

## **Interaction of higher and post-university education as a factor of the formation and development of the professionalism of young specialists**

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### ***Abstract***

*The aim of this study is to analyze interaction of university and postgraduate education as a factor in formation and development of qualification of the young specialists. Students of higher educational institutions and young employees aged 18 - 30 years at the industrial enterprises of the Urals serve as the object for empirical analysis. In order to achieve this goal, a set of complementary methods was used: theoretical and empirical (study and generalization of practical experience; questionnaires; qualitative and quantitative analysis of the results), as well as statistical data analysis. The method of secondary processing of the results of sociological studies conducted with the direct and active participation of the authors was also used. The article presents the results of modern students' monitoring analysis displaying the issues of primary professional development, as well as the survey of young employees at the modern industrial enterprises, reflecting the problems of their professional advancement and prospects for professional and career growth. The conclusion is made about the need for interaction between higher and postgraduate education not only to ensure formation and development of professionalism of the young employees, but also the economic sustainability of enterprises.*

***Keywords:*** *university education; postgraduate education; students; young specialist; professional development.*

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## **1. Introduction**

Dramatic changes of the social situation in Russia place serious demands on the qualification level of specialists in any field of production, development and implementation of their potential. Modern enterprises are impelled not only to adapt to the new economic conditions of business, but also to function within the framework of a rapidly changing external environment and intense competition. In order to increase the competitiveness of the manufacturing units and their innovative restructuring, highly skilled personnel capable of performing these tasks are needed. Moreover, young people represent labour, innovative and strategic resource, in which nowadays it is necessary to invest efforts and funds, thus ensuring the success of the future and the economic sustainability of society. Since the 90s of the last century, the maximum strengthening of the youth role in formation of society has become the most widely declared goal of youth policy. The guiding principles of sectoral youth policy are formulated in the European Charter, among which are the promotion of youth employment, preventive measures in the social environment (White paper, 2001). The Bologna process has caused great changes in the field of education in European countries. The modern time is characterized with leading countries' transition to a new stage of innovative society formation - building an economy based primarily on generation, distribution and application of knowledge (Pakhomov *et al.*, 2009, p. 2). "According to experts, the main focus will be on the competencies and skills of future graduates, their suitability for employment" (Abdikerova, 2015, p. 189) "What kind of specialist is expected at a modern industrial enterprise?". Is it a harmonious person whose interests are beyond the scope of his/her work, who is proactive and creative. Or is it, on the contrary, an obedient "knowing his place" specialist - worker. This leads us to the question: "What kind of specialist shall be trained - a single-discipline master in a particular field or a multi-discipline specialist trained in at least the related industries?". These questions reflect the main issue of higher education and the need of its modernization. Among the problems and related tasks during the modernization of the Russian education we can mention the creation of advanced and continuous educational systems ensuring compliance of education with the needs of the economy. Growing importance of professional training for the companies and significant expansion of the need for it over the past thirty years have caused the leading companies to renew their staff's qualification in collaboration with higher educational institutions on the basis of social partnership principles. Organization of professional training has become one of the main functions of personnel management and components of the staff development system. Personnel development is a set of organizational and economic measures of the company's human resources department in the field of personnel training, its retraining and advanced professional training. These measures include issues of professional adaptation, evaluation of candidates for the vacant positions, current periodic personnel evaluation, business

career planning and professional career promotion, work with the personnel reserve, organization of inventive and rationalization work in the company. This undoubtedly applies to all the categories of personnel but to a greater extent to young employees aged 30-35 years who are at the stage of their professional formation and development. The basic elements of personnel professional development system in the company are induction and adaptation; learning motivation; training; management of business career and professional promotion; formation of personnel reserve; development of creative potential of employees. Successful implementation of these activities is possible through interaction of university education and postgraduate education.

The debatable nature of the formulation and study of the above problems indicates their relevance in modern conditions. Note the studies of those scientists who had a direct impact on the organization and conduct of our research. G.O. Abdikerova analyzed the methodology and methods of integration processes of universities with employers (Abdikerova, 2015). Research of S.I. Pakhomov, N.I. Arister, N.U. Venkovsky and V.A. Gurtov is devoted to the state, problems and trends in the development of postgraduate education (Pakhomov et al., 2009). I.V. Teslenko, Y.R. Vishnevsky, with our participation, analyzed the youth in the system of general and vocational education (Vishnevsky, 2016b, pp. 63-116). The study of the economic situation, youth employment and strategies of behavior in the labor sphere was conducted by O.B. Franz, A.N. Popov, A.G. Mokronosov, P.L. Gluhih and A.A. Vershinin (Vishnevsky, 2016b, pp. 117-161).

The aim of our study is to attempt to show that the interaction of university and postgraduate education is a factor of professional formation and development of a young specialist. We proceed from the rationale that formation and development of young specialist qualification is possible when creating a system of continuous and advanced education through interaction of university and postgraduate education. Nowadays it is the ideology of continuous education that conceptually determines the educational policy in the world (Life Long Learning., 2014, p. 2).

## **2. Methodology and research results**

The methodological basis of this study consists of such basic approaches of studying the youth policy as: normative-value, systemic, structural-functional, sociological and psychological. In order to achieve this goal a set of complementary methods was used: theoretical (analysis of philosophical, managerial, sociological, and pedagogical literature on the problem; systematic fact analysis; generalization; classification; mental experiment; modeling) and empirical (study and generalization of practical experience; questionnaire; qualitative and quantitative analysis of results), as well as statistical data analysis. The

method of secondary processing of the sociological study results conducted with our direct and active participation was also used.

Since the professional development and advancement of young employees are influenced by a behavioral model formed mainly by an educational institution, we analyzed the results of monitoring “STUDENT 1995–2016. Dynamics of social and cultural development of students of the Middle Urals” (Vishnevsky *et al.*, 2017) (the sample was from 851 people in 1995 to 1827 people in 2016), which made it possible to determine changes in the main characteristics of student community (social status and state, adaptation processes, education and professional development, value orientations and extracurricular activities), as well as students' ideas about future work.

Within the framework of monitoring the social and cultural portrait of student community of universities in Sverdlovsk region, the processes of primary professionalization of future specialists were analyzed in three main areas: motives of the primary motivation for choosing a university; significance of the future profession (system of professional values); professional plans of the third-year students.

The results of the students' survey showed that among the motives for choosing a university from 2007 to the present, the 1<sup>st</sup> place belongs to interest in the profession, the 2<sup>nd</sup> place is prestige, reputation of the university, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> place refers to the prospect of finding a good job (Vishnevsky *et al.*, 2017, p. 352). The dynamics of the system of professional values has been recorded: possibility of high earnings is consistently prioritized; career opportunities and achieving high qualification are equally stable. Students attached much less importance to autonomy, independence, lack of petty care, regulation; compliance of the profession with the abilities, knowledge and skills of a person; underestimation of connection between the profession and modern equipment, latest technologies became stronger (Vishnevsky *et al.*, 2017, p. 367). Students' plans for job are as follows: practical work in the private sector was noted by 57.8%, practical work in the public sector (teacher, doctor) - 17.1%, public officers - 15.1%, work in the scientific field - 10.0% (Vishnevsky *et al.*, 2017, p. 383).

Analysis of the subjective perception of the situation on the labor market by future specialists preparing for transition from the education system to the employment system has been carried out. The problems faced by the young people after completion of education subsequently affect the situation on the labor market reducing the amount of wages, and acting as a signal to the employer about lower productivity and competitiveness. In the students' opinion, the rating of such problems is as follows: absence of work experience, practical experience (75%), low salary level (48%), lack of open vacancies (43%). Students see combining study and work as one of the solutions to these problems, and the most

efficient students consider continuing work with the same employer where they had work placement or worked during their studies (2009 - 30%, 2012 - 33%, 2016 - 53%).

Transition from study to work is an important stage in a person's life. In order to evaluate satisfaction of the young employees with the main aspects of their activities at enterprises, including the advanced training system and the prospects for professional and career growth, we analyzed the results of a survey in 2016 of 1,000 young employees from 22 enterprises located in 12 cities in the Urals. Within the same analysis we examined the statistical indicators of efficiency for the corporate youth programs implementation: improvement of qualification level, career growth, and creative action of young employees in their professional, scientific and technical activities.

According to the statistics provided by factory human resources departments, under our application, in 2014 the turnover rate among young employees at enterprises comprised 16% (in 2012 and 2013, respectively, 8% and 15%), improvement of qualification level was 28% (in 2012 and 2013, respectively, 41% and 27%), creative action of young employees in professional, scientific and technical activities - 12% (in 2012 without changes, in 2013 - 20%). (Vishnevsky, 2016a, p. 344). The results of a survey of young employees provided the key to understanding the reasons for such dynamics. All the categories of respondents named "Guaranteed stable work", "Earning decent wages" and opportunity to make a career (respectively, 76.2%, 69.8% and 35.9%) among the motivators of activities at the enterprise occupying the first three places. Opportunity of advanced training is a motivator for choosing an enterprise for every fifth young specialist (21.2%). Level of satisfaction with the opportunity to raise qualifications is relatively high (satisfaction ratio is 0.69) (Vishnevsky, 2016b, p. 235). Employees with secondary professional education highly appreciate the prospects in this regard, noting that there is an opportunity to conclude a tripartite "university – enterprise – employee" agreement for receiving professional education. In our opinion, the desire for advanced training and the level of satisfaction with aspects of labor indicate a universal cognitive creative ability based on the interaction of intelligence, cognitive abilities and real achievements of youth.

### **3. Conclusion**

Youth programs implementation analysis at large industrial enterprises indicates the existence of continuous educational systems ensuring not only the development of the enterprise, but also "the continuous development of the professional corresponding to the evolving modern production" (Vishnevsky, 2016b, p. 251) [5, p. 251]. Today they have already started talking about the "ahead of time education". The main task of ahead of time education is to focus not only on the production developing at this stage, but also on the

expected future. In this regard, it is important to improve a social partnership “enterprise - university (college) - young employee” for development of young specialists.

A new trend has been revealed for corporations and large enterprises of Russia when creating a system of continuous and ahead of time development consisting in creation of corporate universities whose activities are referred to as in-house training. Simultaneously, corporate universities have some characteristics of a university: they allow people to constantly improve their professional level through training, internships, on the one hand. Corporate University is not an alternative to a higher or secondary professional education. “It is an efficient tool for generation of a single information environment for company employees, as well as a center of scientific knowledge” (TMK group, 2019) [7].

The conducted study gives reason to believe that interaction of higher and postgraduate education is a factor in professional formation and development of a young specialist, as evidenced by the tasks solved at the various stages of this development. It is the university that forms in a young person the need of “lifelong” education. Enterprises implementing the system of in-house development, including continuous and ahead of time education at interaction of higher education and postgraduate education, ensure their economic strength by fully promoting improvement and development of qualification of the young specialists.

This study allowed us to develop and test an integrated approach to the analysis of the professional formation and development of young specialists during their studies at an educational institution and acquisition of their professional skills. And at an industrial level, it allowed to identify problems in the interaction of higher and postgraduate education, to develop proposals and recommendations for improving the system of formation and development of young workers’ professionalism.

The results of the study can be used for developing of extended and advanced education programs, implemented by universities in conjunction with industrial enterprises, as well as clarifying issues related to the implementation of youth programs in industrial enterprises, including personnel development programs.

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