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Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future

**FORMATION OF SOCIOLOGISTS ACCORDING TO THE
REQUIREMENTS OF EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL
STANDARDS**

T. G. Kiseleva (a)*, M. A. Zaitseva (b), S. L. Talanov (c), D. T. Berezin (d)

*Corresponding author

- (a) Yaroslavl State Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushinsky, 108/1 Respublicanskaya St, Yaroslavl, Russia, kisseleva2108@mail.ru
(b) Yaroslavl State Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushinsky, 108/1 Respublicanskaya St, Yaroslavl, Russia, mzaiceva@inbox.ru
(c) Yaroslavl State Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushinsky, 108/1 Respublicanskaya St, Yaroslavl, Russia, talanov_sergei@mail.ru
(d) Yaroslavl State Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushinsky, 108/1 Respublicanskaya St, Yaroslavl, Russia, e-mail:dimitry_rus_rub@rambler.ru

Abstract

The authors focused on the training requirements of the sociologists proceeding from the new Educational Standart; specified the professional competences of the graduating sociologists, providing them with successful professional adaptation; described the difficulties in the professional development of working sociologists; outlined ways to increase satisfaction from the activities of working sociologists. As a part of study the content and workplace management of sociologists, their relationships with colleagues and employers were analyzed. The mentioned above points proved to be essential while training students. The connection was established between job satisfaction and staff turnover in companies; the plans to change job between the sociologists with high overall satisfaction are much lower, therefore qualified organization of studying and work placement for future sociologists will help to “wake up and smell the coffee” and to raise work satisfaction during the post graduate adaptation period. Gender imbalance was revealed. The correlation was traced between job satisfaction and life satisfaction; overall satisfaction index among sociologists with Higher sociological education is higher than among persons without basic profile education. Sociologists who started their professional career long time ago have job satisfaction index higher than those who started not more than five years ago. The necessity of project activities, technological practice and the formation of competencies aimed at self-organization and self-development was marked during the preparation of future sociologists. The educational establishment should create conditions for maximum immersiveness of students into research activities, bring the curriculum of students to the real work schedule of sociologists.

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Keywords: Job satisfaction, overall job satisfaction, sociologist’s competencies, State Educational Standart in sociology.



1. Introduction

Sociologists make a huge contribution to the development of society. Their knowledge, forecasts and recommendations are of strategic importance for people's life, social, economic and political decision-making. At the same time, we can note a negative trend in the field of sociological researches, which are carried out by people who do not have full sociological competence, but have mathematical, economic or pedagogical education, claiming the right to formulate recommendations on socio-economic, political and other development of society.

What abilities and skills should a modern sociologist have, for his predictions and analytical derivations helped in making important life decisions? How should the training of sociologists be organized in universities? In what conditions do sociologists work? Are sociologists satisfied with the relationship with their colleagues and employers? Are they satisfied with their job in total? These concepts are difficult to analyze because they are difficult to operationalize. On the other hand, without their understanding it is impossible to develop recommendations for improving the efficiency of sociologists' training of the speciality 39.03.01 Sociology and social work in accordance with the State Educational Standard 3++.

2. Problem Statement

The competence model is widely used in the higher education system, but there are very few studies on the ratio of the necessary and achieved level of competence, they are of a specific nature, not always allowing to extrapolate the results to other educational areas. Nevertheless, the results obtained, for example, in the studies of Melo and Gonçalves (2017), Ivascu, Tămășilă, Tăucean, Cioca and Izvercian (2017), Pokrovskaja, Petrov and Gridneva (2018) allow us to reconceive the process of training a competent specialist of the future.

Nowadays, the idea of competitiveness is an integral part of higher education (Alexankov, Trostinskaya, & Pokrovskaja, 2018; Fersman, Zemlinskaya, & Novak-Kalyayeva, 2017; Lysenko & Sereda, 2018), in which competition occurs in the struggle for the status of the University, talented students, additional resources, grants, therefore the participation of students and teachers in programs such as ERASMUS confirms the efficiency of the educational process, which was proved, for example, in the study of Moisescu and Moisescu (2016). Other authors - Abisheva and Assylbekova (2016), while analyzing the social sphere, note that risk is an integral part of the present day, thus when preparing a specialist of the future it is necessary to form competencies that allow him to design and predict the situation in order to manage the risks. This quality is especially important in the training of sociologists. Bran and Udrea (2016), supporting this idea, distinguish agility as the most important quality of a successful specialist, which allows to increase efficiency significantly. In the conditions of sociologist's irregular working hours, agility should also be among the professionally important qualities. In our opinion, a significant difficulty is the diagnosis of the level of competence formation; therefore, the works and researches of Caciuc and Constantinescu (2016) are of interest. In addition, most experts, (for example, Gavrilă-Ardelean, 2016; Popova, Almazova, Khalyapina, & Tret'jakova, 2017) agree that a graduate of any specialty (including a sociologist) should possess the skills of project activities.

Speaking about the training of future specialists, we cannot ignore the position of the teacher and those educational technologies that are used to train highly qualified specialists. First of all, the teacher himself must possess the competencies that he forms in his students, then the professional communication of the teacher with the students will ensure the involvement of students into the process of professional development and will enhance professional motivation. This is indicated in the studies by Ciric and Jovanovic (2016), Cismas (2016), Mynbayeva, Seilkhanova and Akshalova (2017).

In order to organize the process of training of future specialists properly and effectively, it is important to understand the causes of satisfaction-dissatisfaction of already working specialists of the relevant profile, that is why the study of Fedorova et al. (2017) gave us an idea of a benchmarking study of the satisfaction level of the chosen profession of working sociologists and studying sociologists.

3. Research Questions

In the course of research, the following points had to be worked out:

- what are the requirements to the training of sociologists according to the new State Educational Standard;
- what are the leading professional competencies of graduate sociologists, ensuring their successful adaptation to the profession;
- what are the difficulties and problems in the professional development of working sociologists, how to reduce the risks of leaving the profession of novice sociologists who are university graduates;
- what are the ways to increase the level of satisfaction from the activities of working sociologists.

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is to assess the level of formation of professional competencies of students-sociologists; the compliance of studying results with the requirements of the State Educational Standard.

This aim was specified in the following points:

- to determine the most highly sought qualities and competencies from the point of view of employers and specialists engaged in the sphere of studying of public opinion;
- to assess the level of formation of these competencies among the graduates of the Sociological Department;
- to offer ways, methods, technologies aimed to eliminate the shortages and gaps between the requirements of employers and the current level of competence of students, to create the conditions for increasing the level of satisfaction with the chosen profession among students-sociologists.

5. Research Methods

To solve these problems, a sociological study was conducted in the Yaroslavl region. In the study we engaged the students of the speciality 39.03.01 Sociology and social work, and sociologists working in:

- the centers of studying of public opinion;
- state and municipal administration organizations;
- research departments of various organizations;
- personnel departments;
- rating agencies;
- marketing and advertising agencies;
- consulting companies;
- Media and publishing business.

Quota sample, the total number is n=244. Quota variables: basic education, gender, age, place of work (organization).

In addition, an in-depth interview was conducted, which was attended by 10 people: positional experts; heads of organizations.

In the course of the study a secondary analysis of statistical information was carried out, the data of sociological studies conducted by the VCIOM, by the Public Opinion Foundation (FOM) and by the Institute of Sociology of the RAS were analyzed.

The analysis of the obtained data was carried out using the methods of mathematical statistics, which include the analysis of the reliability of differences using the Cramer criterion, reflecting the correlation measure between the two nominal variables based on the chi square test.

6. Findings

To understand what changes need to be introduced in the training of future sociologists, we have analyzed the level of satisfaction of professional activity of already working sociologists. To begin with, we have made an attempt to find out what the respondents were guided by in their employment? Answers of respondents to the first question are presented in Table 1.

Table 01. Employment motives* (% of number of respondents)

Respondents' answers	Female n=138	male n=106
Find job in sociological sphere	73	65
Find job in a certain company	60	57
Was guided by other motivation (flexible schedule, the opportunity to gain experience, knowledge and contacts to work in other spheres, etc.)	54	49
Find job not by profession, but the content of which suits	21	16

*Respondent could mark several variants.

A significant part of the respondents (73% of women, 65% of men) consciously chose their work. Tellingly more than a half of the respondents (60% of women, 57% of men) chose not just a job in the field of sociology, but in a certain organization. In any case, for sociologists, like for any other employees, other aspects of their work are also important: flexible working hours, the opportunity to gain experience, knowledge and contacts to work in other spheres, etc. (54% of women, 49% of men). At the same time, women indicated that psychological climate in a team, reliable employment guarantees, the opportunity to

be independent and flexible working hours are important for them. For men self-realization at work is important, the opportunity to see the concrete results of their work.

Extrapolating these results to the process of training of the future sociologists, we can say that the leading role in the educational process will be played by project activities, technological practice and the formation of competencies aimed at self-organization and self-development. This requires a radical restructuring of the educational process, in which the knowledge position of the teacher is transformed into a tutor, providing students with support in their own search and discovery of new competencies.

In our opinion, changing the position of the teacher is the primary condition for changing the attitude of students to education. If 5-7 years ago higher education was an end in itself in the training of sociologists (employers required only higher education, the profile of training did not matter much), today the situation is changing. This is proved by the answers to the following question: "What importance was attached to your our speciality by the employers?"» The respondents' answers to this question are presented in Table 2.

Table 02. The importance of field-specific education while job placement (% of number of respondents)

Respondents' answers	students n=108	employers n=136
Paid much attention to my speciality	48	45
The only important thing was higher education	35	39
There was no particular importance in speciality and education	17	16

Almost half of the respondents, in particular 48% of the respondents indicated that much attention in their employment was paid to their higher sociological education. Thus, some respondents explained that the employer while studying their portfolio paid attention primarily to the list of achievements. In addition, for the employer it was important:

- professional experience;
- knowledge, skills and abilities in the field of new technologies;
- readiness for continuous self-education;
- practical training and internships in the field of sociology;
- ability to work with people, etc.

In other words, the employer highly considered the professional component of the portfolio. Therefore, in the preparation of future sociologists the educational organization should create conditions for maximum involvement of students into research activities, because this direction is the best to form the professional competencies of the sociologist-researcher. Perhaps it is necessary to provide for an increase in the number of course and project work that students perform during the training period. A positive impact on the formation of research competence will have the fact that students will participate not only in student conferences, but together with their tutors to speak at National and international conferences, to participate as joint participants in grants and funded projects.

The cognitive component of professional activity is important, but job satisfaction is sometimes determined by the emotional component of the activity, so it was important for us to understand and analyze the structure and dynamics of sociologists' satisfaction with their work in organizations in order to place

correctly the accents while preparing students, to help to see the perspective and "remove the pink glasses" in the learning process. The results of a survey of the satisfaction of practical practitioners are presented in Table 3.

Table 03. Structure and dynamics of the level of job satisfaction of sociologists (average value, minimum – 1, maximum – 5)

Level of satisfaction	(n=244)
Relationship with colleagues	4,4
Relationship with the senior officials	3,7
Work organization	3,6
Work content	3,5
Sanitary and hygienic working conditions	3,4
Usage of working hours	3,3
Salaries and emoluments	2,5
Job in the organization in total	3,5

Sociologists highly marked the level of satisfaction with the relations with colleagues. We explain this for two reasons: firstly, there are more women working in the field of sociology than men, and for women, regardless of the sphere of activity, the relations in the team are always of great importance. Secondly, the training of sociologists in the University is aimed at the formation of such professional qualities as the ability to establish contacts, communication; the ability to avoid (find a way out of) conflicts, that ultimately leads to the ability to get along in any workforce.

The level of satisfaction with the relationship with the senior officials is on the second place. Democratic changes in the society could not but affect the needs of employees in a more democratic relationship with the immediate superior. Both students and already working professionals unanimously explained that they would like to see the management loyal enough, focused on work results, and not on the process; allowing flexible working hours, and not punishing for violations of the schedule. Sociologists-practitioners noted as one of the important advantages of their work the lack of a strict system of accounting of entrance and exit. The work schedule is especially important for women with children.

Women have a higher level of overall satisfaction with the chosen field of activity than men. The reason for this was explained by a polling of heads of organizations in which sociologists work. Employers noted that they are not able to provide their employees with rapid career growth (and in some cases, in general, career growth). Also, there are no special opportunities to increase the salaries of employees, so there is a turnover. These nuances in the organization of work of sociologists are important, so in the course of training and technological practice it is necessary that the training schedule of students was as close as possible to the real work schedule of employees of the centers of public opinion studies. At the same time, we would like to emphasize that our study demonstrated that the plans to change the work of sociologists with a high level of overall job satisfaction are much less common. To substantiate this conclusion, the Cramer coefficient was calculated, which reflects the measure of cooperation between the two nominal variables on the basis of the Chi-square criterion. The results are presented below, in Table 4.

Table 04. Correlation between the level of job satisfaction and potential employee turnover

Potential turn over	(n=244)
Cramer coefficient	0,348
The share of wishing to leave among completely dissatisfied with the work (%)	34
The share of wishing to leave among completely satisfied with the work (%)	0

The polling of employers showed that they are satisfied with the level of preparation of bachelors and masters of sociology, this is not surprising, as employers recruit students for their work during the internship.

Being aware of the close relationship between overall job satisfaction and the content of the activity, we studied the leading labor functions of sociologists-practitioners. This allowed us to have a reasonable position while planning the educational program, while distributing the complexity of the individual courses aimed at the formation of appropriate competencies. The results of calculating the correlation between the level of satisfaction and work content are presented in Table 5.

Table 05. Correlation between the level of satisfaction and work content

Satisfaction	(n=244)
Work content	0,419
Work organization	0,343
Salaries and emoluments	0,232
Relationship with colleagues	0,480
Relationship with the senior officials	0,381
Labour routine and working hours	0,232
Sanitary and hygienic working conditions	0,298
Financial situation	0,344
Life in general	0,221

Attention is drawn to gender characteristics: among women, the level of overall job satisfaction is higher than among men. The correlation between the level of job satisfaction and the level of life satisfaction in general is established, this pattern can be traced in the male sample. We explain this by the fact that for men, as a rule, self-realization, career, etc. come first.

The average index of overall job satisfaction of specialists with higher sociological education is higher than that of persons without core education. People who came to the profession long ago (ten and twenty years ago) have a higher overall job satisfaction index than those who have been working for no more than five years.

Many male-sociologists working 10-20 years in the organization have made a successful career. It is important for them to be able to bring something new and progressive into the work of the organization; to influence the adoption and implementation of important decisions in the life of the organization; to do something useful for the country and people. For female sociologists career growth is also important, but not as much as for men.

The level of job satisfaction affects the quality of work, the level of responsibility, and that is extremely important in a flexible work schedule of sociologists. This pattern is proved by the following results obtained during the study, which are presented in Table 6.

Table 06. Correlation between the level of job satisfaction and the level of work responsibility of the organization

The level of work responsibility of the organization	(n=244)
Cramer coefficient	0,335
Feel the responsibility among completely dissatisfied with the work, %	36
Feel the responsibility among completely satisfied with the work, %	60

The polling of male sociologists showed that 89% (n=106) consciously chose the speciality "sociology" and do not regret the chosen field. Out of 100% of young workers (3 years after graduation), only 8% explained that they chose the speciality "sociology", because they had low scores on the Unified State Exam, which were necessary for admission. The latter circumstance suggests that the choice of the "Sociology" department is not always conscious, therefore, an important role in the preparation of students of this profile plays a preliminary career guidance work carried out among pupils and students of secondary vocational schools. The introduction of standards in secondary school, where the project activities have become a mandatory element of training, allows to build a career guidance work more effectively, involving pupils who are interested in sociology into sociological surveys of the population.

7. Conclusion

The study analyzes the content, organization of work of sociologists, relationships with colleagues and employers, which is essential in the process of preparation of students of the relevant profile. The correlation between the level of overall job satisfaction and potential staff turnover in the organizations is established; plans to change the work of sociologists with a high degree of overall job satisfaction is much less than with the low, therefore, high-quality organization of educational and technical practices for students future sociologists will "remove the pink glasses" and increase job satisfaction at the stage of adaptation after graduation. A gender imbalance was revealed: the level of overall job satisfaction is higher among women sociologists than among men.

The correlation between the level of overall job satisfaction and the level of overall life satisfaction in general is established; the index of overall job satisfaction among sociologists with higher sociological education is higher than among those who do not have basic specialized education. People who came to the profession long ago (ten and twenty years ago) have a higher index of overall job satisfaction than those who work no more than five years

When preparing future sociologists, it is necessary to pay more attention to project activities, technological practice and the formation of competencies aimed at self-organization and self-development. There should be a restructuring of the educational process, the transformation of the knowledge position of the teacher in the tutor. The educational organization should create conditions for maximum involvement of students into research activities, course and project works, participation in National and international conferences.

During technological practice and internship it is necessary to bring the training schedule of students closer to the real work schedule of employees of the centers of the study of public opinion. Finally, the major role in the training of students in this profile plays a preliminary career guidance work carried out among pupils and students of secondary vocational schools.

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