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ECONOMICS AS A PART OF UNIVERSAL KNOWLEDGE: THE ARCTIC ASPECT

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Abstract

The authors of the article made an attempt to analyze the situation related to the modern state policy of the regulation of quantitative and qualitative indicators of the training of economists with higher education in Russia. The study used an interdisciplinary integrated approach that gives an idea of the economic behavior of a person, local community, state and global community, etc. In the framework of the system approach historical-genetic, comparative-historical, statistical methods, interdisciplinary analysis were used. Modern professional specializations that are included in the qualification of an "economist" are described, necessary in the most diverse spheres of life. The article reflected the historical retrospection of the genesis of global economic thought, the correlation of the rates of scientific understanding, substantiation of economic processes and the historical practice of the organization of the training of specialists for conducting economic surveys of remote Russian Arctic territories. The socio-economic myths created out of the desire to regulate the structure of graduation of specialists according to the structure of demand in the regional labor market were identified and refuted. It was concluded that it is necessary to refer to the historical experience of decision making within this problem. The thesis is substantiated that to ensure the competitiveness of the Russian economy in the Arctic regions, it is necessary to continue training economists in regional universities focused on the needs of their own and neighboring territories, and implementing multidisciplinary training to attract and retain young people in the territory, and then professional staff.

Keywords: Regional education, labor market, economist profession, the Arctic.

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1. Introduction

In recent discussions on the topic of specialists prepared in universities, both quantitative characteristics of the ratios of various specialties and areas of training, and qualitative, associated with the various desirable competencies of modern graduate are considered. Many experts believe that it is necessary to regulate the structure of graduates according to the structure of demand at the labor market. Public policy in the field of education also focuses on this discussion through the regulation of the number of budget places in various areas of training. Starting with 2014, universities began to "reduce the number of state funded places in economics, management, PR and increase in those professions that are now in demand by the economy of the country".

It is believed that such a statement of the question is connected with a simplified understanding of the relation between higher education and the labor market, as a result, such a mistake can lead to negative consequences of the economic development of a country and, in particular, its remote Arctic territories. The authors considered several reasons that can lead to such consequences.

Firstly, without an "economist" and economic knowledge, it is impossible to imagine a single business unit, starting with the household and ending with a large international corporation.

Secondly, the satisfaction of current needs for specialists will not quickly respond to structural changes in the economy of the country and, accordingly, prepare personnel for the future. Indeed, the last decades demonstrate how the processes of globalization, development of new economy and technologies change various spheres of economic activity. In particular, financial system, government system, social system, communication systems and many others spheres have undergone active transformations. The system of higher education also cannot stand still, satisfying the existing needs, it should change not just in parallel, but anticipating the future needs of the economy of the country. Nowadays, about 80% of the technologies become obsolete within 10 years, with more than 80% of workers educated more than 10 years ago (Mosicheva, 2011).

Long-term economic development is observed when five basic elements coincide:

- Technical progress;
- Prevalence of critical thinking and innovation over dogmatism in the field of culture and economy;
- Economic knowledge and the ability to organize the expansion of production and exchange;
- Political will of government to produce the necessary institutional reforms that liberate and creatively direct human energy and enterprise;

Openness to external contacts, which makes it possible to exchange not only goods, but also knowledge, information and culture (Kolodko, 2009).

It is necessary to emphasize the complexity of the determinants of long-term development, since they not only complement, but also reinforce the actions of each other. Thus, any promising intentions of state authorities that are not supported by technical progress cannot lead to long-term economic growth, and, conversely, technical progress alone is not enough for such growth without state support. However even their combination is not enough to give the acceleration to economy, if they do not correlate with the progress of science and culture. In turn, both science and culture alone cannot support economic development in the long run. Only the synergy of these processes and the attendant openness to external contacts, the accumulation of experience and economic knowledge can yield bring results.

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Thirdly, the free use of tools for the calculation of the need for specialists and the use of sometimes incomparable indicators, which create a "false" view of the needs of the labor market can lead to negative consequences of the economic development in general.

2. Problem Statement

Nowadays the ideas of the regulation of the structure of graduates turn-out according to the structure of demand at the labor market and taking into account future demand are widely discussed in different countries, while the solution of this issue is not considered in terms of the elimination of the imbalance between supply and demand. The problems of skills mismatch between the supply of skills and qualifications and the demand for skills and qualifications in modern economics are investigated to a greater extent.

3. Research Questions

In the context of the research, the authors attempt to answer the questions about whether the Russian Federation, and in particular its Arctic regions, need economists; whether there is a real need to regulate their numbers. In order do this, it is necessary:

- To describe modern professional specializations in finance and credit, accounting and auditing, commerce, which the "economist" qualifications comprise, which are necessary in the most diverse spheres of life and determine the development vector of the Arctic regions of the Russian Federation
- To carry out historical retrospection of the genesis of global economic thought, the correlation of rates of scientific understanding, substantiation of various economic processes and historical practice of the training of specialists for conducting economic surveys of remote Russian Arctic territories.
- To identify and refute the socio-economic myths generated by the desire to regulate the structure of the issue of specialists according to the structure of demand at the regional labor market.

To consider the possibility of combining a modern system of secondary vocational education with a system of training economists with higher education, ensuring the continuity of general professional and specialized knowledge for the needs of the economy of the Arctic regions.

4. Purpose of the Study

The study substantiated the thesis about the economy as part of the universal knowledge necessary for the successful development of the Arctic regions of the Russian Federation and obligatory in the program of training specialists with higher education in regional universities.

5. Research Methods

The presented research required the application of an interdisciplinary integrated approach, which gives an idea of the economic behavior of a person, local community, state and global community, their

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motivation and values. In the framework of the system approach historical-genetic, comparative-historical, statistical methods, interdisciplinary analysis were used.

6. Findings

Despite the fact that the emergence of "economics" as the art of housekeeping arose even before our era, nowadays an economist today is one of the most modern professions. Interestingly, in Russia the concept of "economist" is interpreted quite widely and economist is commonly called a certain universal specialist in the field of industry, business and commerce. The review of vacant positions suggests that employers often mix different functions in one concept. Economists are involved in all spheres of activity, at the micro level - from small businesses to the largest banks, corporations, holding companies, at the macro level - in national and global economy. As part of the review of the profession, it is impossible to list all the specializations in the field of finance and credit, commerce and accounting and auditing which the "economist" qualification comprises.

Specialists in microeconomics study different economic categories at the level of individual enterprises or households. For example, they can help individuals or enterprises to make decisions that, with current resources and demand, can maximize profits by predicting the possible demand for specific goods, provided by certain price levels for them. Most working economists fall into this category. Economists in particular industries or sectors of economy, as well as areas of knowledge, apply fundamental economic laws, categories and methods for research in such specific sectors as health care, education, agriculture, urban economics and individual regions, lawmaking, history, energy, environmental protection etc. Most of them study the market structure of certain sectors of the economy relative to the number of competitors within this sector and analyze market decisions. Specialist in macroeconomics study the historical trends in the economy of the whole country or group of countries, develop forecasts for future trends in such areas as unemployment, inflation, economic growth, production and investment.

Thus, economic knowledge is necessary in the most diverse spheres of life and determines the vector of the development of a country. Being closely related to the vital activity of state, economic science, one way or another, it influences state economic policy, which is also confirmed by the main milestones in the history of economic knowledge. There are three main stages in the development of economic thought.

The first stage is the era of pre-market economy. It includes two main periods: the period before our era (natural economy), when the economy is considered as the art of housekeeping and the first millennium of our era, when the economy was regulated by religious canons.

The ancient economy of defined our views on the means of labor, the processes of accumulation of wealth and its separation from physical wealth, consumer and accumulative organization of economy, exchange and the social consequences of labor division. These arguments were formed in the system of religious and philosophical teachings of Hammurabi, Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon and others. At the same time, Aristotle believed that it was necessary to separate the concept of "economy" from "chrematistics" (the science of getting rich, accumulation of wealth).

The economy of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance was characterized by the emergence of commodity-money relations. Late Middle Ages were associated with events of the Church Reformation, due to which the ban on appropriation of loan interest was lifted, entrepreneurship was recognized as a

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godly deed. The consequence of these events was the formulation of the concept of credit and the development of market hoarding, the final victory of the commodity-money system of relations over the natural, which stimulated the emergence of economic thought to the level of an equal and separate science.

The second stage, which marked the beginning of the formation of economic science, was the era of the unregulated market. Economy period of the late XVII - early XX centuries was characterized by the development of classical political economy of Smith (1993), who advocated free competition in the market based on supply and demand. This classical theory, which nowadays is the subject of the study of the history of economics, has itself passed through several stages of development. Without deep understanding of the characteristics, it can be said that throughout all stages its ideas were dominant in the evolution of economic knowledge and formed the basis of university education of that time.

The entire experience of the historical development of economic thought shows that the pace of scientific understanding and substantiation of various economic processes systematically lags behind dynamic practices. Nowadays, considering the results of market reforms, it is possible to state that the choice of monetarism, and not Keynesian theory, is the mistake of the 1990s. There is no doubt that this fact actualizes the need to train competent economists, as it was more than once in Russian history, especially at the turn of the XVII – XVIII centuries, when, overcoming socio-economic backwardness, the Russian government realized the need to develop education and science. Various gymnasiums, university, academies appeared; Active support was provided for the development of entrepreneurship and manufacturing. New economic processes demanded the search for new resources, including natural ones. Science and education started to work in accordance with state interests. The geography of expeditionary research conducted after the foundation of the Petersburg Academy of Sciences in 1724 by the decree of Peter I gave clear idea of the places of state interests application that initiated orders for scientific research - this was also a region that was presented in modern geopolitical discourse as Russian part of the Barents / Euro-Arctic region.

At the end of the XVIII century and in the XIX century the Academy of Sciences started to lose its leadership ground, and the scientific initiative for the organization of expeditions transferred to the naval and military departments and to the Russian Geographical Society since its foundation in 1845. The research became more local, but one thing remained unchanged - the expedition participants had an excellent versatile education and were armed with advanced scientific and technical knowledge and used the latest instrumentation base of the time. The training of academically educated specialists with a wide range of practical competencies able to quickly adapt to the requirements of growing scientific and technological progress, which constantly improved the theoretical, material and technical base of Russian science and accumulated invaluable empirical data in the most difficult conditions of polar expeditions, allowed Russia in the XVIII – beginning of XX centuries implementing a large number of government tasks in order to protect their economic and geopolitical interests in the Arctic (Ivanova & Shabalina, 2016).

Further it seems necessary to the authors to return to the question about the need to regulate the structure of graduates according to the structure of demand of the regional labor market (Watts & Sultana, 2004). In this regard the authors consider what myths are generated in the desire to regulate these processes.

For example, the arctic regions are sounding the alarm: they need highly skilled personnel of engineering and natural science profiles. At the same time, "... the share of students receiving higher

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education in the Murmansk region in economic and legal direction is 51 percent, and in natural-technical dicrections is only 34" (Murmansk, 2015, para. 5). This position gives rise to the myth of a certain optimal ratio of specialists in various areas of training.

MYTH 1. A ratio of 51 to 34 is poor. As international experience shows, this ratio corresponds to the level of some of the most high-tech countries in the world. Finland has the highest percentage of engineers among EU countries: more than 20% of the total number of university graduates, compared with 10% in the UK and Belgium. The share of university graduates in the following fields: mechanical engineering, natural sciences, mathematics and statistics, computer technology makes up 38% of the Republic of Korea, 34% in Germany and about 20% in the USA.

MYTH 2. GDP and GRP are the basis of the staff forecast. Usually macroeconomic indicators (GDP and GRP) are often the basis for forecasting the dynamics of employment and the required graduation of university specialists. However, the use of these indicators narrows the horizon of a reliable forecast for a period of only one to two years. In addition, there is no direct correlation between macroeconomic indicators and the structure of specialist turnout. Moreover, some professions are multifunctional in different types of activities that are not structurally distinguished into independent training profiles.

MYTH 3. It reflects the opinion on the necessity to prepare professions that are now in demand by the the economy of the country. What about the recognition of promising demand? There is a problem of time lag - the gap between current demand and the period of training future employees. In this regard, it seems more correct to raise the question of the recognition of future demand, i.e. the opportunities to adapt the release to current needs. This task is already being solved through the implementation of continuing education programs (additional educational programs and vocational training programs).

The task of the provision of the opportunity to learn and relearn throughout life is actualized under current conditions. The need for new professions, specialties, competencies, and retraining of managerial personnel makes the system of additional professional education increasingly necessary. This aspect is reflected both in the Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" adopted at the end of 2012, and in the national project "Education", the federal project "New opportunities for everyone", adopted in 2018, where the development of continuing education is positioned as a structuring factor that creates a close relation between education and labor market.

Back in 1966, an American psychologist, the author of the theory of needs, McClelland (1966), in his article "Is education possible to accelerate economic development?" noted the high interest of society in the economic return on investment in education. He asked himself: how is it possible to talk about the need for skilled labor when there is a gap between education and economy?

Due to the transformation of the Russian legislation in the field of education, a real "bridge" has emerged, providing a direct link between education, labor market and economic agents. Additional vocational education has strengthened its position in educational market and gained a number of competitive advantages.

MYTH 4. It reflects the need to transfer training in economic areas in the capital universities**.** In 2015, at a meeting of the Board of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, during the discussion of promising target enrollment numbers in higher and secondary vocational education, there was a position to reduce state-funded places for legal and economic specialties.

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7. Conclusion

Over the past five years, the opinion of the representatives of the ministry has not changed, and the planned mechanism was put into effect. Even despite the fact that in 2018 there was some growth in the number of allocated state-funded places for economic directions in the regions, the share of admission to universities in Moscow and St. Petersburg according to the "Monitoring of the quality of admission to universities" of Higher School of Economics (HSE) has already exceeded 30% then as in 2016, it did not even reach 20%. HSE and the Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation are traditionally the leaders in the enrollment of economics students. There is no doubt that the quality of education in these universities is really high, but it is rather difficult to imagine a massive labor migration of graduates of these educational institutions after graduation to the Arctic regions.

In this regard, the following questions arise: who will cover regional needs for specialists? Where are the limits of labor market to which a university is oriented? Is it municipal market, the constituent entity of the Russian Federation or the country as a whole? And where economists are trained to meet the needs of the market?

In our opinion, the argument for the preservation of economic education in the regions, including the Arctic, can be the fact that at present the quality of education in the system of secondary vocational education has significantly increased. The inclusion of open source institutions in the WorldSkills movement has a direct impact on the growth of professional skills of graduates, develops their professional competencies, and promotes training in accordance with international standards and the needs of new high-tech industries. Over the six years of the existence of WorldSkills in Russia, more than 70 subjects of the Russian Federation have been involved in the movement, about 500 championships have been held, in which more than 100 thousand participants took part.

Such a graduate is already able to solve modern production problems and in the future when he receives an economic education that ensures continuity with general professional and special knowledge, regional economy will receive a highly qualified specialist with higher education, who possesses the methods of technical and economic analysis and forecasting, both at local enterprise level and economic thinking on a larger scale.

The issues of economic training may be especially acute in the arctic regions, which are located far from the central regions, where living conditions are aggravated by adverse climatic events.

Thus, in the Murmansk region since 2010, there negative trend in the turn-out of economists is being observed, and for the last 5 years the policy of the reduction of state-funded places for the training of economists in the regions has been pursued. However, the demand for qualified economists is still exists, which is confirmed by the data on the demand for additional education programs. This demand has increased several times over the same period.

At the same time, in countries with an established economic system, the trend for the turn-out of specialists in the field of economics is quite stable, and there are virtually no structural changes in the complex with the turn-out of specialists of higher educational institutions. For example, in Canada, the share of graduates in economics from 2000 to the present is 17–19% (CanadaStat, 2018). The transfer of economic education to the capital universities is the wrong direction. In Moscow, for example, the number

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of industrial enterprises is decreasing, and the proportion of people employed in industry is correspondingly reduced, which indicates the post-industrial development of the capital. Does it mean that it is necessary to close Moscow universities, which train engineers? The authors believe that it does not mean so; otherwise the economy of country will be completely non-competitive. The same thing is with economic education in regional universities.

Moreover, it is regional universities that are more familiar and oriented towards the needs of their own as well as neighbouring territories, and through the implementation of multidisciplinary training, they contribute to attracting and retaining young people in the territory, and professional staff also.

The recognition of right direction based on the historical experience of decision making within this problem is necessary to reform education and the social institutions associated with it for the successful development of the Russian part of the Barents / Euro-Arctic region.

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