**Dzhaneryan S. T., Panina E. A.****The Cognitive Component of the Competitive Strategy of Waiters**

The article deals with the results of the study of a cognitive component of the competitive strategy of waiters. 120 Rostov-on-Don waiters were the object of the research. The authors introduce empirically distinguished types of the competitive strategies of waiters (adaptive-selfish, "professional-career plateau", innovative, situational), and also the main purposes of the competition of waiters (quality of activity, reliability of activity, salary, tip, leadership, a better place of employment, and demonstration of an individual style of activity). The multi-component structure of the competitive strategy is considered. The content of the operational component of the competitive strategy of waiters is defined. The influence of certain dimensions of the Self-Concept (Real Self, Ideal Self, Reflected Self) of waiters, men and women, on the content of the cognitive component of every types of their competitive strategy is empirically proved.

Keywords: competitive strategy, waiters, cognitive component, dimensions of Self-Concept.

The specific weight of the catering sector as a sphere of employment becomes more and more of a priority. Business-analysts treat the restaurant sphere as one of the most gainful for investments. Over the last 5 years, the number of café and fast-food restaurants has especially increased, which has generated the need for new personnel for working with guests. Modern restaurants of a classical style of service realize new forms of self-presentation which are reflected not only in the name (gastropubs, dinner rooms, coffee houses, etc.), but also in a unique concept. Respectively, the competition between restaurants of the same segment has increased. The waiter is a "face" of the restaurant and, therefore, a subject of the competitive strategy of the restaurant and a subject of own competitive strategy which is developed in relation to the socio-professional community.

Studying the professional activity of waiters was boiled down to the consideration of their psychological features [2], interrelation of burning out and passion for activity [6], professional selection in the sphere of service [10], criteria of the efficiency of a "person-person" profession [3, 12]. However, psychological features of the waiter as a bearer of own competitive strategy have never been a subject of the psychological analysis before.

Researches of the competitive strategy (of the enterprise, firm, restaurant, goods and so forth) were generally carried out in economic science by foreign [1, 7, 12, etc.] and native authors [8, 9, 15, etc.]. The results of our analysis of these researches have enabled us to define the competitive strategy of the person in his/her professional activity, to establish the structure of the strategy, to designate its types [5].

We treat the "competitive strategy" (CS) of the person in professional activity as a process and result of his/her motivated, purposeful activity providing advantages in his/her professional activity on the basis of the person's ideas of self, subject and



activity requirements. As it was shown [5], the purposes of waiters' competition are directed on achievement of the reliability of activity, material benefits (salary, gratuity), leadership establishment, demonstration of an individual style of activity (service of guests) and searching better place of employment. In our previous study [5] of the dominating purpose of competition we have established types of the competitive strategy of waiters: adaptive-selfish(demonstration of an individual style of service), "professional-career plateau" (material benefits), innovative (leadership) and situational (leadership and searching a new place of employment).The adaptive-selfish strategy assumes that the subject of competition fulfills the minimum requirements of activity, showing the individual style of service "without effort". Subjects of competition with the "professional-career plateau" strategy are focused on the maintenance of the already existing material level by serving regular guests.By means of the innovative strategy subjects of the competition realize the most effective ways of service for strengthening leadership. The situational strategy is inherent in those subjects of competition who use any CS depending on a situation, mainly aiming at the achievement of leadership along with searching better place of employment [5].

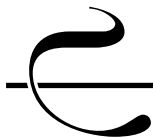
The CS has a complex structure. It includes motivational-goal, cognitive and operational components.

The motivational-goal component causing the sense of competition and ways of its realization by the subject is reflected in the content of purposes of competition entailing a corresponding motive: demonstration of an individual style of serving guests, salary, superiority in interpersonal relations, gratuity, searching a new place of employment, responsibility and reliability in performance of own duties. Features of the CS types of waiters and also the content of the motivational-goal component of each of the types are dealt with in more detail in our previous study [5].

The CS operational component includes both purposeful actions and readiness to them, which are necessary for achievement of goals of competition in activity.

The CS cognitive component includes ideas of self as of a waiter, the specifics of the object of activity (the restaurant guest) and of features of the socio-professional community (the head, colleagues). The cognitive component plays an important role in creation of the strategy, providing the subject with necessary information about his/her own possibilities, features of competitors and guests.

It is obvious that estimates and the subject's ideas of the head, colleagues, the guest, self in professional activity, on the one hand, are connected with the competition purposes, and, on the other hand, are influenced by the self-concept of the person which generalizes the person's knowledge of self in various situations of activity and communication and which is a peculiar filter for perception and interpretation of any information, and also a regulator of interaction with the professional community in the professional activity. By relying on the data on the conditionality of the content of the self-concept of subjects by their professional-career belonging and sex



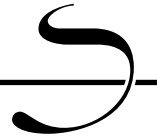
[4, 13], the specified communications should be studied taking into account sexual differentiation of subjects.

In the context of our research the most important measurements of the self-concept of the subject, which influence his/her estimates and ideas of professional community, are measurements of real self, ideal self, reflected self. These measurements, functionally differing by criteria of reality and a source of existence of the content reflected in the self-concept, include all the knowledge of the subject of self at the present time (real self), of desirable but missing at the present moment traits (ideal self), and also ideas of the subject concerning perception and estimates of his/her own characteristics by other people (reflected self). At the same time the content of the cognitive component of the competitive strategy as well as the influence of features of the self-concept on it is insufficiently studied. It is a precondition for their inclusion in independent psychological studying in relation to waiters – representatives of the service sphere.

The research purpose is ascertainment of the content of the cognitive component of each of the types of the competitive strategy of male and female waiters. 120 waiters (83 women, 37 men) working at restaurants, cafe, bars and clubs of Rostov-on-Don were **the research object**. **Research methods** were the following: testing (techniques: "Diagnostics of Interpersonal Relations" by T. Leary, "Who am I?" by M. Kuhn), methods of nonparametric statistics (Friedman and Wilcoxon's criteria, Spearman's correlation coefficient (r)), multiple linear regression analysis (R^2). When studying the content of measurements of the self-concept (real self, ideal self, reflected self) and in result of the content analysis of self-descriptions (M. Kuhn's technique "Who am I?") according to the specificity of these measurements we have calculated the relative frequency of occurrence of the categories reflecting expressional (steady characterologic traits and mental states), intentional (intentions, purposes, plans, dreams, etc.), tool (knowledge, abilities, skills, competences), and status (role positions and status) traits of the subject which he/she correlates with the social environment, vital circumstances, professional sphere [4].

Let's note that irrespective of the CS type waiters generally estimate guests as friendly, colleagues as selfish, the head as authoritarian, and self as a friendly waiter, which reflects stereotypic attitudes of waiters, in our opinion. Therefore for each of the CS types and depending on sex of waiters we have preliminarily revealed those their estimates of the professional environment and self which were mostly interconnected with the purpose of the corresponding CS.

The analysis of the influence of certain measurements of the self-concept on one or another content of the CS cognitive component of waiters was carried out on the basis of results of the regression analysis where a dependent variable was one or another estimation by a waiter of the expressiveness of personal traits (according to T. Leary's test) of the head, the colleague, of self as a waiter. Personal traits of the respondent reflected in one or another measurement of self-concept were independent vari-



ables. If there was no significant regression, the interrelation between the specified variables was defined on the basis of the correlation analysis.

Let's consider the content of the CS cognitive component in connection with waiters' sex and the CS type realized by them.

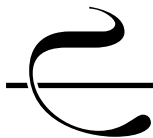
The adaptive-selfish CS. Women's estimates of the main purpose of the CS (demonstration of an individual style of service) are positively connected with estimates of their head as authoritarian. Estimates of the last are mainly influenced by women's understanding of own tool lines in real self ($R^2=0,68$, $p<0,00014$). In other words, women who highly realize existence of their own knowledge, skills, start up the competition for the purpose of demonstration of an individual style of service in relation to the head estimated as authoritative by them.

Unlike women, the leading purpose of the CS of men is not only demonstration of an individual style of activity, but also the reliability of activity. The first purpose is realized by men on condition of estimates of colleagues as altruistic. Estimates of the last are caused by men's high consciousness of their own expressional traits in their real self ($R^2=0,59$, $p<0,002$). The second purpose of the CS – reliability of activity – is realized by the men estimating themselves as selfish, independent, but thus poorly realizing own status in real self ($R^2=0,59$, $p<0,002$). As a result, men who mainly realize own steady characterologic traits start up the CS for the purpose of demonstration of an individual style of activity in relation to altruistic colleagues. The men poorly realizing their own status and estimating themselves as selfish, independent and competing, carry out the CS presenting the reliability of own activity.

Thus, waiters, realizing in this type of the CS the similar purpose of competition (demonstration of an individual style of service), show it in relation to the professional environment, but women – to the authoritative head, and men – to altruistic colleagues. Personal determinants of estimates of the professional environment are different among women and men: women are characterized by a high consciousness of their own knowledge, abilities, skills (real self), men are characterized by a high consciousness of their own steady characterologic traits (real self).

The "professional and career plateau" CS. The leading purposes of competition among women are material benefits and leadership. Estimates of the main purpose of competition (material benefits) are positively connected with women's estimates of colleagues as nonaggressive. By the results of the regression analysis it is established that these estimates are mainly influenced by intensional traits in reflected self ($R^2=0,77$, $p<0,006$).

As the competition purpose leadership is shown when women estimate the head as authoritative. The influence of certain measurements of the self-concept on estimates of the head is not established. Women of this strategy start up the CS with the purpose of becoming a leader, estimating colleagues as not competing and not rivaling and allowing women to realize their aspirations. Another purpose (to take up a leading position) is started up by women in relation to the head estimated by them as authoritative.



Men's estimates of the main purpose of the CS(material benefits) are positively connected with estimates of colleagues as altruistic. By results of the regression analysis it is established that these estimates are influenced by men's understanding of their own life circumstances in their real self ($R^2=0,76$, $p<0,01$). A men perfectly recognizing own life circumstances and highly appreciate readiness of colleagues to mutual aid, realize the CS for the purpose of maintenance of own material wellbeing.

Thus, both men and women of this CS having the similar purpose of competition (material benefits) show it in relation to colleagues whom women estimate as nonaggressive, and men, as altruistic. Leading personal determinants of these estimates are different among women and men: women are characterized by consciousness of the fact that colleagues know about their aspirations; men are characterized by recognition of own life circumstances.

The innovative CS. Women's estimates of the main purposes of the CS (leadership and gratuity) are positively connected with estimates of self as a suspicious and authoritative waitress. From the results of the regression analysis it follows that women's poor consciousness of value moments of future life in their ideal self ($R^2=0,65$, $p<0,004$) influences estimates of self as suspicious, connected with the leadership purpose of the CS. Estimates of self as authoritative, which are connected with such a purpose of the CS as gratuity are influenced by the expressed consciousness of women of the desirable social status in their ideal self ($R^2=0,78$, $p<0,05$). Women start up competition for leader positions, estimating themselves as mistrustful and inclined to criticism, poorly realizing value bases of own future life. At the same time they realize their "right" of receiving gratuity, highly appreciating own persistence and highly realizing the desirable social status. Thus, in this type of the strategy, when women are focused on leadership, there is a paradoxical result: the purpose of competition is connected not with estimates of colleagues, but with the person's appraisal of own professional traits which are intentionally revealed as an excessive suspiciousness in professional activity. In our opinion, the established interrelation reflects the critical attitude of the personality towards self as to an expert, a certain advancing of the professional by personality in the subject, having a weak relation to the future desirable life circumstances.

Men's leading purposes of the CS are demonstration of an individual style of activity, material benefits and leadership. The first purpose of competition is connected with the appraisal of self as a rebellious waiter, and the second and the third, with estimates of colleagues as unfriendly ones. From the results of the regression analysis it follows that estimates of self as rebellious are influenced by a high men's recognition of their social status in real self ($R^2=0,62$, $p<0,002$). Estimates of colleagues as unfriendly are influenced by men's low consciousness of the importance of surrounding people in their real self ($R^2=0,67$, $p<0,05$). In other words, men show an individual style of service, estimating themselves free and independent, highly realizing own real social status. The men realizing the CS for the sake of keeping leader positions



and strengthening material wellbeing, estimating unfriendliness and unavailability of colleagues to cooperation, ignore the importance of the social environment.

Thus, having the purpose of competition similar to women (leadership), unlike women men realize it in relation to unfriendly colleagues while women critically treat their professional traits.

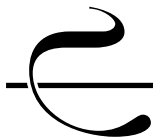
The situational CS. This strategy is characteristic for women. Women's leading purposes of competition (leadership and search of a new place of employment) positively correlate to the estimates of the head as friendly and with appraisal of self as an aggressive waitress. By the results of the regression analysis it is established that estimates of self as aggressive are influenced by women's high consciousness of the future work in their ideal self ($R^2=0,73$, $p<0,0009$). In other words, women start up competition with a view to keep leadership if they "think" the head is friendly. The women realizing the CS of this type are focused on searching a new place of employment, and highly realizing features of a future desirable place of employment, estimate themselves as aggressive. It is obvious that this type of CS may negatively affect an object of waiters' professional activity, i.e. the efficiency of serving guests of restaurant that heads of restaurant business should take into account.

On the whole waiters' sex influences the content of the cognitive component of each of the types of the competitive strategy. Irrespective of the type of the strategy male waiters realize one or another purpose of competition in relation to colleagues. In turn men's "perception" of colleagues is influenced by features of such measurement of their self-concept as real self. Unlike men, women realize one or another purpose of competition (depending on the strategy type) considering psychological features of self as an expert, colleagues, and the head. Personal determinants of waitress' specific "vision" of the specified subjects are various measurements of the self-concept, including ideal self, reflected self, real self.

Conclusions. We have established the content of the cognitive component of the competitive strategy of waiters in connection with its type. Sexual differentiation of waiters causes the nature of influence of certain measurements of their self-concept on their appraisal of professional community (colleagues and the head) in relation to which they start up one or another competitive strategy type.

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