessful student concerning volitional qualities.

The objectives of the research were:

1) to determine the degree of development of the volitional qualities of unsuccessful students;

2) to establish the main gender differences in the degree of development of the volitional qualities of unsuccessful students;

3) to define the general psychological profile of the volitional qualities of unsuccessful students.

## 2. Methodology

The object of scientific research was the volitional processes of unsuccessful students, the subject of the study – the degree of development of volitional qualities of unsuccessful students.

The hypothesis of scientific research was the fact that the prevalence of involuntary characteristics of students determines their unsuccessful education.

In order to check this hypothesis, we conducted an anonymous survey of unsuccessful students using the developed questionnaire “Volitional and Involuntary Qualities” (Tsilmak. 2019).

The questionnaire “Volitional and Involuntary Qualities” consists of 25 volitional qualities (of goal-oriented, encouraging, self-regulating, self-organizing and morally-directed groups) and involuntary qualities (of not oriented on a goal, braking, not regulating, not organizing and antimoral groups). Thus, we included the following diads in the mentioned groups:

a) goal-oriented (not oriented on a goal): purposefulness (thoughtlessness); persistence (flexibility); eagerness (inertia); initiative (non-initiative);

b) encouraging (braking): decisiveness (indecision); courage (cowardice); valor (fearfulness); bravery (timorousness);

c) self-regulating (not regulating): patience (quick temper), firmness (intemperance); self-control (the lack of control); self-mastery (confusion); self-management (mismanagement);

d) self-organizing (not organizing): neatness (negligence); carefulness (carelessness); organization (the lack of organization); conformity to plan (the lack of conformity to plan); consistency (inconsistency); perseverance (the lack of perseverance); thoroughness (superficiality); scrupulousness (the lack of scrupulousness); diligence (the lack of diligence), discipline (indiscipline);

e) morally-directed (antimoral): boldness (desperation); heroism (cowardness).

The unsuccessful students had to evaluate each of these qualities by the degree of their development and revealing, that is 1) high (constant, is always revealed); 2) middle (moderately developed quality, situationally

conditioned, does not always appear); 3) low (not constant, is revealed very rarely, in extreme cases); 4) bipolar (the same degree of development and revealing of opposite qualities).

To identify gender differences, we conducted a survey of an equal number of males and females. Thus, 476 unsuccessful students (238 males and 238 females) participated in the scientific study. Unsuccessful students were determined according to the results of educational activity. The research was conducted in 10 Ukrainian higher educational institutions of humanitarian direction (Odesa, Mykolaiv, Vinnytsia, Kharkiv).

The prerequisites for the survey were:

- 1) a person's desire to participate in the survey;
- 2) the adequacy of self-esteem of one's own degree of development of volitional and involuntary qualities during the educational activity.

The poll rules were:

- 1) to point out the qualities of respondents that are revealed during the educational activities;
- 2) one can skip any of the proposed qualities if the respondent does not have it developed.

After completing the survey, we statistically calculated the results and identified major trends and gender differences. All this allowed us to check the scientific hypothesis.

In the process of scientific research, we used a set of general scientific (general-logic and general theoretical), interrogative, mathematical and empirical methods. By the means of general-logic (analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, scientific abstraction, generalization, analogy, modeling, classification) and general theoretical (formalization, axiomatization, hypothetically-deductive) methods we specified the groups of volitional qualities (goal-oriented, encouraging, self-regulating, self-organizing, and morally-directed) and the groups of involuntary qualities (not oriented on a goal, braking, not regulating, not organizing, and antimoral); specified the content of definitions of volitional and involuntary qualities; created the questionnaire "Volitional and Involuntary Qualities" to assess their degree of development.

The students (hereinafter referred to as respondents) were interviewed using questionnaire methods. The mathematical methods (calculation, registration, scaling) helped a) to calculate the results of the survey of respondents (according to the groups); b) to rank key indicators; c) to establish the degree of development of volitional qualities of unsuccessful students of higher education institutions. The empirical methods

(comparison and description) helped to outline the main results of the scientific study.

### 3. Results

Considering the results of the scientific study regarding the degree of development and revealing of volitional and involuntary qualities of unsuccessful students during educational activities, according to the groups of qualities, the first group consists of goal-oriented volitional qualities and the qualities not oriented on a goal. Goal-oriented volitional qualities are a set of qualities that contribute to the achievement of certain goals. They included the following volitional qualities:

1. Purposefulness, which determines the ability of a person to subordinate all the actions to a conscious goal.
2. Persistence, which determines a person's ability to achieve goals, overcoming external and internal obstacles.
3. Eagerness, determining the ability of a person to repeatedly make a willful effort to achieve a specific goal.
4. Initiative, determining the person ready for independent endeavors, able to improve their personal and social life.

Scientists (Ivannikov, 2006; Soroka, Kalaur, & Balendr, 2019) established the general and specific psychological structure of persistence and initiative as diverse and functional traits of character based on quantitative, correlation and factor analysis. Thus, as V. A. Ivannikov (2006) notes, "... a person reveals one's volitional qualities when one does an action, which is initially not enough motivated, that is, the action is inferior to other actions, struggling for "a behavioral revealing"...". Therefore, goal-oriented qualities are quite important for studying activities.

The qualities not oriented on a goal are the qualities that hinder the process of achieving certain goals. They embraced the following qualities:

1. Thoughtlessness is a quality that determines the imprudence, the indiscretion, the inconsideration of the actions. A thoughtless person does not consider the possible consequences of one's own actions or inaction.
2. Flexibility is a quality that defines a person's compliance and acquiescence to something or someone. That is, a person is easily influenced by others, depends on circumstances and other people.
3. Inertia is a quality, which determines a person's impaired ability to switch from one activity to another.
4. Non-initiative is the quality that determines a person's avoidance of initiative and activity. Such a person does not want to change anything, to

look for ways and means of improving personal and social life, to take responsibility.

In our opinion, the mentioned volitional qualities are very important for the success of students' studying activities. Since, in the course of studying activities, goal-oriented volitional qualities are the basis of one's personal mood for achieving positive studying results. Therefore, as a result of scientific research, we defined the number of unsuccessful students who have goal-oriented volitional qualities and the qualities not oriented on a goal (Table 1 and Table 2):

**Table 1.** The results of researching of goal-oriented volitional qualities and the qualities not oriented on a goal of unsuccessful males students, %

Goal-oriented volitional qualities	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	The qualities not oriented on a goal
Purposefulness	2	30	36	–	16	16	–	Thoughtlessness
Persistence	10	38	42	–	6	4	–	Flexibility
Eagerness	2	14	18	6	26	34	–	Inertia
Initiative	4	22	30	14	4	26	–	Non-initiative

*Legend: 3 – constant quality, is always revealed (high degree); 2 – moderately developed quality, situationally conditioned, does not always appear (middle degree); 1 – not constant quality, is revealed very rarely, in extreme cases (low degree); 0 – the same degree of development and revealing of opposite qualities (bipolar degree)*

1) the number of students with highly-developed purposefulness accounted for 2% males and 4% females; persistence – 10% males and 12% females; eagerness – 2% males and 2% females; initiative – 4% males and 4% females; inertia – 30% females;

2) the number of students with purposefulness developed at the middle level accounted for 30% males and 36% females; persistence – 38% males and 34% females; eagerness – 14% males and 12% females; initiative – 22% males and 14% females; thoughtfulness – 16% males and 18% females; flexibility – 4% males; inertia – 34% males and 30% females; non-initiative – 26% males and 30% females;

**Table 2.** The results of researching of goal-oriented volitional qualities and the qualities not oriented on a goal of unsuccessful females students, %

Goal-oriented volitional qualities	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	The qualities not oriented on a goal
Purposefulness	4	36	30	–	12	18	–	Thoughtlessness
Persistence	12	34	48	–	6	–	–	Flexibility
Eagerness	2	12	14	–	28	30	14	Inertia
Initiative	4	14	38	12	2	30	–	Non-initiative

*Legend: 3 – constant quality, is always revealed (high degree); 2 – moderately developed quality, situationally conditioned, does not always appear (middle degree); 1 – not constant quality, is revealed very rarely, in extreme cases (low degree); 0 – the same degree of development and revealing of opposite qualities (bipolar degree)*

3) the number of students with purposefulness developed at a low level accounted for 36% males and 30% females; persistence – 42% males and 48% females; eagerness – 18% males and 14% females; initiative – 30% males and 38% females; thoughtfulness – 16% males and 12% females; flexibility – 6% males and 6% females; inertia – 26% males and 28% females; non-initiative – 4% males and 2% females;

4) the number of students with bipolar eagerness and inertia accounted for 6% males; initiative and non-initiative – 14% males and 12% females.

The next is the group of encouraging volitional qualities and braking qualities. Encouraging volitional qualities are a set of qualities that push a person to take actions, activate one and stimulate to achieve certain results. They involved:

1. Decisiveness is a volitional quality that determines the ability of a person to act intensively at the right time without hesitation and doubt in the process of overcoming difficulties, obstacles and barriers.

2. Courage is a volitional quality that allows a person, overcoming doubts and fears, to approve oneself in the necessary situations.

3. Valor is a volitional quality that defines a person's ability to take a justifiable risk, fearlessly confront the difficulties (danger).

4. Bravery is a volitional quality that determines a person's ability to stand against others and defend one's (or someone's) interests, positions, values, and beliefs.

Braking qualities are a set of qualities that are opposite to encouraging volitional qualities. They break the activity and independence of the individual. They embraced:



1. Indecision, which does not allow a person to act intensively, to do something, to make a decision. Indecision is the basis of a person's desire to evade decision-making as much as possible, to shift responsibility for the decision to others. Such a person hesitates to make one's own decisions and doubts oneself.

2. Cowardice, which determines the inability of an individual to overcome doubts and fears to approve oneself in the necessary situations. Such a person retreats (passes) in the face of danger, difficulties, obstacles, and barriers.

3. Fearfulness that defines a person's inability to take a justifiable risk and fearlessly confront the difficulties (danger).

4. Timorousness, which indicates the inability of a person to stand against others and defend one's own (or someone's) interests, positions, values, and beliefs.

Encouraging volitional qualities are the basis of the manifestation of educational activity. We defined the number of unsuccessful students who have encouraging and braking qualities (Table 3 and Table 4):

1) the number of students with highly-developed decisiveness accounted for 58% males and 46% females; courage – 48% males and 44% females; valor – 68% males and 6% females; indecision – 10% females; cowardice – 10% females;

2) the number of students with decisiveness developed at the middle level accounted for 42% males and 32% females; courage – 42% males and 34% females; valor – 22% males and 4% females; indecision – 2% females; cowardice – 4% males and 6% females; fearfulness – 12% females;

3) the number of students with decisiveness developed at a low level accounted for 2% females; courage – 2% females; valor – 4% males and 2% females; indecision – 6% females; cowardice – 4% males and 2% females; fearfulness – 4% males and 18% females;

4) the number of students with bipolar decisiveness and indecision accounted for 2% females; courage and cowardice – 2% males and 2% females; valor and fearfulness – 2% males and 22% females.

**Table 3.** The results of researching of encouraging volitional qualities and braking qualities of unsuccessful males students, %

Encouraging volitional qualities	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	Braking qualities
Decisiveness	58	42	–	–	–	–	–	Indecision
Courage	48	42	–	2	4	4	–	Cowardice

Valor	68	22	4	2	4	–	–	Fearfulness
Bravery	44	28	24	–	–	4	–	Timorousness

*Legend: 3 – constant quality, is always revealed (high degree); 2 – moderately developed quality, situationally conditioned, does not always appear (middle degree); 1 – not constant quality, is revealed very rarely, in extreme cases (low degree); 0 – the same degree of development and revealing of opposite qualities (bipolar degree)*

**Table 4.** The results of researching of encouraging volitional qualities and braking qualities of unsuccessful females students, %

Encouraging volitional qualities	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	Braking qualities
Decisiveness	46	32	2	2	6	2	10	Indecision
Courage	44	34	2	2	2	6	10	Cowardice
Valor	6	4	38	22	18	12	–	Fearfulness
Bravery	46	42	12	–	–	–	–	Timorousness

*Legend: 3 – constant quality, is always revealed (high degree); 2 – moderately developed quality, situationally conditioned, does not always appear (middle degree); 1 – not constant quality, is revealed very rarely, in extreme cases (low degree); 0 – the same degree of development and revealing of opposite qualities (bipolar degree)*

Self-regulating volitional qualities are a set of qualities that allow a person to manage oneself. They included:

1. Firmness – a volitional quality that allows a person to refrain from certain actions; to brake (slow down, weaken) unnecessary activity.
2. Patience – a volitional quality that allows an individual to endure physical and mental loads and challenges.
3. Self-control – a volitional quality that allows a person to control one’s own behavior and emotions.
4. Self-mastery – a volitional quality that allows a person to restrain negative emotions and feelings or activate the necessary positive ones. Thus, self-mastery can be revealed both in self-restraint (that is, braking of unwanted moods and emotional states) and in self-activation (that is, a person’s activation of certain moods, states, feelings that are the stimulus for one’s further actions).

5. Self-management – a volitional quality that allows a person to manage one’s actions, independently solve certain problems that may arise during life.

Not regulating qualities are a set of qualities that prevent a person from managing one’s actions. They involved:

1. Intemperance – a quality that determines a person’s inability to break (slow down, weaken) activity, restrain and suppress one’s own feelings and emotions.

2. Quick temper – a quality that defines a person’s tendency to get angry and annoyed quickly.

3. The lack of control that indicates a person’s inability to control one’s own actions.

4. Confusion that determines a person’s inability to hold oneself in the right situations.

5. Mismanagement – a quality that determines a person’s inability to resolve particular issues.

Thus, self-regulating volitional qualities during education activities provide self-control and self-management. We defined the number of unsuccessful students who have self-regulating volitional qualities and not regulating qualities (Table 5 and Table 6):

**Table 5.** The results of researching of self-regulating volitional qualities and not regulating qualities of unsuccessful males students, %

Self-regulating volitional qualities	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	Not regulating qualities
Firmness	14	26	20	20	8	12	–	Intemperance
Patience	4	32	32	12	20	–	–	Quick temper
Self-control	6	12	22	48	4	8	–	The lack of control
Self-mastery	10	44	22	18	8	–	–	Confusion
Self-management	44	22	30	–	4	–	–	Mismanagement

*Legend: 3 – constant quality, is always revealed (high degree); 2 – moderately developed quality, situationally conditioned, does not always appear (middle degree); 1 – not constant quality, is revealed very rarely, in extreme cases (low degree); 0 – the same degree of development and revealing of opposite qualities (bipolar degree)*

1) the number of students with highly-developed self-control accounted for 6% males and 4% females; self-mastery – 10% males and 2% females; self-management – 44% males and 16% females; firmness – 14% males and 2% females; patience – 4% males and 2% females;

2) the number of students with self-control developed at the middle level accounted for 12% males and 24% females; self-mastery – 44% males and 34% females; self-management – 22% males and 54% females; patience – 32% males and 32% females; firmness – 26 % males and 16% females; the

lack of control – 8% males and 10% females; confusion – 22% females; intemperance – 12% males and 10% females; quick temper – 8% females;

**Table 6.** The results of researching of self-regulating volitional qualities and not regulating qualities of unsuccessful females students, %

Self-regulating volitional qualities	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	Not regulating qualities
Firmness	2	16	28	38	6	10	–	Intemperance
Patience	2	32	38	8	12	8	–	Quick temper
Self-control	4	24	30	30	2	10	–	The lack of control
Self-mastery	2	34	32	2	8	22	–	Confusion
Self-management	16	54	30	–	–	–	–	Mismanagement

*Legend: 3 – constant quality, is always revealed (high degree); 2 – moderately developed quality, situationally conditioned, does not always appear (middle degree); 1 – not constant quality, is revealed very rarely, in extreme cases (low degree); 0 – the same degree of development and revealing of opposite qualities (bipolar degree)*

3) the number of students with self-control developed at a low level accounted for 22% males and 30% females; self-mastery – 22% males and 32% females; self-management – 30% males and 30% females; firmness – 20% males and 2% females; patience – 32% males and 38% females; the lack of control – 4% males and 2% females; intemperance – 8% males and 6% females; quick temper – 20% males and 12% females; confusion – 8% males and 8% females;

4) the number of students with bipolar decisiveness self-control and the lack of control accounted for 48% males and 30% females; self-mastery and confusion – 18% males and 2% females; patience and quick temper – 12% males and 8% females; firmness and intemperance – 20% males and 38% females.

Self-organizing volitional qualities are a set of qualities that make it possible to organize and manage one's life. They included the following qualities:

1. Neatness – a volitional quality that determines personal neatness in deeds and actions.
2. Carefulness – a volitional quality that defines a person's ability to follow the most rigorous algorithm of actions.
3. Organization – a volitional quality that indicates a person's ability to allocate time resources.

4. Conformity to plan – a volitional quality that identifies a person's ability to follow the internal and external plan of action.

5. Consistency – a volitional quality that means the ability of a person to pursue one's goal or perform a specific activity.

6. Perseverance – a volitional quality that designates the ability of a person to diligently perform the activity that requires patience and long sedentary work.

7. Thoroughness – a volitional quality that determines a person's ability to be attentive to details.

8. Scrupulousness – a volitional quality that determines a person's ability to do something carefully to the smallest details.

9. Diligence – a volitional quality that defines a person's ability to do something conscientiously.

10. Discipline – a volitional quality that designates a person's ability to follow norms and rules of conduct.

Not organizing qualities are a set of qualities that indicate a personal inability to self-organize. They embraced the following qualities:

1. Negligence – a quality that determines one's personal untidiness in deeds and actions.

2. Carelessness – a quality that designates a person's inability to follow the most rigorous algorithm of actions.

3. The lack of organization – a quality that identifies a person's inability to allocate time.

4. The lack of conformity to plan – a quality that defines a person's inability to follow the internal and external plan of action.

5. Inconsistency – a quality that means the inability of a person to progressively achieve the intended purpose or perform a specific activity.

6. The lack of perseverance – a quality that determines a person's inability to perform diligently the activity that requires patience and long sedentary work.

7. Superficiality – a quality that indicates the inability to be attentive to details.

8. The lack of scrupulousness – a quality that determines a person's inability to do something very accurately.

9. The lack of diligence – a quality that defines a person's inability to do something conscientiously.

10. Indiscipline – a quality that designates a person's inability to follow the norms and rules of conduct.

Self-organizing volitional qualities are the basis of the activity side of studying, that is, the degree and constancy of knowledge and skills depend

on the degree of their development and revealing. We defined the number of unsuccessful students who have self-regulating volitional qualities and not regulating qualities (Table 7 and Table 8):

1) the number of students with highly-developed neatness accounted for 6% males and 4% females; carefulness – 4% males and 2% females; organization – 10% males and 8% females; conformity to plan – 2% males and 2% females; consistency – 16% males and 14% females; perseverance – 4% males and 4% females; thoroughness – 8% males and 8% females; scrupulousness – 2% males and 2% females; diligence – 8% males and 8% females; discipline – 4% males and 4% females;

2) the number of students with neatness developed at the middle level accounted for 20% males and 14% females; carefulness – 6% males and 6% females; organization – 10% males and 14% females; conformity to plan – 16% males and 6% females; consistency – 14% males and 16% females; perseverance – 10% males and 16% females; thoroughness – 32% males and 22% females; scrupulousness – 18% males and 12% females; diligence – 20% males and 8% females; negligence – 10% females; discipline – 14% males and 14% females;

3) the number of students with neatness developed at a low level accounted for 34% males and 48% females; carefulness – 52% males and 58% females; organization – 48% males and 44% females; conformity to plan – 34% males and 48% females; consistency – 48% males and 40% females; perseverance – 38% males and 32% females; thoroughness – 26% males and 36% females; scrupulousness – 42% males and 44% females; diligence – 30% males and 34% females; discipline – 43% males and 44% females; negligence – 12% males and 2% females; indiscipline – 17% males and 16% females; the lack of diligence – 10% females;

4) the number of students with bipolar neatness and negligence accounted for 28% males and 22% females; discipline and indiscipline – 22% males and 22% females; carefulness and carelessness – 40% males and 34% females; organization and the lack of organization – 34% males and 34% females; conformity to plan and the lack of conformity to plan – 48% males and 44% females; consistency and inconsistency – 22% males and 30% females; perseverance and the lack of perseverance – 48% males and 34% females; thoroughness and superficiality – 34% males and 34% females; scrupulousness and the lack of scrupulousness – 38% males and 42% females; diligence and the lack of diligence – 38% males and 48% females.

**Table 7.** The results of self-organizing volitional qualities and not organizing qualities of unsuccessful males students, %

Self-organizing volitional qualities	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	Not organizing qualities
Neatness	6	20	34	28	12	–	–	Negligence
Carefulness	2	6	52	40	–	–	–	Carelessness
Organization	8	10	48	34	–	–	–	The lack of organization
Conformity to plan	2	16	34	48	–	–	–	The lack of conformity to plan
Consistency	16	14	48	22	–	–	–	Inconsistency
Perseverance	4	10	38	48	–	–	–	The lack of perseverance
Thoroughness	8	32	26	34	–	–	–	Superficiality
Scrupulousness	2	18	42	38	–	–	–	The lack of scrupulousness
Diligence	8	20	34	38	–	–	–	The lack of diligence
Discipline	4	14	43	22	17	–	–	Indiscipline

*Legend: 3 – constant quality, is always revealed (high degree); 2 – moderately developed quality, situationally conditioned, does not always appear (middle degree); 1 – not constant quality, is revealed very rarely, in extreme cases (low degree); 0 – the same degree of development and revealing of opposite qualities (bipolar degree)*

**Table 8.** The results of researching of self-organizing volitional qualities and not organizing qualities of unsuccessful females students, %

Self-organizing volitional qualities	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	Not organizing qualities
Neatness	4	14	48	22	2	10	–	Negligence
Carefulness	2	6	58	34	–	–	–	Carelessness
Organization	8	14	44	34	–	–	–	The lack of organization
Conformity to plan	2	6	48	44	–	–	–	The lack of conformity to plan
Consistency	14	16	40	30	–	–	–	Inconsistency
Perseverance	4	16	32	48	–	–	–	The lack of perseverance
Thoroughness	8	22	36	34	–	–	–	Superficiality
Scrupulousness	2	12	44	42	–	–	–	The lack of scrupulousness
Diligence	8	8	36	48	–	–	–	The lack of diligence
Discipline	4	14	44	22	16	–	–	Indiscipline

*Legend: 3 – constant quality, is always revealed (high degree); 2 – moderately developed quality, situationally conditioned, does not always appear (middle degree); 1 – not constant quality, is revealed very rarely, in extreme cases (low degree); 0 – the same degree of development and revealing of opposite qualities (bipolar degree)*

Morally-directed qualities are a set of qualities that allow a person to overcome obstacles, recognize mistakes and achieve goals fearlessly and firmly. They involved the following qualities:

1. Boldness – a volitional quality that determines the ability of a person to overcome obstacles, to be responsible for oneself, one’s decisions and actions fearlessly and firmly.

2. Heroism – a volitional quality that defines a person’s ability to overcome the personal instinct of self-preservation for the sake of a particular cause.

Antimoral qualities are opposite to moral qualities, that is, a set of qualities that indicate a person’s unwillingness to follow established norms and rules. They included the following ones:

1. Desperation – the quality that determines unjustified and excessive riskiness, and invigilance of a person. Such a person is not afraid of anything and is inconsiderable of others, does not stop even if one is threatened with death.

2. Cowardness – a quality that identifies one’s timorousness and fearfulness.

In learning activities, morally-directed qualities designate one’s personal ability to sustainably overcome the difficulties and obstacles that arise in the learning process. They give the possibility to approve oneself, to take responsibility for one’s own decisions and actions. We determined the number of unsuccessful students who have morally-directed volitional qualities (Table 9 and Table 10):

**Table 9.** The results of researching of morally-directed qualities and antimoral qualities of unsuccessful males students, %

Morally-directed qualities	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	Antimoral qualities
Boldness	74	14	2	10	–	–	–	Desperation
Heroism	36	34	26	4	–	–	–	Cowardness

*Legend: 3 – constant quality, is always revealed (high degree); 2 – moderately developed quality, situationally conditioned, does not always appear (middle degree); 1 – not constant quality, is*



*revealed very rarely, in extreme cases (low degree); 0 – the same degree of development and revealing of opposite qualities (bipolar degree)*

**Table 10.** The results of researching of morally-directed qualities and antimoral qualities of unsuccessful females students, %

Morally-directed qualities	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	Antimoral qualities
Boldness	44	46	10	–	–	–	–	Desperation
Heroism	14	14	62	10	–	–	–	Cowardness

*Legend: 3 – constant quality, is always revealed (high degree); 2 – moderately developed quality, situationally conditioned, does not always appear (middle degree); 1 – not constant quality, is revealed very rarely, in extreme cases (low degree); 0 – the same degree of development and revealing of opposite qualities (bipolar degree)*

1) the number of students with highly-developed boldness accounted for 74% males and 44% females; heroism – 36% males and 14% females;

2) the number of students with boldness developed at the middle level accounted for 14% males and 46% females; heroism – 34% males and 14% females;

3) the number of students with boldness developed at a low level accounted for 2% males and 10% females; heroism – 26% males and 62% females;

4) the number of students with bipolar boldness and desperation accounted for 10% males; heroism and cowardness – 4% males and 10% females.

#### 4. Discussion

Thus, in our study, we examined the degree of development of unsuccessful students' volitional qualities. A group of goal-oriented volitional qualities is a consciously regulating goal-oriented activity of a person when achieving ones goals. Consequently, unsuccessful students have goal-oriented volitional qualities developed and revealed at a low level. Since goal-oriented volitional qualities are the basis of volitional actions, their low level of development and revealing in the course of educational activity indicates the lack of a person's educational motives and desire to study, to learn something new, to increase the level of competence. That is, one can state that educational activities and their outcomes are not significant for these individuals. The encouraging volitional qualities of unsuccessful students are mostly developed and revealed at high and middle levels. The

decisiveness, courage, valor, and bravery of unsuccessful students are directed to various tricks and manipulative technologies during an educational activity, instead of active gaining of knowledge and researching of difficult educational questions. It is known that such individuals are not particularly worried if they do not know anything and cannot answer the teacher's questions, they boldly look down into the book when formulating the answer. The analysis of group of self-regulating volitional qualities determines that individuals should be able to control their own actions, educational activities. However, since unsuccessful students have self-regulating volitional qualities generally developed and revealed at the middle, low, and bipolar degrees, such individuals cannot always make themselves learn the educational material. The degree of development of self-organizing qualities of unsuccessful students is mainly low and bipolar. This indicates that such people cannot organize and manage their own educational activity because the degree of development of goal-oriented volitional qualities is also mostly low. So, if there is no educational motivation, then there is no educational activity. The analysis of group of morally-directed qualities shows that the courage of males is generally revealed at a high level, while the courage of females – at a low; the heroism of males is developed at the high and middle levels and the heroism of females – at a low. This group of traits has a direct correlation with encouraging volitional qualities for males. It should be noted that the boldness and heroism of unsuccessful students during their educational activities are distorted. That is, a student can easily accept responsibility for the fact that one is not ready for a class. So, in this case, unsuccessful students mostly reveal pseudo-boldness and pseudo-heroism.

In the general context our study has shown that the general psychological profile of the volitional qualities of unsuccessful male students differs from the general psychological profile of the volitional qualities of unsuccessful female students.

Having conducted average statistical calculations of the general psychological profiles of the volitional qualities of unsuccessful male and female students, it is possible to determine the general psychological profile of unsuccessful students concerning volitional qualities. Thus, the volitional qualities of unsuccessful students generally have such indicators:

- a) highly-developed decisiveness, courage, and bravery;
- b) valor and boldness developed at the middle level;
- c) purposefulness, persistence, eagerness, initiative, self-management, self-control, self-mastery, patience, neatness, carefulness, organization, consistency, thoroughness, diligence, and heroism developed at a low level;

d) bipolar self-control and the lack of control; perseverance and the lack of perseverance; firmness and intemperance; scrupulousness and the lack of scrupulousness; discipline and indiscipline.

Thus, we established a direct correlation between the success of studying and the degree of development of volitional qualities necessary for the educational activity.

This study complies with the ethical standards of the Act of Ukraine “On Higher Education” No. 1556-VII dated 01.07.2014, the Letter from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine “On the Academic Plagiarism Prevention” No. 1/11-8681 dated 15.08.2018 and the requirements of “Regulation on the Organization of Scientific, Scientific and Technical Activities at Higher Educational Establishments of III and IV Accreditation Levels”, approved by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 422 dated 01.06.2006. Informed consent was received from all individuals who took part in this research.

The study was previously approved by a Research Ethics Committee of the National University “Odessa Law Academy”, protocol No. 4/1 dated 16.04.2015. The study was anonymous and conducted in compliance with the ethical principles according to the provisions of the Student Honor and Dignity Code. This document was developed on the basis of Ukrainian and world experience of ethical rulemaking, expert recommendations taking into account the motions of the structural units of the University and agreed with the bodies of student self-government, trade unions, and other public organizations. All members of the university community are guided by the principles of the academic freedom – independence of the community members in obtaining and using knowledge and information, in conducting researches and applying their results, as well as by the academic integrity – advocating honesty, justice, respect, responsibility, ethical principles and laws in scientific (creative) activity to establish confidence in the results of scientific (creative) achievements.

## 5. Conclusions

1. The volitional qualities of unsuccessful students are mainly highly-developed. This indicates that the courage, decisiveness, bravery, and valor of unsuccessful students are directed at various tricks and manipulative technologies during the educational activity but not to the active gaining of knowledge and researching complex educational issues.

The groups of goal-oriented, self-organizing and self-regulating volitional qualities of such students are generally of a low degree of

development. Although these qualities that underlie the success of the educational activity. This indicates that the lack of students' studying motivation and the lack of willpower in relation to concerning educational activity.

The unsuccessful students were found to have the bipolar manifestation of some volitional and involuntary qualities, in particular, self-organizing (perseverance and the lack of perseverance; scrupulousness and the lack of scrupulousness; conformity to plan and the lack of conformity to plan; discipline and indiscipline) and self-regulating (self-control and the lack of control; firmness and intemperance). This indicates that the educational activity of such people depends on the educational desires and motives and is situationally conditioned.

2. The main gender differences in the degree of development of the volitional qualities of unsuccessful students were established. Therefore, males have higher indicators than females regarding the degree of development of such volitional qualities as valor, self-mastery, firmness, conformity to plan, boldness, and heroism. Males deny that they are indecisive; females deny that they have such qualities as desperation, timorousness, and mismanagement.

3. The general psychological profile of the volitional qualities of unsuccessful students was determined. Thus, the volitional qualities of unsuccessful students generally have the following indicators:

- a) highly-developed decisiveness, courage, and bravery;
- b) valor and boldness developed at the middle level;
- c) purposefulness, persistence, eagerness, initiative, self-management, self-control, self-mastery, patience, neatness, carefulness, organization, consistency, thoroughness, diligence, and heroism developed at a low level.

Therefore, the hypothesis of the scientific study that the prevalence of involuntary qualities of students determines their unsuccessful education was confirmed.

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