

The Features of the Career Strategies of Technical University Graduates



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Abstract: *The article discusses the features of the career strategies of technical University graduates, as well as the content of a career as a phenomenon, by highlighting its structure. The article presents the results of the study of the graduates' career strategies of the direction 21.03.01 "Petroleum Engineering" of the Surgut Institute of oil and gas (a branch of the Industrial University of Tyumen in Surgut). The results of the career orientations and the career planning features are analyzed on the basis of the study, as well as a comparative analysis of the career strategies of each group of the graduates is given.*

Index Terms: *career strategies, self-regulation of behavior, career orientations.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In a dynamic socio-economic situation, a psychological problem is associated with the construction and development of a professional career, which allows a person to realize his/her abilities. During the period of study at the University the career strategies of students are being formed and it helps to determine career goals and plans necessary for the positive professional development. The problem of studying the career strategies of graduates is determined by a number of reasons.

First, most of the young people strive for getting higher education, but not always consciously choose the specialty taking into account the individual characteristics and the situation on the labor market. As a result, some graduates make a choice in favor of a career not related to the acquired profession.

Second, the transition to level education in Russia's universities has led to the reduction in the duration of training, which in its turn can become an obstacle to the formation of a conscious and targeted career strategy of graduates-bachelors.

The employer, considering the graduate as a candidate for a certain position, pays attention to the quality of his training at the University, the level of his personal development and his readiness for future professional activity.

Psychological studies [1-3] have shown that the development of the personality of a University student as a future specialist goes in a number of directions. Moral development at this age

is aimed at strengthening the conscious motives of behavior, such qualities as commitment, determination, perseverance, independence, initiative, self-control are strengthened; the interest in moral issues such as goals, lifestyle, duty, etc. is increased.

II. METHODS

Along with the moral development, the professional orientation is strengthened, professionally important qualities are formed and mental processes are "professionalized"; the sense of duty and the responsibility for the success of professional activity are increased; the personal claims of the student in the field of his future profession are growing. The formation of the maturity of the student's personality increases the activity of the student in the formation of qualities and experience necessary for him as a future specialist. The theoretical analysis of the examined literature revealed that the career strategy is a very complex process due to the stages with a gradual complication of their content. This process is a complex one that can weaken or eliminate the negative factors to achieve the gradual goals of social or official promotion of the person in the strategic period. The model of the career strategy is the cognitive analogue of the process of the regular improvement of the professional man's status. Despite the large number of the investigated papers and the high level of development of the career-building theme, research in the field of the students' career planning has a fragmented character. We consider that the most complete representation of the content of a career as a phenomenon is possible by means of highlighting its structure. As a part of this research work, we discussed the structure of Gnedina T. G. and Nevstrueva T. H. [4], which is divided into three components. The first component is the target one and it is responsible for the direct choice of career, based on goals, objectives, motives, needs, values, personal orientations. The second component is the procedural one, which is responsible for the process of achieving the planned career, using methods, strategies, tactics, stages, phases.

And the third component is the effective one, including professional competence, change of roles and positions within professional activity, including official growth.

Thus, building a career strategy is a complex process, and by the end of training the graduates must possess a set of ways and methods that will help them to achieve success in their professional activities. This set is determined by the objective conditions for each of the graduate individually, the consistency of life and professional plans is the most essential in it.

Revised Manuscript Received on 30 July 2019.

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Based on the theoretical analysis of the literature, we planned and implemented an empirical study of the career strategies of our graduates. The study was conducted in 2016 on the basis of the Surgut Institute of oil and gas (a branch of the Industrial University of Tyumen in Surgut), the purpose of which was to study the nature of the career strategies of graduates. 81 graduates (bachelors) of the direction 21.03.01 "Petroleum Engineering" participated in this research, 3 methods for diagnostics of the career orientations of students were considered.

1. E. Shane's method "Career Anchors" [5] is used for diagnostics of the individual hierarchy of the career orientations of students. "Career Anchors" are defined by the author as value orientations, social attitudes, interests, etc., socially conditioned motives for activity, characteristic for a certain person.

2. The technique "Style of self-regulation of behavior – SSB-98" by V. I. Morosanova [6] is designed to study the specifics of planning activities by the graduates. A characteristic feature of the individual style of self-regulation is a set of style features of regulation, which include typical for the given person features of regulatory processes that implement the main parts of the system of self-regulation (planning, programming, modeling, evaluation of results), regulatory and personal or instrumental properties of the individual (independence, reliability, flexibility, etc.).

3. The technique "Writing about my life in 10 years" by T. P. Maralov [7] is designed to identify the stages and level of meaningfulness of the career strategies. The works of the graduates were processed using content analysis.

The main category of the analysis was the sphere of further professional activity (work in the specialty; work in a related specialty; own business; trade; unemployed; obtaining a new specialty).

We used the following subcategories: position (leading specialist), stages of professionalization (graduate school; post-graduate school; dissertation; professional work; courses

and seminars; moving to another city).

We also considered the number of the described career tactics of the career strategy, ways and means of achieving a career, personal and professional qualities and level of the analysis of awareness, structure and realism of the career strategies.

III. RESULTS

As a result of the analysis of the methods mentioned above, the following features of the career planning by the graduates of the Surgut Institute of oil and gas (a branch of the Industrial University of Tyumen in Surgut) were identified.

1. The results presented in Table 1 demonstrate the hierarchy of the career orientations of the graduates under test. Having considered the leading career orientations of each experimental group, we see that the orientations "Professional competency", "Integration of lifestyles" and "Stability" dominate with the majority of students of the specialties "Operation and maintenance of oil production facilities", "Drilling of oil and gas wells", "Construction and maintenance of transportation systems, storage and marketing of hydrocarbons".

This fact demonstrates that maintaining harmony between the family and the professional sphere is of great importance for the students. Career should not be an inconvenience to personal life, managers and colleagues should treat family problems with respect and understanding.

The hierarchy of the career orientations of the graduates is given in Table 1 (results of Survey 1).

E G	Career orientations							
	Management	Professional competency	Autonomy	Service	Challenge	Entrepreneurship	Stability	Integration of lifestyle
1	3	5	3	3	3	3	5	5
2	3	5	2	3	2	2	4	4
3	3	5	3	3	2	2	4	4

Table I. Results of Survey 1.

Note: E G – Experimental Group

The selected groups of students feel the need for safety, protection and confidence in the future. When choosing a position, they pay attention to social guarantees, the possibility of signing a long-term contract with the employer. Stable and long standing of the company in the field of business is important for them.

For the students of the specialty "Operation and maintenance of oil production facilities", along with the orientation "Integration of Lifestyle", the leading anchors are "Professional competence" and "Stability", which indicates the need to improve their professionalism, to implement their knowledge, skills and abilities in life. They want to work in a stable and harmonious mode, independently balancing

professional and personal life. According to their opinion to achieve success in career means to get high position and to have their own business in future [8].

The students of the specialty "Drilling of oil and gas wells" give the priority to the "Professional competence", that is, they are focused on the development of their professionalism. Having chosen a certain sphere of activity, they strive to accumulate and improve professional knowledge and skills. The top of their career path is the level of skill, recognition of their importance [9].

It should be noted that the career orientations such as “Integration of lifestyles” and “Stability” dominate as well with all the students of other specialties, which means that they strive for the harmonious combination of personal aspects of life with the professional sphere, and they have the desire to work in a stable and harmonious mode.

Students of the specialty “Construction and maintenance of transportation systems, storage and marketing of hydrocarbons” also have “Professional competence” in the first place, followed by “Integration of lifestyles” and also “Stability”, which underlines their desire to harmonious combination of personal aspects of life with the professional sphere. Students of this specialty as well as students of other specialties want stability and coherence in work, confidence in the future.

Thus, less expressed career orientations of the students in these specialties are “Service” and “Challenge”. The students of these groups choose easier ways rather than they would overcome insuperable obstacles and solve insoluble problems. A specific area of activity or qualification is more important for them, than the process of struggle and

competition. Novelty, diversity and challenge are of little value to them [10].

This fact means that it is not important for these students to focus themselves on the integration of their own efforts. It is not fundamental for them to manage their own project or business. However, these career orientations can manifest themselves with age and experience [11].

To determine the model of the career strategies of graduates, we made the survey in which we compared the characteristics of the models identified by L. V. Nazarova and the career orientations by the method of “Career Anchors”. We obtained the following data: most graduates adhere to the “Status” model of the career strategies, fewer graduates adhere to the “Material” and “Achievable” models.

Correlation of the models of the career strategies and the career orientations is given in Table 2 (results of Survey 2).

Table II. Results of Survey 2

Career strategies models	Career orientations
Status model: linear dependence with a small deviation from the vertical line of career advancement, dominance in choosing a career path of professional status in relation to the size of wages	“Integration of lifestyles”, “Stability”, “Service”
Material model: the basis of career movement is economic profit, people often do not think about the moral side of the strategy	“Professional competence”, “Management”
Achievable model: the presence of pronounced ambitions, activity, responsibility, the desire for popularity in the professional sphere; the main thing is not high positions and wages, but achievements and winnings	“Entrepreneurship”, “Integration of life styles”, “Autonomy”, “Challenge”, “Management”

2. The results of the technique “Style of self-regulation of behavior – SSB – 98” showed a moderately high overall level of self-regulation of most graduates. This indicates a pronounced independence of graduates, flexible and adequate response to changing conditions, the ability to master new activities and comfortable psychological state in unfamiliar situations [12].

3. To study the content characteristics of the career strategies of the graduates, we used the method of content analysis of works on the theme “My future professional life in 10 years”. The field of further professional activity was the main category of analysis.

I. ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

As a result of the analysis of the above methods for the diagnosis of the career orientations of students, the following results were obtained:

1) The majority of the graduates (44%) define only one career strategy, the smaller part (21%) – three career strategies;

2) The choice of job status depends on the number of the career strategies: the graduates with one career strategy see themselves as leaders; with two or more career strategies – employees/subordinates;

3) The relationship of the number of the career strategies and ways to achieve them: the graduates with one career

strategy do not take into account the way to achieve their goals in the construction of a career plan, with two or more – consider their plans with more details. Training, business development, career ladder are singled out as the achievement of the career strategy;

4) Regardless of the number of the career strategies, the vast majority of the graduates do not distinguish the stage of professionalization and personal qualities as a means of achieving career success;

5) The level of the analysis of building of the career strategies among the graduates divided into three groups:

- The formal analysis (career actions are targeted and carried out in accordance with the individual goals);
- The analytical description (career movement is provided by the analysis of the optimal choice of actions and tactics of the career route);
- The reflexive analysis, which additionally includes an objective assessment of the achieved situation, taking into account individual abilities and personal qualities.

II. CONCLUSIONS

Summing up the results of the study, it should be noted that the nature of the career strategies of the graduates of the Surgut Institute of oil and gas (a branch of the Tyumen industrial University in



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Surgut) is largely identical to the results of the similar studies conducted in other universities of the Russian Federation.

By the time of the graduation from the university, only a small part of graduates have a clear idea of their professional goals and of a conscious career strategy.

From the practice established in the leading universities of the country it follows that the increase of the practical orientation of training is achieved only as a result of the organization of the industrial practices for students in real production, at enterprises providing the students the opportunity to combine study with work in the specialty, the participation of all students in the project activities as well as the development of students business.

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