

ICEST 2020
**International Conference on Economic and Social Trends for Sustainability of
Modern Society**

**UNDERSTANDING THE CAREER OF STUDENTS RECEIVING
SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

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Abstract

In the light of the current problems of modernization of secondary vocational education in Russia, the author substantiates the relevance and presents the results of a study of ideas about the career of students of secondary vocational institutions in Krasnoyarsk. Social images are considered as a form of conceptualization of reality, which is built on the basis of common sense and is an important aspect of the foundations of the activity of social subjects. It is noted that the images are contradictory and thus, their investigation is important to improve the effectiveness of the educational process. We analyze the data of a questionnaire consisting of three blocks aimed at identifying students' perceptions of what a successful and unsuccessful career is; what factors influence the success of a career (General and personal); what is the place of education in career self-determination. The author analyzes the contradictions in students' views that prevent the implementation of the subjective position in building a career: while the career is a procedural characteristic of professional activity, the students' views do not represent its dynamic aspect and the topic of goal formation is poorly represented, the target criterion for career success is highly subjective; goals and means do not differ, merge; the problem of working relationships in the respondents' views is significant for a successful career, but the understanding of one's own role in building them remains uncertain. A productive aspect of students' career ideas is the pronounced significance of education, both basic and supplementary.

2357-1330 © 2020 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Secondary vocational education, students, professional self-determination, career, understanding.



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1. Introduction

Secondary vocational education in Russia is in a state of modernization. Its necessity is due to the state and trends of economic development, which impose new requirements on the quality of labor, human resources of enterprises and organizations, and training of specialists. Suvorova (2009), speaking about the priorities for the development of secondary vocational education in Russia, draws attention to the fact that it has a double significance in the development of society: “providing human resources, as well as training qualified personnel, which includes not only professional training, but also the formation of personality” (p. 209). In addition to the actual implementation of labor functions, a professional should be able to solve complex non-algorithmized tasks and consciously build a strategy for their own professional path and career. The psychological aspects of determining the professional path, especially the socio-psychological views of future professionals, are becoming relevant.

2. Problem Statement

Analyzing approaches to defining a career in science, Mogilyovkin (2017) states that with some differences, they are united by the fact that career is regarded as a dynamic phenomenon included in the professional space of personal development as one of the forms of self-realization; as a result of the actions of external and internal factors; as a criterion of social adaptability and success of the life path; the career has an individual character, but there are basic characteristics that can be used to describe and evaluate it. In the light of the tasks of developing the personality of a future professional, the position of Pryazhnikov (2008) is particularly interesting, who, following the recognized specialist in career periodization D. Super, refers to career building as a process of professional self-determination. Gnedina (2006) describes a career as a three-component structure that includes: the target component (goals, projects, orientations, tasks, claims, motives, desires, needs, aspirations, values, meanings), the procedural component (methods, strategies, tactics, pace, stages, periods, phases), the effective component (achievements, changing roles and positions, professional competence and efficiency, professional and job growth).

2.1. The world of professions is changing very quickly

The problem of career is now taking on a new meaning. Both the content of professional activity and the system of relations in which professionals are included are changing (Avramenko, 2015; Kumykova, 2012; Meshkova, 2014). Along with the change in public attitudes, the priorities that the subjects of the labor process are guided by in these relations change. Analysts say that self-determination is difficult in a highly uncertain environment and that future-oriented education should be built with these realities in mind (Yurtaeva, 2012). However, it is important to understand that for employees it is an internal basis for building their professional path. The system-forming component of these foundations is social representations.

2.2. It is in representations that stable social contents, meeting new realities and refracted by personal needs, become the form of mental representation that serves as the basis for the actions of social subjects

Representations of certain groups of people are closely related to social processes and the state of social structures and can be considered as socio-psychological characteristics of these groups (Bovina, 2010). The author of the theory of social representations S. Moscovici and the founder of one of the directions of its development Jodelet (1984) characterize social representations as naive, natural knowledge, separated from scientific knowledge and based on the type of common sense. S. Moscovici says about the concept of social representations that it is: "... modern in nature, since in our society it replaces the myths, legends and everyday forms of thinking that exist in modern societies" (as cited in Jodelet, 1984, p. 94). Jodelet (1984) adds that "... social representations are properties of everyday practical thinking aimed at mastering and understanding the social, material and ideal environment" (p. 361). Emelyanova (2001), studying social representations in the conditions of transformation of Russian society, defines them as elements of public consciousness that conceptualize social reality at the level of common sense and indirectly regulate behavior.

2.3. Representatives of the social psychology of education speak about the need to study the social representations of participants in the educational process

This is necessary for tracking educational results, understanding the basis of actions of educational subjects, and reasonable design of its optimization (Belinskaya, 2017, Tolstykh, Ter-Avanesova & Chernyak, 2019). When conducting such research, along with the productive aspects of representations, specific contradictions and tendentiousness are found, the understanding of which can form the basis for the development of appropriate innovative technologies (Grebennikova et al., 2017; Lukyanchenko et al., 2019).

3. Research Questions

In light of this, questions about the nature of ideas about the career of young people receiving secondary technical education are relevant:

- how students imagine a successful and unsuccessful professional career;
- what factors in their opinion determine career success;
- what, in students' opinion, is the importance of education for a successful career;
- the meta-issue of the research is the question of what students' perceptions will contribute to or hinder the implementation of the subject's position in building a career.

4. Purpose of the Study

Identification of the content of ideas about the career of students receiving secondary vocational education.

5. Research Methods

The research focused on these issues was conducted on the basis of the Krasnoyarsk technical school of industrial service and the Krasnoyarsk construction technical school. 42 students took part in the study. Of them: 24 boys and 18 girls.

The research methodology was based on a questionnaire developed in accordance with its purpose, which includes identifying the opinions of respondents through incomplete sentences and questions and a scale assessment. The questionnaire consists of three blocks aimed at identifying individual ideas about:

- what a successful and unsuccessful career is from three perspectives: a) how the respondent sees it himself, b) how, in his opinion, peers represent a successful and unsuccessful career, C) how, in his opinion, parents represent,
- which factors influence career success (general and personal),
- what role education has in career self-determination.

The following results of processing the received data were received.

5.1. Analysis of the ideas about what a successful and unsuccessful career

Through a school assessment, respondents were asked to determine the significance of a successful career for them in the range of 10 points. For most of the respondents, career has a pronounced significance. There are no average ratings, which may indicate that this aspect of professional activity is emotionally charged.

In the continuation of the unfinished sentence "in my opinion, a successful career is that..." there are several semantic alternatives. One third of the answers associates a successful career with the fact that a job is personally significant and attractive (interesting, favourite, enjoyable); one fifth of the answers - with a material reward (a large, high salary). Fourteen percent of the responses have an educational theme (good, higher education). In one tenth of the answers, refers to the involvement in the labor process (working hard). Nine percent of the responses were determined in the topic of psychological comfort of working conditions (good relationships, stability, convenient schedule), and the same number – in the topic of social status (respect, good position). The lowest number of responses (seven percent of the total) reflect the topic of goal setting and goal attainment.

The sentence "according to my peers, a successful career consists of..." was continued in the following thematic ratio: a third of the responses reflects the topic of high pay; thirteen percent of the responses reflect the topic of personal significance and attractiveness; eleven percent of the responses - the topic of education; nine percent of the responses – the topic of having a job (there is a job, and everything is good). Seven percent of the responses formalized the topic of confidence and ability to overcome. Twenty-seven percent of the responses are not themed (either "I don't know" or "like me").

The sentence "in the opinion of my parents, a successful career is..." received these extensions: a fourth of the responses - about a high salary. almost a fifth is about education; a tenth is about "getting settled in life" and another tenth is about the personal significance and attractiveness of work. Six percent of the responses were given to the topics of family support and career advancement correspondingly. A

fifth of the responses are vague. One respondent believes that for their parents, a successful career is about following their steps.

The sentence "in my opinion, an unsuccessful career is ..." received the following sequels. The authors of thirty percent of the answers qualified as a career failure low salary; seventeen percent of the answers - low personal significance and attractiveness of work (unloved, uninteresting, not motivating); sixteen percent of the answers – lack of quality education; twelve percent of the answers-uncomfortable working conditions (a lot of hard, difficult work, difficult working relationships, lack of stability); eight percent of the answers-lack of dynamics in professional life and status; nine percent of the answers - non-compliance with the requirements of the work, you can say your own "failure"; six percent of the answers-indifference to the career; two percent-lack of goal setting.

The sentence "My peers believe that an unsuccessful career is..." was continued by respondents in these variants: the topic of low wages is represented the most (36%). Eleven percent of the responses were based on lack of good education and another four on low intellectual competence. Nine percent of the responses were related to the topic of low personal significance and attractiveness of the work. Seven percent of the responses describe the situation of an external task of work and working relationships (to work without giving "to the uncle" on his terms). Seven percent of the answers - the lack of meaningful motivation in the employee. One answer is simply "work hard". One fourth of the responses states that it is difficult for the respondent to determine the opinion of their peers.

Determining the opinion of parents about what an unsuccessful career is, the respondents gave these answers. Low pay – twenty-two percent of the answers. Poor education – nineteen percent of the responses. Low personal significance and attractiveness – fifteen percent of the responses. Low involvement in work – five percent of responses. According to one answer, the team is poor and there is no dynamics in its activity and status, and it does not meet the requirements of the job. The third part of the responses recorded the difficulty for respondents to determine the opinion of parents.

5.2. Analysis of the ideas about which factors influence career success

By means of a scale assessment, respondents were asked to determine the share of efforts that they expect to spend in the total volume of life interests (career, family, friends, etc.) on a career. the ratio of ratings on this scale is close to the normal distribution. There are both low and high assessments, but most of them have an average level.

The question about what will contribute to a successful career received the following responses: thirty-eight percent of the responses state the important role of motivational and volitional factors (hard work, efficiency, purposefulness), twenty-eight percent of the responses – the importance of learning (the presence of cognitive competence and the desire to develop it), twelve percent of the responses – the importance of interaction with others (networking, the ability to receive support and build productive relationships). A tenth of the answers are about the importance of the financial factor, and another nine percent - about the need for a good context (choice of profession, its demand, the place where I got to).

The answers to the question, what can hinder a successful career, were distributed as follows. Thirty-seven percent of the responses reflected motivational characteristics of workers (poor motivation, apathy, lack of desire, etc.), one-fifth of responses - a bad relationship, for the most part by the participants of labor process (employees and management), eleven percent - low functionality, low power of an employee, ten

percent - the incompetence identified with low level of education, nine per cent - weak mobilization efforts (uncertainty, complacency, indiscipline, etc.), four percent had problems with time. One answer has a paradoxical character, defining high competence as an obstacle to a successful career.

Respondents' answers to the question: which of your qualities (characteristics) will contribute to a successful career, in half of the cases refer to their motivational characteristics related to the attractiveness of work, engagement, eighteen percent of the answers - the ability to interact productively, seventeen percent - intellectual and practical competence, eleven percent - the reliability of the respondent as an employee. One person gave the answer "success", apparently attributing this characteristic to himself. Two people failed to answer this question.

Indicating what qualities (characteristics) can, on the contrary, be an obstacle, respondents in almost half of the cases indicated weak motivation, lack of involvement in the labor process; eleven and a half percent of responses state low communicative competence, the same number – low psychological reliability (weak confidence and emotional stability), a tenth of responses indicate low intellectual competence. Another tenth indicates that the respondent does not see any of their characteristics that can hinder a successful career.

5.3. Analysis of the ideas about what role education has in career self-determination

Using a scale technique, respondents were asked to evaluate the significance of vocational training for a career in the range of 10 points. The ratio of ratings on this scale is close to the normal distribution. There are both low and high assessments, but most of them have an average level.

The question of how, in your opinion, professional training helps a successful career, received the following answers. Forty-four percent of the answers state that education provides knowledge about the profession helping its deep development; twenty-seven percent of the answers - that education provides the necessary documentation for decent employment, positions and salaries; five percent of the answers state that education itself is a manifestation of the quality of life, seven percent of the answers declare that education is not particularly necessary for a career, and another seventeen percent of the answers were "I do not know".

The question of what professional skills in your opinion are necessary for a successful career received the following answers: a fourth of the answers - about communication competence, the same amount – about reliability as an employee; sixteen percent of the answers – about intellectual competence; a tenth - about professional skills. Twenty-two percent of answers were "I don't know", and one person wrote that "none".

The last question of the questionnaire is formulated broadly: What kind of training do you think you will need in addition to basic training for a successful career? What should be its content (what should I learn?), duration (in hours, days), and how often should I be trained? The third part of the answers to it does not have a productive content: one answer is "no" and fourteen answers are "I do not know". The remaining responses indicate an expressed interest in continuing education. The intensity of the educational load that is desirable for respondents varies from one hour three times a week to "the more, the better". Most of them are interested in foreign languages, next in importance, IT-competence, a small number of responses indicates an interest in learning the basics of management, effective communication and additional expansion/deepening of professional knowledge.

6. Findings

If we summarize the results obtained, we can state the following. For most of the respondents, career is a significant aspect of professional activity. The quality of a career is determined not by externally set benchmarks for statuses and positions, but by subjective criteria, how motivating, interesting, and engaging the job is, the size of its financial return (the amount is not specified), and the comfort of the conditions. In other words, a good career is when you enjoy working and, by putting in the effort, you get a tangible reward. Since there is no question of purposeful efforts, you can "get" or "not get" into this state, because in the opinion of respondents, the career is almost devoid of dynamic characteristics, progressive movement and its own strategy for building it. Goal setting and goal attainment do not occupy a significant place in the respondents' view. The social criterion of career quality is represented by the level of education.

In the opinion of respondents, material remuneration as a criterion of career success is more important for other people (peers, parents) than for themselves. The signs of a successful career "for yourself" are more hedonistic than for others. Thus, the criteria for a successful career "for yourself" include comfortable working conditions, while the idea of criteria for peers is simply about having a job and being able to overcome difficulties. Career guidelines attributed to parents include the themes of family support and progressive career advancement.

The criterion of attractive work, despite its apparent personal orientation, has a pronounced potential to be a "personal whim" due to its subjectivity. Evidence of this may be an increase in the representation of the material factor and the appearance of the career dynamics factor in the responses to the question about unsuccessful careers. That is, a career is successful when you like the job, but when the remuneration is low and there are no tangible promotions, the career is highly likely to be regarded as unsuccessful. This may imply that good financial remuneration and career advancement are a priori included in the characteristics of a job that you like. This is similar to the logic Gertsenovskie (A. Herzberg) motivational set, including "hygiene" factors, in the absence of which the work can not satisfy, "drivers" that stimulate high engagement. The criteria for an attractive job can include many factors that are different in nature. And the lack of any of them can be the reason that "job is unattractive".

There is a logical contradiction in the ideas of young people. If the goal setting theme is very weak, respondents consider employee motivation to be a factor of successful career. It turns out a tautological logic "chicken-egg": the work must be motivating, and to get such a job, you need to be motivated. In other words, goals and means do not differ, they merge together.

Interestingly, the relationship factor was determined in the questionnaire responses. In the question of career success, it is interpreted as the personal communicative potential of the respondents themselves. Respondents believe that their ability to establish relationships and build productive interaction will help with career issues. When it comes to an unsuccessful career, the relationship factor is interpreted as malevolence, non-constructive attitude of others (employees and management). However, in the answers to the question about personal characteristics that can hinder a career, there are statements about their own lack of competence in this field. This suggests that the problem of working relationships is significant for respondents, but is to some extent a zone of uncertainty and incomprehensibility.

It should be noted that the respondents are interested in vocational education and are interested in additional education. In many ways, education is identified with a successful career.

7. Conclusion

From a socio-psychological point of view, the content of respondents' views can be interpreted as a manifestation of a reactive (as opposed to an active, subjective) position and a low readiness for full self-determination. Possible means of optimizing ideas and attitudes regarding professional career can be: providing information about various options for career "routes", about the features of employment places, getting acquainted with the experience of professionals, organizing the educational process, including situations of effective acquaintance with the realities of production, tasks solved by a specialist and their own resources of professionalization (Filippova & Lukyanchenko, 2017), creating conditions for reflection of their own resources in relation to professional tasks and real conditions of production, developing goals, guiding the process of professional self-determination and awareness of resources/means to achieve them. The research conducted has a pronounced practical significance (consisting in the understanding of productive and unproductive aspects of students' ideas about career that is necessary for building the psychological aspect of professional education) and academic significance (consisting in obtaining data on the content and contradictions of social representations of a particular social group).

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