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PROJECT-RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN MODERN VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

Abstract

This article presents the results of a survey conducted among 10th and 11th graders of Almaty schools, which allowed to determine the leading factors of professional self-determination of school leavers and substantiate the approaches to career guidance suggested by the author. On the one hand, the modern approaches to career guidance should be based on the project-research activities of schoolchildren, in the form of career guidance projects. On the other hand, it is necessary to integrate the activities of guidance counselors and IT-specialists, which allows developing effective tools to raise the awareness of schoolchildren about the world of professions and specialties. Such approaches correspond to modern challenges: universal digitalization, increasing pace of life, globalization, generational and intergenerational interactions, etc.

Key words: vocational guidance, project-research activities, continuity of school and university, awareness of school leavers, integration of vocational guidance and IT-specialists.

Introduction

The modern state policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan is aimed at important national priorities, among which a special place is given to solving urgent problems in the development of education. The state takes various measures aimed at increasing the status of teachers (school teachers, university teachers); at revising approaches to education management; at appealing to important principles of humanization, humanitarization, development of 21st century skills among students (schoolchildren and students); at developing productive networking in educational sphere, for example, involving representatives of labor market and other stakeholders into the educational process; integrating science and education, etc. [1].

Higher education plays a special role in the current changes and emerging trends in education. It is known that higher education institution connects science and practice, and acts as a transmitter of progressive scientific ideas and social innovations. The functioning of higher education system in the country, as its main scientific and practical and educational potential, affects the productivity of development of not only science and social practice, but also the state as a whole.

However, it should be noted that the level of development of modern higher education system does not meet the modern requirements of the Kazakh society and does not contribute to the formation of the status and promotion of the Kazakh state in the world [2].

The modern social and educational situation is complicated by the spread of COVID-19 virus around the world, requires a response to the emerging threats. At the same time, changes in the higher education sector: updating the conceptual framework, the introduction of updated educational content, the transition to the distance learning format revealed acute problems of higher education: the decline of modern Kazakh students cognitive interests, the level of educational motivation; insufficient level of formation of students 21st century skills, including for learning in a distance format, associated with independent acquisition of new knowledge; difficulties and mental strain that hinders prof.

The above-mentioned points to important research positions: higher education institutions, as well as schools, should become the epicenter of formation of new skills and competences in students; the updated educational programs of higher education institutions are focused on the development of a wide range of skills, where a special role is given to research skills, skills of mastering various ICTs, skills of working in a group, etc. This set of skills serves as a definite reserve and a basis for the formation of necessary competencies in the process of subsequent professionalization or postgraduate

education. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the theoretical and methodological basis of the content of higher education, ensuring its openness, continuity and continuity.

Thus, the real state of higher education in Kazakhstan does not exclude the crisis situation, and at the same time it indicates the search for optimal innovative approaches to overcome it.

Analytical review of the state of higher education system and its scientific support allows to put forward the thesis about the value, universality and specificity of project and research activities in solving modern problems of higher education and formation of students' competences, demanded in the world of VUCA.

On the other hand, the problem of professional suitability of university graduates, their ability to solve real problems in business, real sectors of the economy and social sphere is quite acute. As practice shows, there is a tendency for university education in Kazakhstan to be disconnected from the real production tasks and conditions. Graduates after receiving their diploma often have to retrain and improve their qualifications in order to be in demand in the modern labor market. The organization of the educational process in universities is focused more on academic practice, built on theory, which is often outdated and disconnected from real life.

We see the solution to this problem in creating such an educational environment in a modern university, in which educational (academic) tasks are fully implemented, research potential of all subjects of the educational process of the university is activated, interaction with the business sphere and the possibility of productive communication between all subjects is provided, conditions for lifelong learning are created. In other words, all this corresponds to the requirements of building Universities 4.0 – universities of a new format, meeting the challenges of our time. In such a university, specialists are trained with a focus on the development of their T-skills, representing a comprehensive immersion in the future professional sphere. This implies a serious approach to the selection of teaching staff, to the mandatory involvement of practitioners. Development of T-skills is accompanied by the solution of various cases, and from the real professional sphere, holding a certain number of practical classes directly in organizations and companies. It is obvious that in addition to the actual formed professional competencies, the graduates get a real opportunity to find a job.

In our opinion, the above-mentioned aspects come down to a very important aspect of modern higher education, which requires transformation. The analysis of the current state in the system of higher education and our own long-term experience as a teacher of higher education allowed us to notice that the majority of graduates of Kazakhstani schools enter universities and choose professions, guided by the recommendations and advice of parents, teachers or simply guided by the fact of prestige of the university and the profession. The so-called “intuitive” choice of a specialty and university is directly reflected on the subsequent training in higher education (often manifested in low or situational motivation), leads to a decrease in its quality and negatively affects the subsequent employment. Thus, according to statistics, more than 80% of graduates of modern Kazakh universities work not in their specialty.

The reason for this state of affairs, in our opinion, lies in unproductive career guidance. Modern innovative ways of career guidance can correctly guide school graduates in choosing their professional direction and solve important issues of improving the quality of higher education in our country. We must understand that education is a system in which all of its components must function coherently. Today we observe the disconnection, fragmentation of the levels of the education system, the lack of continuity and cooperation between the school and the university.

Literature review

Analysis of vocational guidance in the Republic of Kazakhstan has shown that it requires revision and development of new approaches to its organization. Despite the fact that the government pays attention to improving the quality of career guidance services, the real situation shows a situational manifestation of interest in career guidance.

It is known that at the request of the Government, the company “BTS” developed the Atlas of professions and competencies, launched an information platform Edunavigator [3]. In the last 2-3 years, private career guidance services provided by career counselors have intensified.

However, career guidance is perceived as situational (one-time) work that occurs “on demand” and is reduced to the fact that schoolchildren are informed about some universities, conducted tests, the results of which are compiled profile with professional preferences.

Such work does not bring proper effect and the problem of low awareness, low level of readiness for professional self-determination, lack of interrelation and continuity between school and universities remains unsolved.

It is known that the choice of professional direction or future specialty is an important factor in the success of a person’s future life. The right choice of professional sphere and specialty allows you to achieve not only economic and financial well-being, but also to fully realize your creative potential, contributes to personal growth and self-development. In other words, a person who is engaged in business that brings him pleasure increases self-confidence, preserves and strengthens psychological health, and in general improves the quality of his life.

It will be appropriate to note the importance of effective career guidance in improving the quality of secondary vocational, higher and postgraduate education. If motivated and professionally self-determined students study at universities, the level and quality of higher education will noticeably increase. There will be consistency and continuity in education, which is an important condition for its productivity.

Thus, the search for the most effective ways of career guidance among children, adolescents and young people is relevant both at the national level and at the individual level. Obviously, the search for effective tools and formats of career guidance should meet modern challenges: universal digitalization, increasing pace of life, globalization, generational and intergenerational interactions, etc.

Now there is a certain intensification of career guidance work in schools of the Republic of Kazakhstan, there are a variety of non-state career guidance organizations. Due to interaction and cooperation with various foreign specialists and organizations, career guidance has become multidirectional. New forms and types of vocational guidance work appear.

However, the interest and demand on the part of the public for career guidance does not reduce the difficulties and problems in finding effective ways of professional self-determination among today’s youth.

In our opinion, we can identify two poles of problems that significantly reduce the productivity of existing career guidance approaches and complicate the professional self-determination of Kazakhstani youth.

On the one hand, the conscious professional choice of young people is hindered by:

- ♦ poor awareness of the occupations (and professions) in demand in the labor market. The existing approaches of informing young people do not contribute to the formation of a complete picture of the professional formation of specialists in various fields. In other words, there is practically no explanatory information about the specialties included in the existing classifier of training directions and specialties in Kazakhstan [4]. High school students have a vague idea in what field they can work, choosing a certain specialty, what professional functions and competencies should be formed during its development. Finally, many modern high school students are completely unfamiliar with the specifics of higher education, they know nothing about the Bologna Process and its requirements. Quite a large percentage of high school students do not have a clear idea of what universities there are in the country;

- ♦ unconscious competence, which is expressed in the fact that many modern high school students lack motivation and desire to continue their education in college or in higher education. This trend is caused by the devaluation of education in society, when the main factor of a person’s success is considered the achievement of economic well-being. Social media and other sources show that it is possible to achieve economic well-being without much effort. For example, bloggers, gamers, etc. All of this creates a distorted idea of young people’s professional self-determination, which in their opinion should be reduced to the fact that one should be engaged in what brings pleasure and decent remuneration. They believe that you can work for anything and anywhere. The main thing is that it should be paid decently;

- ♦ exposure to environmental influences, associated with the mentality and ethno-cultural peculiarities of the inhabitants of Kazakhstan. Respect and unquestioning obedience to adults is also

manifested in relation to the professional choices of young people. Quite often, in our country high school students choose a specialty and university on the insistent recommendation of their parents or other significant adults. Sometimes a person goes to a university “for the company” because his or her friends go to that university. In our opinion, in addition to ethnocultural characteristics, exposure to the influence of the immediate environment in making professional choices may be related to the infantilization of modern society;

- ♦ the influence of current circumstances that deprive or indefinitely postpone the realization of a conscious professional choice. Most often this problem is faced by high school students who are ready for professional self-determination. However, due to circumstances (lack of financial resources, poor academic performance, need to work, etc.) they do not have the opportunity to realize their plans.

At the other pole there are problems associated with the state regulation of career guidance in the country. Among them are:

- ♦ formation of the state order and distribution of grants to universities of Kazakhstan, which is aimed at training qualified and competitive specialists for various professional spheres. However, reality shows that the state order and grant distribution system does not always correspond to the real demands of the constantly changing and dynamically developing labor market. Recently, we have been facing an oversupply of specialists in one area and a shortage in another. Obviously, this issue requires careful analytical calculations, a clear picture of the prospects of the country and the labor market, strategic planning and the ability to make adjustments, to redistribute grants;

- ♦ organization, the UNT and the procedure of admission to universities, which to date demonstrates a detachment from the existing professional fields and indicates a lack of continuity between school and university. The system of tests in the UNT does not show the formation of school graduates' aptitudes, motives and values for a particular professional field and specialty. The system of admission to universities depersonalizes the applicant, because it is focused on quantitative indicators;

- ♦ low level of informativeness, which manifests itself in the lack of systematic informing the population on the issues of getting education in the country. For example, up-to-date information about the UNT procedure, the rules of admission to universities, the changes introduced, often appears just before the start of these activities. This complicates the orientation of school leavers in the issues of higher education in the country, reduces the effectiveness of career guidance [5].

Thus, in order to solve the above problems, systematic work is needed on the part of both the state and educational organizations (schools, universities).

Improving the effectiveness of career guidance is determined by the construction of a clear hierarchy of tasks, to which it is aimed. In this sense, we believe that it is necessary to move from the general to the particular. First of all, it is important to solve the problem of poor awareness of the population about professions, specialties, universities, the system of admission to universities and the distribution of grants, etc. And after that it becomes possible to solve all other career guidance tasks: diagnostics, consulting, building a personal trajectory of professional development, etc.

We believe that project-research activity has a great potential in the development of career guidance work. It is able to correctly guide schoolchildren in choosing a professional direction and form soft skills, which are becoming relevant in the modern world, as well as to ensure continuity between school and university.

Today, we are witnessing serious transformations in the professional sphere. To be successful and competitive, it is no longer enough for a person to possess knowledge and skills in only one specialized area. Nowadays a complex of skills is required – the ability to think critically, the ability to work in a team, communication skills, high activity and working capacity, the ability to work in a situation of uncertainty, etc.

The experience of using project-research activities in the system of higher education has shown its effectiveness in forming a set of abilities, skills, as well as a means of successful socialization and development of professional orientation of the student. Today, project and research activities are still in demand in educational practice, but at the same time they expand their opportunities, filling with new value meaning. And, first of all, it gives a renewed impulse to productive partnership of the university with various companies, organizations and schools. It can be argued that in modern conditions of active penetration of information technologies in the sphere of education in the form of

distance, combined forms of learning, project-research activity expands its potential, changing in its organization, content, tasks of modern student's personality development and becomes innovative [6].

Materials and methods

We conducted a survey of students in grades 10-11 of schools in Almaty in the number of 540 people. The survey was conducted on the basis of the author's questionnaire, aimed at obtaining information about the preferred ways and factors influencing the choice of future profession.

The purpose of the study was to determine the leading factors of high school students' professional choice. This will allow us to prove the validity of our idea that project-research activities and awareness are of great importance in career guidance.

The questionnaire met the requirements for the structure, scope, and wording of the questions:

- ♦ presence of open and closed questions, ranking procedure, which ensured reliability of the results obtained;

- ♦ balance of questions and answer options;

- ♦ relevance, ensuring independence and independence of answers from the influence of respondents.

- ♦ The number of questions was adequate to the conditions of the survey and the age and psychological characteristics of the respondent groups.

Questionnaires were adapted to the Internet environment, based on the principles of friendly interface (Respondent-FriendlyDesign) and usability (Usability). The KinesisSurvey service was used to create a Web-based questionnaire.

The responses received were automatically converted into an array of data processed by computer statistical programs and the results were presented in the form of a distribution and graphs. Qualitative analysis and interpretation of the results were then performed. The study was conducted between September 2021 and March 2022.

The reliability of the results of the study was ensured by:

- ♦ representativeness of the sample in relation to the general population;

- ♦ correspondence of the instruments to the survey;

- ♦ application of quantitative data processing methods.

Results and discussion

The analysis of answers to the question "Do you choose your future profession independently?" showed that 45.8% of high school students choose their profession independently. Schoolchildren who made a conscious choice of profession, as a rule, know what they will do in the future. Already at the stage of choosing a specialty and university they have an idea of how and where they will be employed. Those young people who strive to develop and consider professional growth to be a priority motive for obtaining education in their field of study have chances to succeed in their chosen professional field.

54.2% of high school students responded that their choice can be influenced by various factors, ranging from their parents to the large number of specialties offered by universities. In case of unconscious choice, when young people choose their future profession guided by various factors of the social environment, the desires and requirements of parents, there is often a loss of interest in the specialty and disappointment in future professional activity.

The results of processing the answers to the question "Did your parents help you choose a specialty?" showed that 69.4% of respondents focused on the help of parents in choosing a future specialty. Parents usually take an active part in determining their children's life and professional plans. At the same time, the issues of choosing a profession and determining educational paths is a difficult task for both students and their parents. For 30.6% of schoolchildren parental assistance in the choice is not significant. But many graduates can repeat the professional path of their parents, some by listening to stories about work or by being at their parents' workplace, form their choice. Some graduates already know exactly what specialty they will enter by the end of school, studying it on their own. But it is worth considering that the family is still the leading factor in choosing a profession.

The information received concerning the high school students' appeal to the services of career counselors, psychologists or other professionals for career guidance showed that the majority of 86.3% of applicants did not use the services of a career counselor in choosing their future profession. Perhaps this suggests that even with a large number of tests, methods of psychological and pedagogical support of the career guidance process, the organization of the career counselor remains a serious problem. The needs of society, individual-psychological properties and age features of the personality of schoolchildren are not always taken into account. Incorrect choice of profession will lead to dissatisfaction of students and university graduates with the chosen sphere of professional activity, and the number of students who do not expect to work in their profession will grow.

Only 13.7% of applicants used the services of vocational guidance specialists. School students have little information about many new professions, and traditional professions are undergoing significant changes. The problem of choosing a profession is always faced by high school students, and now it is becoming especially urgent in connection with the changes taking place in our society. A professional choice made taking into account such factors as the demand of the labor market, requirements of the profession for a person and his/her individual characteristics becomes the most important condition for successful mastering of the profession, harmonious entry into labor activity, formation of a competitive professional, in the end – well-being.

The survey showed that high school graduates in search of information about the university are more often guided by information from social networks (61.9%) and the website of the university (61%). We can also note that quite often applicants are guided by the opinion of parents (40.6%) and reviews of friends (39.6%). The smallest percentage was given to the option "Open Doors Day at the University" (20.6%). (20.6%). Some applicants among sources of information about the university indicated publicly available ratings of universities (0.6% of the number of respondents), the availability of specialties of interest (0.2%), reviews on the Internet (0.2%). Thus, the results indicate that the most effective way to attract applicants are a page on social networks and high-quality, understandable university website.

Finally, almost all respondents (98%) indicated a lack of experience in doing career guidance projects, while expressing great interest and desire to do them. High school students noted that if they had the opportunity to develop various career guidance projects during their studies, they would have a more accurate idea of the profession and specialty they liked by the end of school.

Conclusion

Thus, the results of the survey showed the relevance of finding the most productive ways of career guidance. We propose to organize modern career guidance work based on the principle of consistency and interdisciplinarity, which defined the author's approach.

Firstly, we are convinced that career guidance should be implemented at school from the 7th or 8th grade. This work can be implemented both in the educational process and during extracurricular time. In our opinion, it should be aimed at involving students in career guidance projects. This will not only expand students' understanding of the existing modern professions, but will also form the necessary research skills and competencies that will be useful in higher education. Such work has already been implemented by the author in cooperation with schools in Almaty and IITU. It should be noted that this direction of career guidance work provides real interaction between school and university, ensuring the development of their connections and continuity.

We believe that the innovative form of students' project-research activity allows productive:

- ♦ organize effective interaction in the triad "school-teacher-student", based on the principles of partnership, which shows an interested attitude to learning, understanding of their own role in it, as well as the joint search of the teacher and the student, where the teacher of higher education acts as a partner, not a mentor;
- ♦ to increase motivation for learning by developing cognitive interest and research skills, providing independence and freedom in the ways of conducting cognitive activities;
- ♦ organize interaction with organizations and school, promoting the development of continuity of different levels of education and creating conditions for lifelong learning.

Secondly, career guidance today must be realized on the basis of the integration of specialists from different spheres – psychology, education and IT [7]. Digitalization of our life requires the use and active use of digital tools in different spheres, including career guidance. The results of the survey showed that high school students get the main information from Internet sources and social networks. This was the reason for developing the project aimed at increasing the probability of high school students to make more accurate career choices by expanding the system of professionally-oriented information through the Telegram Bot.

Telegram Bot, which will describe each specialty and video with basic information. The Bot will have different professional areas: technical, financial, humanities, natural sciences, etc. And each area will have specialties represented. Telegram has a popular reputation and will be a great additional tool for choosing a specialty.

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ПРОЕКТНО-ИССЛЕДОВАТЕЛЬСКАЯ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ В СОВРЕМЕННОЙ ПРОФОРИЕНТАЦИИ

Аннотация

В статье представлены результаты проведенного опроса среди учащихся 10-х и 11-х классов школ г. Алматы, которые позволили определить ведущие факторы профессионального самоопределения выпускников школ и обосновать предложенные автором подходы к профориентации. С одной стороны, современные подходы к профориентации должны выстраиваться на обращении к проектно-исследовательской деятельности школьников, в виде выполнения ими профориентационных проектов. С другой, необходима интеграция деятельности профориентаторов и IT-специалистов, позволяющая разработать эффективные инструменты, повышающие информированность школьников о мире профессий и специальностей. Подобные подходы соответствуют современным вызовам: всеобщей цифровизации, повышению темпа жизни, глобализации, поколенными и межпоколенными взаимодействиями и др.

Ключевые слова: профориентация, проектно-исследовательская деятельность, преемственность школы и вуза, информированность выпускников школ, интеграция профориентаторов и IT-специалистов.

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ҚАЗІРГІ ЗАМАНҒЫ КӘСІПТІК БАҒДАР БЕРУДЕГІ ЖОБАЛЫҚ-ЗЕРТТЕУ ҚЫЗМЕТІ

Аңдатпа

Мақалада Алматы қаласы мектептерінің 10 және 11 сынып оқушылары арасында жүргізілген сауалнама нәтижелері ұсынылған, олар мектеп түлектерінің кәсіби өзін-өзі айқындауының жетекші факторларын анықтауға және автор ұсынған кәсіби бағдар тәсілдерін негіздеуге мүмкіндік берді. Бір жағынан, кәсіптік бағдар берудің заманауи тәсілдері мектеп оқушыларының кәсіптік бағдарлау жобаларын орындау түрінде жобалық-зерттеу қызметіне жүгінуде құрылуы керек. Екінші жағынан, мектеп оқушыларының кәсіптер мен мамандықтар әлемі туралы хабардар болуын арттыратын тиімді құралдарды жасауға мүмкіндік беретін кәсіби бағдаршылар мен IT-мамандардың қызметін біріктіру қажет. Мұндай тәсілдер қазіргі заманғы сын-қатерлерге сәйкес келеді: жалпы цифрландыру, өмір сүру қарқынын арттыру, жаһандану, ұрпақтар арасындағы және ұрпақтар арасындағы өзара іс-қимыл және т. б.

Тірек сөздер: кәсіптік бағдарлау, жобалау-зерттеу қызметі, мектеп пен ЖОО сабақтастығы, мектеп түлектерін хабардар ету, кәсіптік бағдар берушілер мен IT-мамандардың интеграциясы.