

THE FACTORS OF CAREER SELF-DETERMINATION OF STUDENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

Choice of profession is a social phenomenon that every person has to face in life. Numerous studies convince us that not only the well-being of a person depends on the chosen work, but also his attitude to himself and life in general, therefore, the right and timely professional choice is very important. Research about factors of career self-determination of students of higher education institutions in Ukraine shows that self-determination is an important factor in the socialization of young person, and the factors that determine students' career choices become an actual problem of nowadays. The present study involved full-time and part-time students of Institute of Philology and Mass Communications of Open International University of Human Development "Ukraine" in order to examine the factors of career self-determination of students of higher education institutions (N=189). Diagnostic factors of career self-determination of students studying in the third and fourth year were carried out using the author's questionnaire. Processing of obtained data was carried out using the Excel 2010 program; factorial and comparative analysis were applied. Results of the study showed that initial stage of career self-determination falls down on the third and fourth studying year at the university, when an image of future career and career orientations begin to form. At the same time, the content of career self-determination in this period is contradictory and uncertain, therefore, the implementation of pedagogical support of this process among students is effective.

Keywords: *quantitative research, career self-determination, higher education institutions, university students.*

Introduction

Interest in a topic such as career self-determination of students is determined today by many factors. The economy of Ukraine needs professionals who are able to accept and respond to any changes: scientific, technical, economic, social, cultural. In addition to professional competencies, a young specialist is required to possess the so-called supra-professional skills that contribute to a successful career.

Career is a subjectively conscious employee's own judgment about his or her future being employed, expected paths of self-expression and satisfaction with work. This is advancing along the once chosen path of activity. For example, gaining more authority, higher status, prestige, power, more money.

Career is not only promotion. It can be told about the career of housewives, mothers, students, etc. The concept of career does not mean an indispensable and constant movement up the organiza-

tional hierarchy. It should also be noted that a person's life outside work has a significant influence on his career and is a part of it. In other words, a career is an individually conscious position and behavior associated with work experience and activity throughout a person's working life.

Choosing a career is one of the most important decisions a person makes in his life (Augiene & Kriaučiūnaitė, 2013) as the person's achievements in a particular field of activity depend on the correspondence between his personality and the nature of his work, as well as on combining personal expectations in the field of his personal career with the organization's capabilities.

The concept of career exists in the broad and narrow sense:

- in a broad sense a career is a sequence of professional roles, statuses, and types of activity in a human life. The result of a career is high professionalism, achievement of recognized professional status. The criteria of professionalism can change during the labor activity of a person.
- in the narrow sense a career is a worker's promotion, achievement of a certain social status in professional activity, occupation of a certain position. In this case, a career is a path of career advancement that is consciously chosen and implemented by an employee, aspiration for the intended status (social, official, qualification) that ensures the professional and social self-affirmation of the employee in accordance with his level of qualification.

The essential component of the concept of career is promotion, that is a forward movement. In this respect, a career is a process defined as passing a sequence of states of a system.

Among foreign studies a special role is the problem of career decision-making and issues of career advancement and development (Sampson, et al., 1999). Foreign researchers interpret the concept of career more often in the broad sense, meaning by it the life path of a person connected with work, broken up at certain intervals.

Super gives the following definition of the concept of career. This is a sequential chain of events in a person's life, including a sequence of occupations and life roles, which determines the general orientation of the subject towards self-development, career growth throughout life. A career is revealed only in the process of its implementation by the subject and is unique for each individual (Super, 1976).

McDaniels argued that a career is more than a profession or a job, it is a lifestyle that includes a consistent change in professional activity and various activities in free time throughout a person's life (McDaniels, 1992).

Gysbers, E. Moore considered the concept of career through the process of self-development of the subject throughout life through the integration of roles, environments and events in human life (Gysbers & Moore, 1987).

Hansen pointed out that career is connected with a sequential chain of decision-making and situations of choice in the field of education, work and family, which caused to the role-based integration of the individual (Hansen, 1981), and Augiene (2009) indicates that no one can make a final decision, because, due to the certain circumstances, a change can correct a decision (Augiene, 2009).

Career Self-Determination

The term "career self-determination" is often used in nowadays science. More and more researchers indicate that the career context is broader than the professional context and it requires a separate study.

In pedagogical research the problem of self-determination is the most developed, but the lack of unity persists in this phenomenon understanding. Various aspects of self-determination are considered in the writings of Leontiev (2003), Rubinstein (2003), at the same time, most researchers consider the nature and mechanisms of various types of self-determination, especially it is emphasized on professionals Zeer (2008), Klimov (2004), Pryazhnikov (2008).

Self-determination is recognized as a process that covers different periods of a person's career development, including his mature years, as he has to change professions, organizations, and types of employment repeatedly. Retraining of adults, facing the situation of unemployment cannot be comprehended outside the processes of self-determination. Question of self-determination studying

at the time of graduation from a professional, especially a higher school arose sharply, since the large gap between the profession market and the labor market, the transition to a multi-level structure of higher education creates additional uncertainty in the professional and life prospects of young people. The “professional” conceptual context is being replaced by broader contexts - career and employment. The last include educational, professional and non-professional activities, the processes of moving between organizations, entering and leaving the labor market, increasing the number of jobs or moving to part-time jobs, their psychological support and social performance.

A career is wider than the professional development of the individual, in favor of such a judgment is the erosion of the professional identity of people (Chudzikowski, et al. 2009) and the growing scale of deprofessionalisation of employment, the subjective adoption of which is already recorded at the stage of education in general and vocational schools.

Factors of Career Self-Determination

According to Super, the stage of training and self-determination is the initial stage of career formation. Factors affecting career choice are a prerequisite for determining the preference of a future specialty and the formation of a career development strategy (Super, 1983)

Internal factors are the capabilities, abilities and interests of a person himself.

The ideal option is when a career meets all the given conditions. However, most often there is a need to sacrifice some of them. All factors are quite significant, and it is impossible to grade them by importance, since different factors are significant for different people.

Internal factors concern the personality itself - what it can and wants. Since the final choice is a personality choice that can have a decisive influence on the whole subsequent life, special attention should be paid to internal factors.

Opportunities should be considered among internal factors. A number of professions are close to people with diseases. For example, a person with a sick heart cannot become a pilot, and an allergic person cannot become a chemist. For some professions, a quick reaction is needed, which is checked using special equipment. Tasters must have developed taste buds, musicians - hearing, etc.

Abilities are usually manifested during training. Obviously, programming for a person with poor grades in mathematics will not be the best choice, and a person without visible acting skills is unlikely to make a movie star career. Exceptions exist, but they are quite rare.

Interests and preferences are extremely important in choosing. The work should be interesting and take place in those conditions that are most comfortable. For a creative person, the early rise and work from eight to five is not the best choice, and for a person who is passionate about technology - political or artistic activity.

External Factors

External factors - it is relevance in the labor market, high wages, a real opportunity to get a profession, opinions and desires of loved ones.

Prestige - is the main factor of the choice for the most young people. Indeed, prestige is an important motive. However, in the wake of popularity, there may be an overabundance of specialists in a prestigious profession which will create difficulties in finding a job.

The same can be said about demand. For example, the demand for construction specialties is growing at high rates of construction and is falling in a situation of economic crisis. Therefore, in this matter it is better to focus on expert forecasts than on the existing situation.

Salary in self-determination of career cannot play a decisive role, since usually a position is not paid for a profession. High salary associated with a registered profession, as a rule, reflects the degree of risk. When considering the factor of wages, it is important to pay attention to the possibility of career growth. For some jobs, a starting salary can be very high, but over time it will not increase; for others, it grows over the years, and after a while the latter will significantly overtake the former.

The real opportunity to get a profession can be limited by the lack of material conditions, the complexity of admission, etc. To solve this problem, efforts should be made to change the restrictive conditions - to use a loan, find an alternative educational institution, etc.

Biographical Factors of Career Self-Determination

Family factors (professional continuity in the family, the profession of family members and loved ones, family legends and myths, one way or another connected with the professional world, the expectations of any of family members that are significant for the optant etc.).

Event factors (the location of an enterprise near the house, a meeting with an interesting person - a representative of particular profession, an event in life related to a particular profession: for example, one doctor said that he decided to become a doctor because several years looked after a sick grandmother).

Entourage. Some make their professional choice under the influence of their friends, beloved teachers and acquaintances. This factor can render a bad service in cases when there are no personal prerequisites for choosing a profession, there are certain restrictions. In the situations described in the last lecture, just such a case of the influence of the factor “for the company” is described.

Economic and political factors. Sometimes the choice of professional educational institution and the general professional path of a person is based on the need to earn money for his family, as well as on the events and directions of current politics. In the transitional period for our country, a lot of people changed their field precisely under the influence of these factors.

Research Problem

A modern young man faces many problems that are important to solve at the very beginning of the career path. The problem of understanding of future professional activity among university students is extremely acute. It is well known that a significant part of graduates of higher educational institutions in the future do not work in their specialty and only being senior students, they understand the fallacy of their own professional and career choices. These students do not have skills of career goal setting and planning, and the motivation for learning is reduced. Today, there are many studies of career self-determination, starting from the school day and covering the entire period of a person’s professional activity. It examines the questions of choosing a profession, determining professionally important qualities, professional development. But, in our opinion, modernity dictates the need to take into account a wider context – the CAREER.

The youthful age poses a lot of important tasks for a person: from self-knowledge and gaining identity to the need to determine the direction of future life. At the same time, the intensive development of the Internet, social networks and media send the huge flows of information, values, opinions, and needs to young people, which, although provide great opportunities for life choices but in the same way create chaos in still immature consciousness of young men and women. A situation is created when there are many opportunities and prospects, but it is difficult to make a choice in view of unstable development of society and the state.

One of these choices is a determination of direction and sphere of future work, advancement in which would allow the subject not only to develop as a person and professional, but, one way or another, would contribute to the achievement of life goals. Moreover, if earlier it was possible to limit oneself simply to the choice of a profession and to be confident in one’s own future, then this is clearly not enough at the present stage of development of society. Mastering the profession does not guarantee that the subject will be able to realize his goals and aspirations. Indeed, every year the threat of reduction, unemployment, competition in the labor market, lack of opportunities for career advancement, etc. only intensifies.

All this must be taken into account when planning a future career path, while comparing it with one’s own desires, goals, and aspirations. And thus, it is more expedient to consider the career aspect, which includes not only the choice of an attractive field of activity, but also an analysis of the desired short-term and long-term goals of the individual and social development of the subject, the achievement of which career advancement can contribute to. Thus, the problem of career self-determination of youth comes to the fore.

In modern science, many studies have been devoted to studying the characteristics of career self-determination of youth in which a successful career acts as the basic need of a modern person

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and the ability to shape it is a vital skill. The career need is also very important because it helps students to understand the importance of career and encourages students with low motivation to be interested in their career (Lamanauskas & Augienė, 2017). The process of career self-determination is actively carried out already at the stage of training at the university. Student youth as a mobile social group is focused on preparing for the performance of professional tasks in their specialty in order to achieve a certain social status. The pedagogical school focuses on the fact that the professional base formed at the university should include the ability to “clearly recognize one’s own career potential and in accordance with it to build effectively a career path, overcoming all possible obstacles and difficulties” (Mogilevkin, 2007).

Research Methodology

General Background

Career self-determination begins to form with the advent of appropriate motivation. At the same time, this process includes subject-object orientations already formed by that time in life situations (Korzhova, 2010), which reflect the subject’s general life strategy that affects all his life activities (Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, 1991).

Based on career orientations, accumulated personal experience, and subject-object orientations in a life situation, a blurred career image begins to take on some shape with the advent of knowledge about a future career (cognitive component), which include concepts and representations (Pryazhnikov, 2008).

This knowledge triggers the emotional component of career self-determination, as it begins to be evaluated by the subject, causing certain emotions that together form the emotional background of career self-determination, and forming a promising career self-esteem (Holland, 1999).

The emotions and the feeling of satisfaction and dissatisfaction from assessing the knowledge gained about a future career activate the activity component of career self-determination, which consists in further internal work on the initial career image created, as well as in finding your own way to build a career. All this happens in the form of reflection and cognitive activity (Super, 1976).

Specifically, the main research questions of the survey were as follows:

- to analyze theoretical approaches to the problem of career self-determination.
- to reveal the conceptual content of the concept of career and professional self-determination;
- to identify the system of factors influencing the career choice of young people and the social mechanisms governing the process of career self-determination of university students;
- to conduct a comparative analysis of the factors that influence the career self-determination of the third- and fourth- year students.

The data collection took place from September to December 2018. An empirical study was conducted to clarify this structure (3–4- year students left the sample, $N = 189$).

Characteristics of the sample survey. It is very important to determine the correct sample size, which must be found in accordance with strict rules. The study involved students of Institute of Philology and Mass Communications of Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine”, studying full-time and part-time. The exact number of respondents was obtained by the sample calculation formula:

$$n = \frac{1}{\Delta^2 + \frac{1}{N}}$$

Count formula example

n – sample size calculated by the formula with a confidence interval of 0.05;

Δ – selectable sampling error rate;

N – total number

To use this formula, it is a need to know how many students study at the Institute of Philology and Mass Communications of Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine”. Information came from the training department of University “Ukraine”. In accordance with it a total number of students is 783 (716 bachelors, 67 masters) who study at the Institute of Philology and Mass Communications of Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine”.

Thus, the use of a sample calculation formula showed that at least 184 subjects should be interviewed from the entire population.

Sample

During the study, 189 students were interviewed, so it can be stated that these studies are reliable, dependable and distinctive for the University “Ukraine”. The sample for the survey was randomly selected so that all students of the Institute of Philology and Mass Communications of Open International University of Human Development “Ukraine” had equal access to the sample. According to the survey, the majority of respondents study in the third year - 127 students (67.2%), and in the fourth year - 62 students (32.8%). According to estimates by age category, the age from 16-20 years old - 118 students (62.4%) prevails, a significant number of students surveyed between the ages of 20-25 - 61 students (32.3%), and a small number of students in 25-30 years old - 10 (5.3%). The study revealed that the form of training was mainly permanent (daytime) respondents - 161 students (85.2%), and extra-mural course (part-time) - 28 students (14.8%).

Instruments and Procedure

The questionnaires were made available in the teaching area of the sample. The participants completed the questionnaires during their presence in the lesson, before the start of the lesson and during the breaks. Participation in the study was voluntary. No award was given for participating in this research. Confidentiality of the data was maintained throughout all research stages.

Data Analysis

The obtained data were analyzed by applying descriptive statistics. Absolute and relative frequencies were calculated.

Research Results

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic characteristics of respondents (N = 189)

	N	%
Gender		
Student (male)	57	30.1
Student (female)	132	69.9
Age		
16-20 years old	118	62.4
20-25 years old	61	32.3
25-30 years old	10	5.3

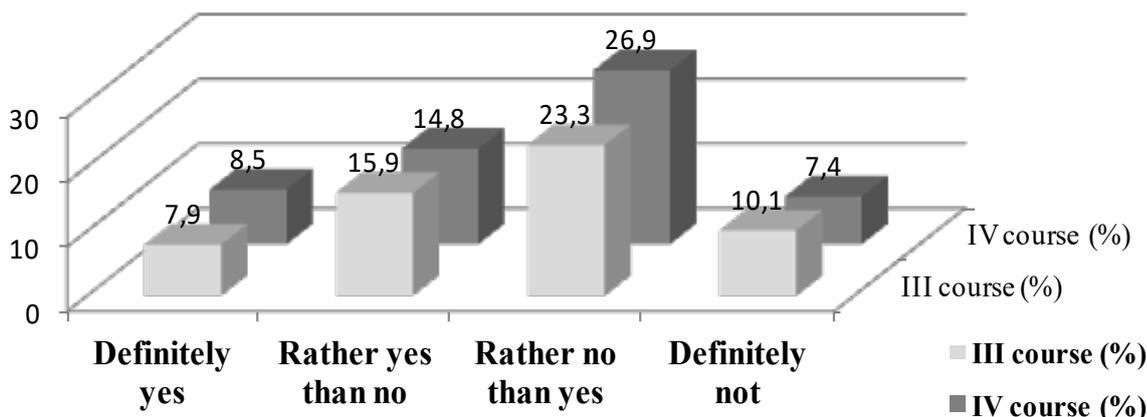
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	N	%
Course		
III Course	127	67.2
IV Course	62	32.8
Mode of study		
Daytime	161	85.2
Part-time	28	14.8
Specialty (major)		
Philology	189	100

According to Table 1, all 189 students surveyed study in the specialty “Philology”. In the percentage, the number of students (m) is 30.1% and students (f) are 69.9%. This shows that more women than men took part in the research, which reflects the general situation, since, according to the Department of research of the University “Ukraine, there are more women at the Faculty of Philology. During the survey, respondents were asked whether they had doubts when deciding to enter the specialty “Philology” (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Doubts about the correctness of decision making upon admission to the specialty (N = 189)

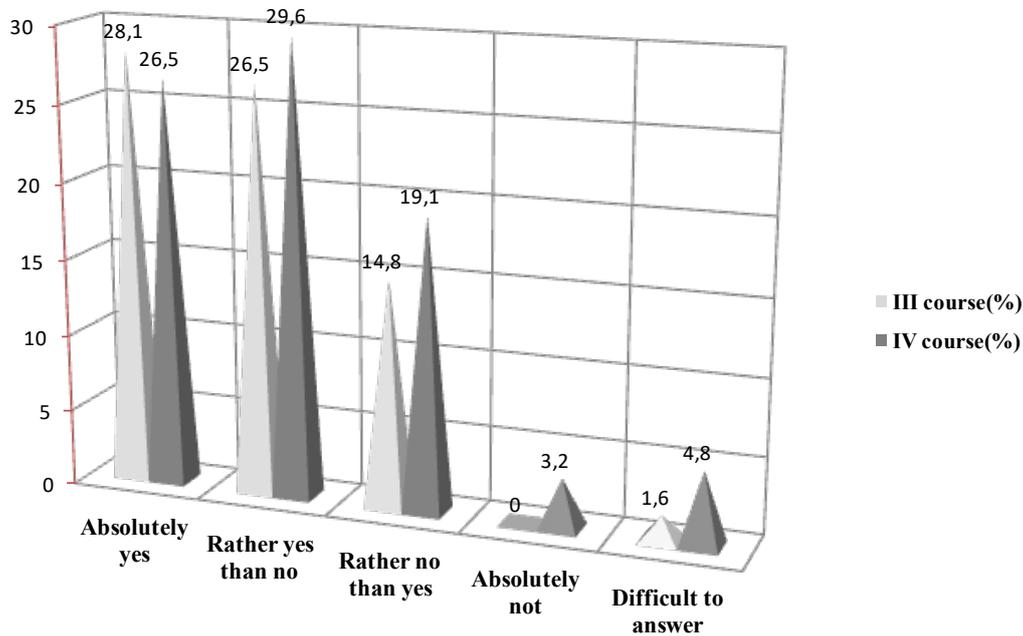


The study of Figure 1 showed that the responses of 3rd and 4th year students did not differ much. Therefore, 23.3% of 3rd year students and 26.9% of 4th year students answered, “Rather no than yes”, indicating that there were doubts, but minor. 15.9% of 3rd year students and 14.8% of 4th year students responded to “Rather yes than no”. 7.9% of 3rd year students and 16 8.5% of 4th year students answering “Definitely Yes” indicated that the percentage of fluctuations in admission to this specialty was not large. Students who did not doubt the choice of specialty and answered “Definitely not” was quite a bit: 10.1% of 3rd year students and 7.4% of 4th year students.

The aim of the study was to find out the level of confidence in the correctness of the acquisition of the future profession of respondents.

The results are shown in Figure 2.

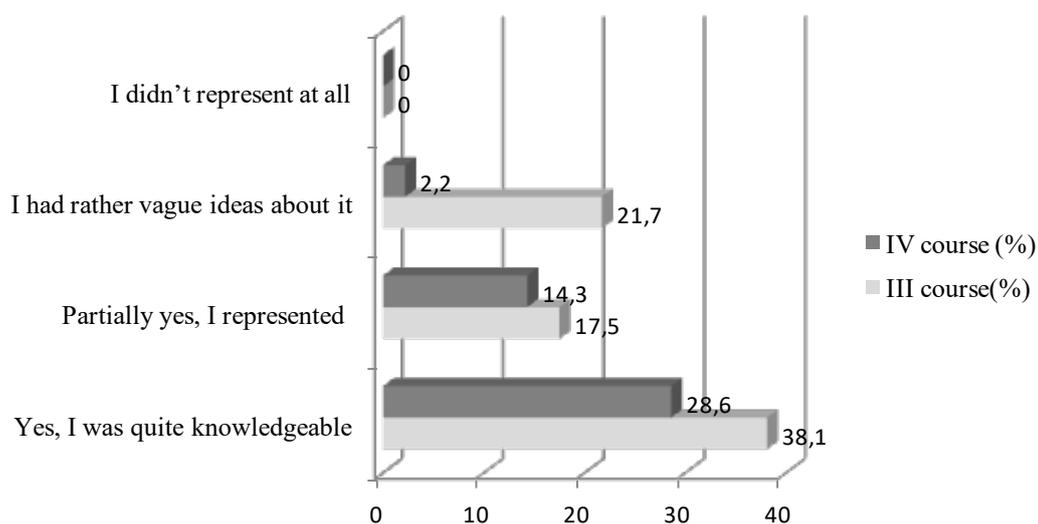
Figure 2
Confidence in the correct choice of profession



Based on the results of Figure 2 regarding the correctness of professional choice, it can be stated that most respondents are confident in their professional choice. In comparing the correctness of professional choice, the greatest gap is currently observed in the answers between “Absolutely yes” of 28.1% of 3rd year students and 26.5% of 4th year students and “Rather yes than no” - this answer option was noted by 0.0% of students 3rd course and 3.2% of 4th year students. “Rather no than yes” - the average result for both courses: 14.8% of 3rd year students and 19.1% of 4th year students. “Absolutely not” in the ratio of 26.5% of 3rd year students and 29.6 of 4th year students. To the “Difficult to answer”, 3-year students answered in percentage terms 1.6% and 4.8% of the answers of 4th-year students.

In order to find out whether the students had an idea about the chosen profession and the specifics of the profession upon entering the university, the answers were analyzed in Figure 3.

Figure 3
Perceptions of what people do in their chosen specialty “Philology” (N = 189)



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Analyzing the results of Figure 3, it is observed that the difference in the responses of respondents 3 and 4 courses is significant. There is also a very big difference between the positive and negative responses of 4th year students. So, in both groups of respondents, the percentage of the positive answer “Yes, I was quite knowledgeable” is quite high: 38.1% of 3-year students and 28.6% of 4-year students, which indicates that students purposefully chose their future profession and had ideas about the specifics of activity in this area. Partially about the chosen profession students represented in the amount of: 17.5% 3rd courses and 14.3% 4th courses. For the 3rd year students, it was rather vague to imagine when entering about a future profession: 21.7% of students, and for 4th year students: 2.2% there were no problems with the idea of the chosen profession and its specifics. The fact that the students of both groups did not mark “I didn’t represent at all” says that, before entering the university, entrants were familiarized with a number of professions and their specifics.

As was already presented in a theoretical analysis of the problem of career self-determination, the motivational component is expressed in acquired competencies, career orientations and includes goals and values of a future career.

Discussion

Currently, the works of many scientists (Augienė, et al. 2014; Markova, 2010; Markin, 2011; Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, 1991) emphasize the importance of human resources, one of the indicators of which is the correct choice of a profession and the ability to build a career, emphasizing the importance of career education in higher education institutions. Career is a job, role and status promotion of the subject, implemented in the framework of professional activity, during which there is a professional and personal development, as well as self-realization of the personality.

The beginning of career, according to one of the author’s positions, coincides with the beginning of professional activity, and according to another, with the beginning of educational and professional activity. For the success of career advancement, the career planning process is important, which must be started at the stage of schooling as part of career guidance activities, as the leading career factors are satisfaction with the chosen profession and the internal consistency of the personal and professional perspective.

Career is a dynamic process of organizational advancement, within the framework of which professional and personal development, as well as self-realization of a person takes place. An analysis of the stages of career development allows us to conclude that the determination of career goals, plans, the formation of an image of a future career begins long before the start of professional activity, which gives rise to career advancement, even in the process of studying at school, when a student is faced with the need to plan his own future and choose a profession.

Speaking of professional self-determination, one should keep in mind the formation and development of a person as a subject of labor activity. The career context goes beyond the boundaries of the profession and work, including life claims and plans, as well as the unprofessional aspects of life. Profession and work are only one of the most important conditions for career advancement. Based on this, we can conclude that career self-determination has a broader meaning than professional self-determination.

In this study, career self-determination is understood as psychoreflexive activity aimed at finding your own way of building a career and creating its image, which includes key personal formations (values, motives, life strategies, etc.). Moreover, in the structure of career self-determination, one can distinguish motivational, strategic, cognitive, emotional and activity components.

Motivational is represented by career orientations (career goals, values and motives), the strategic one includes subject-object orientations in life situations, the cognitive component is represented by knowledge and images-ideas about the future career, the emotional one includes the emotional background and perspective career self-esteem. The active component is expressed in reflection and cognitive activity.

As part of the monitoring of career education, several shortcomings were noted. At the universities it is necessary to improve the system of career education, career self-determination so that students can recognize themselves, their aspirations and capabilities, professions and the world of work. To study this research the following scientific problems were selected: What problems that

are important to solve at the very beginning of career path are faced by a modern young man? What career planning skills have students not formed?

In this regard, the problematic goal of the research was to study the content of ideas about the factors of self-determination of the career of students of higher educational institutions. To achieve this goal, it was decided to conduct a survey of students of the 3rd, 4th courses of Open International University of Human Development "Ukraine".

Based on the analysis of scientific literature, the following hypotheses were put forward:

- students' perceptions of a professional career in the process of life and professional self-determination are not complete.
- the activities of the teaching staff of the higher school on the students' mastery of additional information in the field of regulation of the process of forming ideas about the career, taking into account external and internal factors that influence their life and career self-determination, are not organized.

To test these hypotheses, an empirical study was conducted: a survey of students at "Ukraine" University to find out their views on the importance of career development, factors that help and hinder students' career development, encourage students to plan their careers, and develop professional skills.

Limitations

As the specific sample was numerically relatively small ($N=189$) and the students were only third and fourth course, there exists the need for a further study of the same subject.

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations can be made:

1. For the university and institutes:

- to identify and develop guidelines for career development and student development;
- to integrate career development into subjects and emphasize its importance both in career and in personal life;
- to establish a more accurate level of need and the acquisition of professional competence, it is proposed to conduct research at all university institutes.

2. For Career Center:

- to create a Career Center, so that there is a representative at all university institutes who can participate in the educational process, for example, to give presentations on relevant aspects of a professional career during lectures, to analyze labor market trends with students, etc.
- to organize career days where students have an opportunity to learn more about career possibilities, organize seminars where students can discuss and gain the necessary professional skills, etc.

3. For students:

- to develop employment, personal and professional competencies in the learning process.

Conclusions

As a result of the study, it was found that career self-determination includes five main components:

- Motivational component (career orientation) - these are the goals, values and motives of a future career, which rise the process of career self-determination.
- The strategic component is represented by subject-object orientations in life situations, which are included in the process of career self-determination, influencing the formation of career orientations, ideas about a future career, and promising career self-esteem.
- The cognitive component is represented with knowledge about the future career, expressed in the formation of the concepts of career issues and images, ideas about the future career.

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- The emotional component includes the emotional background of career self-determination and promising career self-esteem.
- The activity component includes activities for self-development, cognition and reflection. This component provides the course and direction of career self-determination. All components are interconnected with each other, but the motivational component has a greater impact on the entire process of career self-determination, “triggering” career self-determination.
- Diagnostics of the motivational component of students’ career self-determination showed that career orientations inside of them are formed, but they have insufficient certainty, there are contradictions between the goals and motives of a career. The main goals that students are focused on in their future careers are material welfare and social responsibility; among values prevail mind, success, competence, health, family safety, universalism; Among motives, intrinsic motivation is expressed. The revealed contradictions affect the goals of material welfare and the low severity of material motives, as well as the orientation towards the value of universalism, but the low severity of the motives of social interest.

Diagnostics of the strategic component showed that most of the students are characterized by an average severity of transitive creativity and a locus of control, but for a significant part of them there is a tendency to objectivity in interaction with a life situation, which manifests itself in a more pronounced adaptation to the situation than to the desire to transform it and change to your advantage.

Diagnostics of the cognitive component of career self-determination among students showed that most of them have formed concepts of career issues and images, ideas about their future careers, but not enough formed ideas about future career roles.

The emotional component of students’ career self-determination is characterized by a lack of certainty of the emotional background, positive and neutral self-esteem, insufficient self-determination of self-esteem in a future career related to interpersonal relationships, since only 1/3 of the students were able to highlight their position.

Diagnostics of the activity component of career self-determination has shown that this activity of students is carried out and is aimed primarily at self-knowledge and self-development.

Thus, the diagnosis of career self-determination among students showed that the most formed component of them is the motivational component (career orientation), while other components are underdeveloped, which requires the organization of pedagogical support for this process based on the use of interactive learning methods.

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