

Professional and Career Consulting as a Factor of Professional Self-determination of the Youth

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Abstract – This paper presents the essential characteristics of professional and career consulting, its features and the role for effective professional self-determination of the youth, and the choice regarding future profession. The concept of professional self-determination of the young person is described. The authors conclude that professional and career consulting should be carried out throughout the entire period of the person's professional development within three stages. The essential characteristics of the stages of consulting are indicated.

Keywords – professional and career consulting, activity, youth, self-determination, career development.

1. Introduction

The youth as a social group has been and has remained the subject of discussion and study throughout the history of the mankind. One of the most acute problems of our time is professional self-determination of the modern Russian youth. Its consequence is imbalance in the existing labor

resources and the needs of the labor market, which causes unemployment and other destructive social and economic processes, which involve not only the youth itself, but also the whole society. This circumstance caused attention to the system of professional and career consulting. There is a need to rethink the existing approaches regarding professional self-determination.

High school students often find it difficult to make the right professional choice despite a sufficiently large number of educational institutions. This happens as a result of insufficient professional and career consulting, as graduates don't know well enough what specialty is the most suitable for them, they are not aware of their personal characteristics and inclinations [1], [3], [4]. First of all, it is necessary to carry out systematic career guidance work at schools in order to solve this problem.

Research results [23] show that many school graduates choose a profession without a sufficient reason, making it difficult to motivate their choice. This choice can be made under the influence of a randomly generated interest or external circumstances, under the influence of their parents and, what happens very often, it can be an act of imitation of peers. Even if the choice of profession is motivated, success of professional self-determination cannot be fully guaranteed. It must be emphasized particularly, that formation of a stable positive attitude towards the profession occurs only within the professional activity itself [2], [9], [10].

Currently, the world of professions has become more diverse [16]. Social and economic problems existing in modern society dictate the conditions for the emergence of new professions and specialties within the labor market. Those circumstances complicate making the right choice of future work activities for a young person.

According to [22], the two-thirds of current graduates of Russian universities either do not work on the specialty, or they have to get additional

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education, or they are not demanded by the current labor market at all. However, the state is interested in eliminating the discrepancy between the supply and demand of personnel at the labor market, in order to reduce the cost of training for non-sought-after graduates, and to increase the efficiency of using budget funds for quality education.

In this regard, today each educational institution faces a significant and challenging task, which is associated with the organization of a new career guidance system. The purpose of this system should be efficient pre-professional and professional development of a young person [5], [6], [8].

It should be noted that a young person has a complex interaction of psychological dynamic processes when he/she chooses a profession and realizes himself/herself in it. That means the formation of an effective attitude to the professionally important qualities and conditions, namely, professional self-determination, personal development, and inclusion in work, as well as building his/her own model of continuing education [17], [21], [24]. It requires another approach of educational institutions toward the organization, and content of professional and career consulting. Young people also need psychological and pedagogical assistance within choosing profession that enables them not only to realize themselves in it, but also to ensure a decent life.

2. Methodology

Educational institutions have increasingly begun to use various types of consulting in their work. They are aimed at resolving issues related to the provision of educational services, the formation and development of an individual, strategic planning regarding educational organization, etc.

Scientists consider [12] that there is a need for a holistic implementation of the processes of professional development of a person. We believe that professional and career consulting should be carried out in order to provide effective professional self-determination, and to make the right choice of the future profession for young people. The main goal of professional and career consulting is identity implementation within the professional field of activity.

Professional and career consulting provides integration of the following social institutions such as family, school, higher institution, job, which have an impact on the formation of professional self-determination of the individual [18]. Professional and career consulting includes a set of social and psychological techniques, methods which are aimed at the implementation of psychological and pedagogical services to accompany the professional

development of a young person, his / her formation as a subject of labor [3], [10], [11].

Thus, we believe that professional and career consulting is a process of building information and psychological program of personal and professional development by a young person together with a specialist (educational psychologist, professional practitioner). This program should be ensured not only by the productive implementation of his / her professional activity, but also reaching of career heights [7], [13], [15]. Moreover, career is understood not as a simple career advancement, but as the achievement of a certain official status, and even much broader as the achievement in the scope of life success.

The process of professional self-determination and the formation of an individual as a professional is very long and multi-staged period. Professional and career consulting should be systematic and phased, which will provide the solution of the following tasks:

- Selection of professional activities depending on the individual psychological characteristics of the person;
- Self-determination of personality and implementation of the professional field of activity;
- Self-knowledge and the development of professional abilities, self-development [14], [20].

3. Materials and Methods

The first stage concerning professional and career consulting covers the period of training high school students from the 9th to the 11th grades.

School graduates face a very difficult problem. They have to make a decision considering their future profession, in order to choose academic subjects for the Unified State Exam, and to choose a proper educational institution for vocational education. Thus, they have to make a deliberate choice regarding the profession for them. We believe that professional self-determination is a personal process that promotes an adequate representation of the individual concerning his / her future profession, and the attitude to it, as well as a vision of himself / herself in the profession and self-realization in it.

It is clear that it is very difficult to select a profession or «to see oneself in profession» for the school graduates. Therefore, the goal of professional and career consulting at this stage is to form readiness for professional self-determination, to help the school graduates in choosing profession that meets his / her self-image, in which he / she can assert himself / herself.

In this regard, we consider that professional and career consulting should include the following activities:

1. Psychological and pedagogical professional and career consulting aimed at the formation of professional self-determination, that is, the ability to make a professional choice. We used the method of Holland's Six Personality Types [19], which allows identifying the graduate's susceptibility according to professional activity, which is expressed in his / her value orientations for certain types of professions.

2. We used diagnostic technique «Career Anchors» of Edgar Schein [25]. It makes it possible to identify the professional orientation of a young person towards the spheres of professional activity more deeply and more accurately.

We conducted classes aimed at the formation of professional self-determination in which representatives of a certain profession took place.

School graduates attended such events as “Fair of Professions” organized by universities and educational institutions.

4. Results

We conducted a survey during which we interviewed first-year students, future bachelors of economics, psychology and law at the Institute of World Civilizations. There were 146 respondents who participated in the study. One of the questions was: “Was it conducted professional and career consulting work at your school?” 53% of the participants gave positive answer to this question. The next question was: “Did professional and career consulting work affect your career choice?” Only 39.7% of the respondents said “yes”. Thus, it can be stated that 43% of students were in the so-called “risk zone”, because they had mixing values. Consequently, they did not have their personal position concerning their future profession. Thus, it complicates the process of professional self-determination, which means that they can leave their profession. Therefore, both temporary and financial costs would be useless. All these mentioned above will not contribute to the professional development of the young man, his / her formation as a subject of labor.

The second stage of professional and career consulting covers the period of vocational training at university or institute obtaining primary professional knowledge and skills.

During the previous years, the purpose among some university students was to get a diploma rather than a profession. As a result, society got poorly qualified specialists who did not work within their speciality.

Therefore, the goal of professional and career consulting is not only to help a future specialist to self-assess himself / herself in profession, and to compare the results of self-knowledge with the requirements that the chosen profession makes, but to build their further career path, since the career building is an integral part of the process of professional self-determination.

In connection with these, we consider that following activities should be carried out within the framework of professional and career consulting:

1. It is necessary to work out a professional and career program. This document contains a detailed and comprehensive description regarding the future profession. Professional and career program is not a rigid standard scheme, it is an informational and psychological, competence developing model, professionally significant, comprising personal qualities of a specialist. Professional and career program is being one of the mechanisms for the formation of professional self-determination. It is built on the basis of interconnected blocks such as psychological program and professional competence.

We asked first-year students, who participated in the study, to answer a number of questions that allowed us to reveal awareness of the students of their future profession and their readiness for professional self-determination. The questionnaires were filled out by the students before the experimental work, and after receiving primary knowledge and skills of profession. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The results of the diagnosis of survey

Indicators	Before the experiment		After the experiment	
	Experim ental group	Control group	Experim ental group	Control group
Students have an idea of a holistic professional activity	43,2%	42,8%	45,7%	79,9%
Students don't have an idea of a holistic professional activity	56,8%	57,2%	54,3%	20,1
Students name the mental properties which are important for the successful implementation of professional activities	39,7%	40,1%	44,7%	85,7%
Students can't	60,3%	59,9%	55,3%	14,3%

name the mental properties which are important for the successful implementation of professional activities				
Students name psychological qualities incompatible with the profession	46,1%	47,2%	51,2%	83,4%
Students don't name psychological qualities incompatible with the profession	53,9%	52,8%	48,8%	16,6%
Students indicate the competencies necessary for the successful promotion of a specialist	44,1%	43,9%	52,5%	91,2%
Students don't indicate the competencies necessary for the successful promotion of a specialist	55,9%	56,1%	47,5%	8,8%

The results from the Table1 reveal that at the beginning of the experiment, students' ideas about their future profession were less than 50% in experimental group and in control group. The indicators increased significantly in experimental group after experimental work. The results in the control group did not change significantly.

This confirms our assumption that professional and career consulting has a positive impact on the formation of professional self-determination of a young person. It should be carried out throughout the entire period of his / her professional development.

5. Discussion

Professional and career consulting is effective within the interaction of university with the production. It should include the following activities:

- professional and career consulting should be conducted within educational institution or at work;
- professional and career consulting should be conducted within the course of advanced training and / or self-education;

— development of related types of labor is necessary for the better performance of work;

— it is necessary to develop professional training as a result of increase of professionalism, transition of workers to a new level of professionalism, increase in the efficiency of professional activity, and also the satisfaction of a person with his / her profession;

— it is necessary to use art therapy as a mechanism of psychological correctional impact, including work with employees' self-esteem, their “I-image”, anxiety, fear, aggression, and so on.

Professional and career consulting may include other activities and services that ensure the achievement of the goals in professional self-determination as well.

6. Conclusion

Thus, there comes a moment in each person's life when a person has to decide where to go to study, which profession to choose that determines his / her life path. However, it is very difficult to realize it regarding the school graduates, because they do not have enough knowledge concerning their future profession, the requirements for it, to assess their own abilities and to identify interests and inclinations.

In this regard, professional and career consulting acquires special significance, since it does not only contribute to the professional self-determination of a young person, but also contributes to the formation of readiness for conscious and independent construction, adjustment and realization of the prospects for his / her development and professional growth.

Professional and career consulting is a holistic continuous process of becoming an individual, including professional features of a specialist, which begins at the moment of pre-profile training of a young person and his / her choice of profession. The above mentioned items include the period of acquisition regarding professional knowledge and skills, labor activity and it lasts for the entire professional life of a person. Professional and career consulting ensures the coordination between personal and social interests, which contributes to the success of the process comprising professional self-determination of a young person at all the stages of his / her development as a person and as a subject of labor.

As a result of conducting professional and career consulting dropouts from the educational institutions reduces, the costs of training specialists decrease.

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