AMURCON 2021
AmurCon 2021: International Scientific Conference

RESEARCH ON FUTURE LAWYERS' DEMAND TO BUILD AN INDIVIDUAL LEARNING TRAJECTORY

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Abstract

The relevance of the research is caused by the development of one of the trends of the modern system of higher professional education - focus on the implementation of individual approaches through the construction of students' learning trajectories. The digitalization of higher education provides training using an individual learning trajectory, which becomes one of the most important markers of students' conscious choice and interest in their future occupational activities. An individual learning path is required to meet students' occupational and personality demands and ambitions more completely. It allows the future professionals to acquire not only professional knowledge, skills and abilities but also such qualities as mobility, flexibility, communication, and independence, the ability to take the initiative, make choices and be responsible for them. This condition requires conventional approaches in professional training to transit to the conditions of individualization of learning. The main focus of the study is to investigate the requirements of future lawyers in building an individual learning trajectory. The survey method is used in the study. The questionnaire conveys the questions to point out the importance and opportunities to build an individual learning trajectory within the implemented curriculum. The study identifies the demand of future lawyers in choosing an individual learning trajectory, as well as their preferences for additional resources to master the competence for future occupational activity.

1. Introduction

One of the priority national goals of the Russian Federation in 2020 - 2030 is the development of an effective system of identifying, supporting and developing abilities and talents of children and young people based on the principles of equity, universality and aimed at self-actualization and career guidance of all students (Federal'nyy zakon..., 2012). Global trends in the development of higher education in recent decades show a shifting emphasis from traditional passive teaching towards the active position of students in learning and the individualization of their educational route (from Teaching to Learning) (Daneikin et al., 2020). Different variations of organizing students' learning are considered. The model (format) is called 'individual learning trajectory' is widely discussed (Sharifzyanova et al., 2015). Individualization of learning means active participation of students in the development of professional skills, an option of academic subjects, methods of progress control (Vergun et al., 2016). Nowadays, individual learning trajectories are actively used in higher education institutions. This approach to learning allows not only getting a major but also competencies in other areas (Strogetskaya et al., 2020).

In education, there are concepts, the content of which is connected with the concept of individual learning trajectory: 'individual learning route', 'individual learning program', 'individual developmental trajectory', 'generalized learning route' (Ivars et al., 2018). The review of the content of the concept ' learning trajectory' can be divided nominally into three categories: the first interprets ILT as a way in education, the second sees it as a form of organization of learning activities, and the third one implies a process (Weinstein et al., 2020).

Khutorskoy (2005) considers the individual learning trajectory as a personal way of actualizing each student's personal potential in learning. Approaches to the definition of individual learning trajectory by different researchers (S. V. Vorobyeva, A. P. Tryapitsyna, and N. A. Labunskaya) reflect its nature in the properties of a curriculum. It aims to create conditions for individualization of learning concerning personal goals, motives and further personal and occupational development (as cited in Shemanaeva, 2017).

Timoshina (2010) considers the notion of 'individual learning trajectory' from the point of view of anthropocentric and competence-based approaches

Individual learning trajectory of a student is an individual path in learning determined by a student together with a teacher, organized taking into account motivation, abilities, mental, psychological and physiological traits of a student, as well as socio-economic and temporal capabilities of the subject of learning. (p. 316)

Nowadays, individual learning trajectory is a dynamic didactic concept. It is filled with new content as social relations and higher education systems develop and improve. The implementation of individual learning trajectories is possible if it is related to the competence approach as one of the models of professional training within the third generation Federal State Education Standards of Higher Education (Akimenko et al., 2020). Individualization is expected both in the construction of the curriculum and unique trajectories of studying particular academic disciplines (Fedorova, 2019).

The concept of individual learning trajectory is meant as a rather new model of higher education, where the student is turned out to be a key player. The student issues the request for studying, an option of discipline and the unique path of development. The student makes his or her curriculum through the choice of study courses along with studying compulsory disciplines according to the major. Finally, at the end of the studies, he/she becomes a sought after professional, capable of self-education and self-development.

An analysis of definitions of ILT shows that it has much more figurative and extended meaning than a learning program. One of the aims is the development of a learner's ability to form his/her learning trajectory according to the current global demand, i.e. in a digital learning environment. The development of information and communication technologies, digitalization of the educational environment allows talking about the individualization of learning in e-learning through distance learning technologies (Vainshtein et al., 2019).

In addition to the experience of cognitive activity, an individual learning trajectory allows students to acquire the experience of creative activity on their own. It is expressed as the ability to make non-standard solutions on problematic issues and the experience of emotional and value relationships, in the form of personal orientations. The effectiveness of ILT also is measured in the degree of achieving personal goals, the level of expression and the development of a range of personal qualities as a result of ILT actualization.

2. Problem Statement

Personalization and digitalization of higher education require changes in priorities in the arrangement of learning, its focus on personality and professional growth of a learner, providing conditions for revealing his/her potential and content development of professional competency. This, in its turn, entails changes in the traditional methodological system of education, but so far a systematic view of the way to build an individual learning trajectory and manage learning in these conditions has not been developed yet.

The transition of university education to a student-centred model is becoming a throughout the line of change. This is reflected both in the development of educational programs based on students' requests and educational experience, as well as in the more active involvement of students in designing their learning. The importance of student involvement in the education quality management system is increasing, including by increasing the opportunities for students to choose and design their trajectories, developing the independent student evaluation system, increasing the use of digital services and content for independent work.

Amur State University is testing the introduction of individual learning trajectory of students in learning, which is aimed at improving the quality of graduates' training, promoting their academic mobility, individualization of training according to the educational demands of students through the effective use of distance learning technologies.

Over the 2020-2021 academic year, the following regulatory and legal documentation was developed to provide the learning process: 'Regulations on the current control of the progress and mid-term assessment of students while arranging to learn using distance learning technologies, 'Regulations

on the development, use and examination of e-courses', 'Regulations on the selection and inclusion of mass open online courses in higher education programs and transfer credit of students' academic performance'.

The partnership with universities was organized providing the opportunity to train students of Amur State University in online courses, promoting the mastery of professional competencies of students. In the academic year, 2020-2021 more than 250 students were trained in online courses of universities ensuring the quality of students' training that matches the world level. They are Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation, Ural State Pedagogical University, Sergo Ordzhonikidze Russian State University for Geological Prospecting, Far Eastern Federal University.

The university's online courses provide an opportunity to experiment in the field of online learning, pedagogical practices and technologies, mastering new learning technologies. Besides, the open online courses provide students with an opportunity to choose from a wide range of real-world learning opportunities at the country's best universities.

To introduce students' learning trajectory, there is a survey of students conducted to find out learning needs, develop a list of online courses for the 'AmSU White Book' to ensure that students choose the necessary courses to meet their learning requirements, design AmSU's online courses.

Available university experience and literature analysis allowed us to approach the problem of studying the demands of future lawyers in building an individual learning trajectory.

3. Research Questions

Currently, the professional future of a younger generation is asymmetrical, accompanied by unpredictability and lack of obvious prospects for professional self-actualization, which is expressed in the transformation of professional self-concept, neurotization and intrapersonal conflicts, and destructive trends in professional development. The purpose of designing an individual learning trajectory (ILT) is to overcome the uncertain current professional and learning situation and to arrange activities towards the fullest realization of professional and personal potential. This process requires an individual to master the methodology of socio-professional forecast development (Zeer et al., 2017). National research on improving Bachelor training quality in the system of higher professional education using individually oriented technologies reflect the process of the development of individual learning trajectories as a trajectory along which each particular student progresses in the development of his/her competence. Such a trajectory provides a student's choice guided by the teacher's pedagogical support, the model of mastering the disciplines, forms of organization of their learning activities and logic of drills in laboratory sessions. It is also aimed at the personal identity and self-actualization of a future lawyer.

Personalization of students generates a positive motivation; personal responsibility of a student for learning outcomes; interest in his/her high-level performance; acts as an important condition for individualization of learning. This fact emphasizes the necessity to study the demands for future lawyers to build an individual learning trajectory and deeper experimental and practical development of the problem of building an individual learning trajectory.

4. Purpose of the Study

This study was conducted at the Faculty of Law of the Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Professional Education Amur State University. The purpose was to study the demand of future lawyers to build an individual learning trajectory. The novelty of this research is represented by a significant amount of factual data, significantly supplementing the current scientific ideas on the construction of individual learning trajectories.

5. Research Methods

The sample of the present study consisted of 153 students: undergraduate and graduate students of the Faculty of Law of Amur State University undergraduate and graduate programs, aged from 18 to 40 years- old.

The subject of the study is the examination of future lawyers' demands in building an individual learning trajectory.

For experimental research, we conducted an online questionnaire survey among students of AmSU Faculty of Law from September to November 2021. The procedure of the online questionnaire proposed individual questionnaire completion: each of the participants could enter a personal account of Moodle e-learning system and take a survey, including open-ended and closed types of questions.

6. Findings

We analyzed the results of the survey. To the question 'Is it important to you to build an individual learning trajectory for your personal and professional development?' the opinion is divided as follows: the majority of respondents - 87% - answer 'yes' and that it is important for them; the rest 13% of students answer 'no' and that it is not important for them. To the question 'Do you consider the implementation of the disciplines within the educational program sufficient for personal and professional development?' most respondents (82.55%) believe that the implementation of the disciplines, professional modules, their content and quantity is sufficient for further effective work and personal development. Other 16,9 % of surveyed students answer that for personal and professional development the number of disciplines and professional modules is not enough. Most of the surveyed students (85.15%) think that the online courses of other universities, which they can choose during their studies, will contribute to their personal and professional development. The rest 14.85% of respondents believe that additional online courses conducted at other universities will not contribute to their personal development as a future specialists. Only 41% of students have previously taken online courses to develop their personal and professional development. Meanwhile, most of the students who have taken such courses are studying for a Master degree program, namely 63.6% of the surveyed Master students. The opinion of undergraduate students is distributed as follows to the open-ended type of question 'What courses (disciplines) do not you study but would like to study and consider necessary for your personal and professional development?' The majority of surveyed undergraduate students (60%) would like to study additional courses (disciplines). They list the following: Foreign Languages (Latin, Chinese, Korean, etc.);

disciplines in the field of Computer Science and Communication Technologies; Logic; additional Legal disciplines; Office Management, etc. Another part of the respondents - 31% - feel that the courses provided by the Faculty of Law are sufficient for further personal and professional development. 9% of undergraduate students 'find it difficult to answer'.

To the same question, 'What courses (disciplines) do not you study but would like to study and consider necessary for your personal and professional development?' the opinion of the students of the Master program is distributed as follows: as well as undergraduate students, the majority of surveyed master students (73%) would like to study additional courses (disciplines) while studying at AmSU Faculty of Law. They list the following options: Public Speaking, Psychology, Logic, Project Management, IT-related disciplines, etc. 18% of the interviewed Master students consider that the courses (disciplines) studied are sufficient for further personal and professional development. The rest of the Master students (9%) find it difficult to answer.

Most undergraduate students surveyed (16%) suggest that the curriculum should include disciplines related to Psychology, Social Psychology and Legal Psychology. This is explained by the fact that participation in any process requires a deep understanding of personal psychology. It is possible to have experience in dealing with different people, in analyzing situations, but only professional knowledge of psychology provides an objective basis and offers effective ways of solving problems.

Another group of students - 7.6% - suggest introducing courses in Life Coaching, Public Speaking and Ethics. Such courses help a future lawyer to go through the stages of Life Coaching, allow going beyond the standard thinking and becoming freer, to access internal resources.

The study of Public Speaking aims to develop your speaking skills and abilities. Thanks to these skills, every student will be able to speak freely not only at seminars and tutorials in all academic disciplines at the university, but also to use these skills in the further practice of public speaking presentations for various interested audiences.

A lawyer's ethics, like any other person, accompanies him at leisure, at home, and in social activities. A lawyer's ethics cannot be restricted to the courtroom. Studying the lawyer's ethical standards is obvious - this knowledge will keep him from engaging in unpleasant behaviour, will give an idea to the surrounding people about high professional and moral criteria a lawyer should meet, as his work involves the promotion of rights and freedom of citizens, performing the duties about the society and the state, hence, serving the law and justice (Neobkhodima..., 2004).

Another 6.1% of students surveyed suggest introducing courses related to business, bankruptcy and financial literacy. Developing a financial mindset, learning economic theories is the foundation for a comfortable and wealthy life. Financial literacy is a set of knowledge about how to control and manage financial flows, divide money skillfully and augment capital. Future lawyers need this knowledge to start up their activity related to law, as well as to manage their finances properly.

The same number of respondents - 6.1% - suggests the introduction of foreign languages such as Latin, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, including those for Legal purposes. Knowledge of a foreign language now offers significant advantages for employment in many areas. Studying a foreign language is not easy, but it is a very rewarding activity, which is very good for self-esteem and self-confidence. Some respondents (5.3%) suggest introducing courses related to IT systems and technologies, as well as courses

to study 1C software. Information literacy enables students to search, evaluate, effectively use and create information to achieve their personal, social, professional and learning goals. The ability to analyze the ever-increasing flow of information and make rational and effective decisions based on it gives a future lawyer a competitive advantage in today's digital society.

Another 4.6% of the surveyed Master students suggest more legal practice. In higher education, students study various legal disciplines theoretically, so practice provides an opportunity to refine the theory. Experts admit that practice in Law universities is insufficient. A focus on practice would make life easier for young lawyers and future employers.

3% of the surveyed undergraduate students suggest introducing courses on International Law and Paperwork in Law. 2.3% of respondents each suggest introducing a course on the Basics of law enforcement intelligence-gathering activities and Logic. 1.5 % of the respondents introduce Forensic Psychiatry, Criminal Science, Anti-corruption, Notarial systems and Intellectual Law. They also suggest the introduction of additional disciplines, the content of which allows matching professional interests of students (to refine their qualification) according to their tendencies.

A part of the students (16.3%) think that all the courses studied are sufficient, and the rest - 19.9% - find it difficult to suggest additional courses (disciplines).

Master students are those who have already completed their first higher education degree and who have decided to get another profession/qualification or to master their knowledge and improve their training in the occupation they have already had. Therefore, the previously mastered professions and practical experience influenced the offer of new courses in this category of respondents.

The majority of the surveyed Master students (13.7%) propose to introduce a new course studying Techniques and Methods for Time Management - Time Management. Time management is about self-organization and self-management. Time management helps a person to schedule time and save resources.

The same number of undergraduates surveyed - 13.7% - would like to study Case Law in more detail. Case Law is an auxiliary source of law, filling gaps in the current legislation of the Russian Federation and defining uniform approaches to the interpretation and application of legal standards by courts.

Another part of the respondents - 9.1% - suggests introducing the discipline of General Psychology. The subject of General Psychology is the psyche and mental phenomena of a single individual as well as mental phenomena observed in groups and communities. The study of this section of psychology is also necessary for successful professionals for further personal development.

4.55% of undergraduates suggest introducing courses in Project Management; Labour Law; IT systems and technology; Arbitration; Internet copyright; Legal monitoring; Law and Culture; LegalDesign and Law-project work.

The students consider that LegalDesign is one of the new and interesting areas. It is one of the key trends in the field of Law. It is about a wide range of approaches designed to make legal documents more available and comprehensive. At all times, laws, regulations, agreements, contracts and other legal texts have been some of the most difficult to understand. This problem - the translation from legal language to

'everyday language' - is intended to solve by the complex approach of LegalDesign. Documents are taken apart, simplified and often designed as flowcharts, comics or even games.

After all, the following findings can be summarized due to the study:

First of all, the majority of surveyed undergraduate and graduate students need to build an individual learning trajectory for their personal and professional development;

Next, even though the majority of respondents studied professional modules, their content and quantity are sufficient for further effective work and personal development, they would like to study additional disciplines within the curriculum;

After that, the survey revealed that not all respondents (41%) took online courses to develop their personal and professional development. The surveyed students believe that online courses from other universities, which they could choose during their studies, would contribute to their personal and professional development.

The surveyed students take care of their choice of job. They suggest fairly those learning routes that would most fully meet their personal and professional demands and intentions, which could allow a future specialist to develop not only professional knowledge, skills and abilities but also such qualities as mobility, flexibility, communication skills, independence, the ability to take the initiative, make choices and be responsible for them.

7. Conclusion

The results of the study on the demands of future lawyers to build an individual learning trajectory will be taken into account in the further design of learning trajectories. When designing individual learning trajectories of future lawyers, it is also important to consider such factors as the results of monitoring the level of meta-skills development; educational platforms of other learning institutions providing online courses in the field of training students in the field of Legal Studies; online learning platforms providing the opportunity to obtain meta-skills and skills for personal development of future lawyers; the designed resources of universities (online courses, programs of extended education, etc.). Based on the results of the study, a teaching and learning specialist or a tutor will be able to make recommendations for choosing an individual trajectory that will be optimal for a student.

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