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Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future

THE CAREER CHOICE AS A FACTOR OF AN EXPERT PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

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Abstract

In the given article, one analyzes the connection between the career choice of school leavers and their professional culture development from the perspective of sociological research materials. The author focuses on the factors affecting the process under consideration and solutions of problems, which can help to avoid specific shortcomings of modern higher education. The place of professional culture in the contemporary interpretation of educational and professional competencies is defined more accurately. Furthermore the author establishes a link between profession and culture through the higher education institution of a given field of study. One postulates the problem of the Republic of Crimea integration into national professional field as an equivalent segment of competitive society. The author articulates the impossibility of dealing with this problem without developing and strengthening the educational service market. The author marks such a fundamental disadvantage of a contemporary educational system, which is a consequence of a mechanical Bologna system implementation as commitment to formation of a narrowly focused specialist who is socially incompetent and who feels the lack of humanities knowledge fund that is necessary in order to lead social interaction in a rather qualified manner. In accordance with the article main purpose and objectives, one analyzes the students' attitude to the main parts of educational and pedagogic process including revealing the axiological dispositions relating to study and future working life in the context of building expert professional culture.

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1. Introduction

Unfortunately, the current understanding of educational and professional competence does not make the professional culture a priority. Nevertheless, professional culture seems to incorporate most of the competences. At the same time, exactly the notion of culture (lat. cultura – upbringing, education, development) in Therborn (1991) apt words predetermines the meaning and content of any social action. Göran Therborn accentuated that researchers demonstrate perfunctory interest towards questions like “Why do these people act in such a way? Why does this social order change exactly like that?”.

In actual practice a connection between culture and profession including career choice and higher education institution of a professional field is not taken into account by education officials (not only by the Russian ones). It is possible that they are not acquainted with a very comprehensive definition of culture proposed by Volkov and Mostovaya: “Culture is a value system, life views, behavior models, norms, a set of human activity methods, objectified in items, physical objects (means of work, knowledge) and handed down to the next generations” (Volkov, 1999, p. 418). Professional culture in the context of general understanding of culture is organically defined as a set of implicit rules and values shared by a professional group (Steiner, 2013) or an adult expert community who is working in its professional domain and going onto further study (Nittel, 2000). It should be reminded that current educational system is a multidimensional integral part of a social organism that is in motion, which is transforming and renewing as required not only by pace of scientific and technological progress but also by new relations emerging in economics, politics, spiritual life. A social scientist, Sheregi (2010), righteously remarks that the educational system is a basic social institution determining the level of scientific and technological, economic and cultural progress of society: “To encourage this progress this institution must not only correspond to the needs of time but also be able to develop rapidly while providing concurrently an opportunity for a personal development” (Sheregi, 2010, p. 378).

The implementation of Bologna process in education caused not only its endogenous changes, but also changes in economics, political sphere, state cultural activity and also in civil consciousness in general. What is more, according to sociological investigations such changes are not always logical in terms of forming full-scale professional culture. The involved process could not but have an impact on high education student’s personality and also on formation of social maturity.

2. Problem Statement

One of the main goals faced by the Republic of Crimea is building an equivalent segment of competitive society. It is impossible to meet the challenge without developing and strengthening the educational service market. The rational basis of such role is obvious. There is no science, innovations, qualified management and labor force without education.

It should be reminded that a student from Latin means “working, striving to knowledge”. Objectively, in the years since M.V. Lomonosov who traveled down memory line to his studentship, these characteristics have not lost their applicability. Named above student objectives should not lose their content and meaning in due course. It is truly necessary to gain knowledge and comprehend the wealth of contemporary science to become a full high-qualified professional. An American sociologist, Steve Fuller equitably postulates that Alma Mater is the main factor, which determines a place in society

and has factually replaced birthright, family and clergy that used to be the main guardians of social status (Fuller, 2018).

Disappointingly, majority (primarily by education officials) in a mechanic treats fashion and this fact has caused some negative consequences, which manifested themselves as conception constriction of the main educational goal and which resulted in narrowing of the main educational goal understanding to realization of three from five principles of modernity identified by a British scientist named Krishan Kumar – a principle of differentiation (the growing specialization of labour activity), rationality (the priority of intelligence and effectiveness) and economism (accent on economic motives of life-sustaining activity) (Kumar, 2004, p. 304). A program aimed at industry-specific knowledge and skill formation often substitutes training of high-educated and full-developed expert, manager, citizen and intellectual. So higher education becomes an upscale TVET and its graduate actually becomes a narrowly focused specialist who is not able to lead people and cannot deal with patterns in economics and politics due to the lack of humanities knowledge fund, which is necessary for doing full professional, managing and communicative activity. As early as in the 70th an American social psychologist, Inkeles, conducted a set of comparative studies directed at identifying of the modern man personality specificity. The identified peculiarities included the following ones: “feeling of a subjective power», «pursuit of self-improvement” and an inclination to fund on the principle of meritocracy. The above mentioned principles have apparently the character, which is contrary to the tendency of the narrow specialization. (Inkeles & Smith, 1974). At the same time, however most of human activity spheres are being pressed by the growing alienation and education is no exception in that regard. The specialization trend strengthening proves E. Fromm’s opinion about the substitution of a human need “to be” on a struggle for “to have” including a specialization, career status, prestige (Fromm, 1963). Another neo-Marxist thinker of the mid-twentieth century Herbert Marcuse considers that subtraction resulted into phenomenon origination of a “one-dimensional man” who is restricted by work and consumption and who has no opposition (“two-dimensionality”) primarily at the working sphere (Marcuse, 2002).

Correspondingly, being implemented in the space of total consumption (Sokolova, Pylkin, Safanova, & Stroganova, 2017), education is forced to practice one-sided particle methods of an identity reproduction limiting itself to professional skills of a man-of-work who is in demand on the job market. Particularity is what represents one of the main goals of globalized education and what is its adaptation to the demand for the main subjects of the capitalist economy via transnational corporations and international banking and financial structures. It is a requirement of a “partial individual” who is a qualified worker-executor, a narrowly focused expert (Benin & Frolov, 2014, p.53).

3. Research Questions

At first sight the research questions that we have raised in the process of research program creation are fairly straightforward: “What shall one study for?”, “Where shall one study?”, “What should influence the studying process?”, “How shall one study?”, “What conditions should affect studying?”. However, these adopted for students questions can reveal answers demonstrating the meaning of the articulated problem reflecting connection between a career choice and correlation dynamics between this choice and professional culture of future experts.

4. Purpose of the Study

Therefore, the present study is aimed at complex testing of students' attitude to the main parts of educational-bringing-up process including testing students' system of axiological dispositions relating to study and future working life in the context of building a professional expert culture. This is particularly relevant in the context of investigations conducted by an American sociologist Ronald Inglehart that validate a change of emphasis on "postmaterialistic values" which include ones forming professional culture of an expert such as a wealth of experience and knowledge and communication. Consequently, the scientist develops perspective and strong theory of these tendencies (Abramson & Inglehart, 1995; Timermanis, Ivanov, Zamorev, & Smaragdina, 2017).

5. Research Methods

The factual basis of the given article is represented by the results of the sociological survey conducted in Crimean federal university of V.I. Vernadskiy in 2016 (N=400) by means of questionnaires and focus group methods in 3 departments (Chigrin & Chigrina, 2016; Zhupnik & Chigrin, 2015).

6. Findings

It is well known that educational system plays a significant role in preparation of the youth for work and life in general, that is why education is traditionally considered as a mechanism of studying and student youth upbringing. Students undergo two steps of socialization and professionalization according to main periods of the maturation in the system of a higher education. The first stage implicates not only the inclusion of the youth in the high school system and entry into a new social status of a student, but also a specific group value synthesis inserted by students of different social origin in a student team. As a result, such inserting acts are one of the most important aspects of relative student social homogeneity construction.

In the second stage, socialization takes place. It means training students to understand their basic social status, implementation of social functions of intellectuals in the society (professional, organizational, managing, cultural and educational functions).

The problems of upbringing and student socialization construct a multidimensional problem. Its solving requires both further clarification of theoretical positions and particular practical actions. Entering university does not solve the problem of professional orientation, because taking a university course is just a preparation for future practical activities and students often misunderstand this fact. Under these circumstances, it is possible to suggest the idea solely about a profession image. In point of fact, students basically choose rather future social status, a reference group and reciprocally the model of a desirable future than profession itself as a type of a certain activity (Martishenko, 2017).

Materials of many investigations testify that professional interests either strengthen, clarify and become more particular during taking university course or change, fade; profession acquirement motivation extends, deepens, differentiates or becomes reversed (under certain conditions). Enumerated facts demonstrate the necessity of a purposeful professional student orientation that should be implemented by the entire scientific-pedagogical university team.

We can see from the research that only 5, 4 percent of respondents are not satisfied with the selected specialty. However, it should be emphasized, that on the average 13, 5 percent of respondents could not express their attitude to the subject. The situation on the faculties is as follows (table 1).

Table 01. The level of the university students' satisfaction with the chosen career on faculties (in 0%, N=400)

Faculties	Satisfied	Generally, yes	Difficult to say	Generally, no	Dissatisfied
Geography Department	41,7	27,1	22,9	4,2	4,2
History Department	60,7	25,4	8,2	3,3	2,5
Philology Department	55,6	25,6	14,4	4,4	0,0
Management Department	82,8	13,8	3,4	0,0	0,0
Philosophy Department	45,3	29,2	18,9	6,6	0,0

As it can be seen from the table, the level of students' satisfaction from different faculties varies considerably. The reason may lie in the fact that applicants have no idea about specific features of their future profession; additionally they do not have the possibility of employment according to their field of study. Thereafter we examine the level of V.I. Vernadsky Crimean Federal University students' satisfaction depending on the year of study:

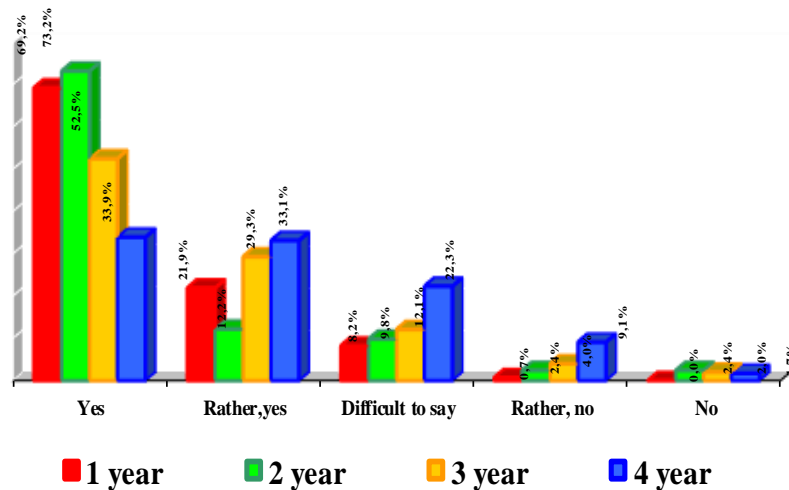


Figure 01. The level of students' satisfaction with the chosen profession

We can see from the histogram that students of the first year of education are quite optimistic regarding their profession while they do not have enough information about it. Second year students of V.I. Vernadsky Crimean Federal University start feeling some euphoria in reference to the idea of becoming qualified experts. It denotes the peak level of satisfaction with a chosen profession. Nevertheless, during the third year of education when the features of the selected branch of study begin to acquire certain parameters in terms of occupation level, salary (to a large extent), professional duties the

percentage of satisfaction diminishes. It is especially relevant to the first parameter. The same tendency is viewed during the fourth year of study.

We respectfully assume that major departments are mainly concerned about giving students as much professional knowledge (volume) as possible. However, one misses herewith reasonably required cause-effect relationship of this knowledge and motivation to use it as teachers, group leaders, managers, influence actors. A large body of research shows that people address to leaders, experts whom they consider not only as professionals but also as public opinion leaders, agents of influence in a variety of situations.

Presumably, general scientific and humanitarian departments deviate from the process of continuous career-guidance with all their might. There is the same scheme here: to give students maximum knowledge but not to tense up concerning the most fruitful usage of this knowledge in future postgraduate professional activity.

The research demonstrates that implementation technological process of the formation of students' satisfaction with a selected specialty in higher education is far from being exhaustive. There is a number of affecting factors: attenuation and mainly renunciation from preparatory career-guidance in secondary schools; Unified State Examination – the system of pre-university testing which destroys profession choice motivation; slackening of a career choice segment of pedagogical process in an educational system in general; a drastic reduction of humanitarian disciplines studies rate; the situation on the labor market.

For another thing, it should not be overlooked, that socio-career guidance of the entering university youth is rather unsustainable and vague. If one compares the answers on the above stated questions with university choice motivation, it will be evident that those students are less satisfied who chose not a profession itself but other attributes like concepts of student life, parents' decision, territorial or material factors of high education institution choice and etc (table 2).

Table 02. Correlations between level of satisfaction with profession and the main motivation of the high education institution choice

	Yes	Rather, satisfied	Difficult to say	Rather, not satisfied	No
interest in the studied discipline	65,8	22,6	9,8	1,3	0,4
wishes (demands) of friends and parents	31,3	43,8	14,6	8,3	2,1
a possibility (necessity) of getting scholarship	59,5	31,0	4,8	4,8	0,0
a wish to get a diploma of higher education	53,8	28,2	13,3	3,6	1,0
a wish to achieve independence	58,2	21,8	16,4	1,8	1,8
student romance	56,8	25,0	13,6	4,5	0,0

a wish to be helpful to society and people	64,9	24,7	7,8	2,6	0,0
a proximity of the high educational institution to home	57,8	27,7	10,8	2,4	1,2
other	43,8	28,1	12,5	9,4	6,3

Thus, the most satisfied with chosen specialty are the ones who: a) take an interest in the studied disciplines; b) want to be helpful to society and people (through their labor); c) have a possibility (necessity) of getting scholarship [state-financed places availability].

The other important reasons include “the prestige of CFU among other universities; there was no way to enter another university (first of all the capital high schools are mentioned); the attraction of the Crimea”. While comparing the satisfaction level of students who entered the university guided by other reasons, we can see that the loss of social guideline of entering the higher education institution induces recently reorganized Ministry of Science and Education to reconsider the problem of student subpopulation formation.

7. Conclusion

It can be concluded that higher education is primarily aimed at transferring students into advanced social segment that provides innovative character of society modification; therewithal education should give future expert a sum of knowledge and skills respectively to a chosen profession. The combination of the named above principals of the high-qualified expert preparation converts the higher education institution into a tool of personal socialization and professionalization. Nonetheless, one should take into account that professionalization in comparison to socialization in its broad meaning involves readiness to fulfill professional duties on the high cultural level. At the least, these duties should coincide with conceptualization of a future profession, and this goal should not be left out of the basic higher school scope of tasks.

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