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**THE INNOVATIVE ACTIVITIES OF MORDOVIAN STATE
TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTE**

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The article looks at innovation management at an innovative university. Innovative processes in a modern Russian university including Mordovian State Teacher Training Institute are aimed at accomplishing the following tasks: increasing the readiness of the university staff to innovative activities, their professional mobility and involvement in innovative activities of the university and the region. The article claims it is necessary to continuously create, perfect and manage human resources involved in innovative activities.

Keywords: education, innovative efficiency, innovative educational space, professional mobility, innovative university, innovative thinking.

**ОПЫТ ИННОВАЦИОННОЙ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ МОРДОВСКОГО
ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОГО ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКОГО ИНСТИТУТА**

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В статье рассматривается управление инновациями в рамках инновационного вуза. Инновационные процессы в современном отечественном вузе, в том числе и в Мордовском государственном педагогическом институте, направлены на решение следующих задач – повышение готовности сотрудников вуза к инновационной деятельности, обеспечение их профессиональной мобильности и включенности в инновационные процессы

вуза и региона. В статье отмечается – человеческую ресурсную базу инновационных преобразований необходимо целенаправленно формировать, улучшать и управлять.

Ключевые слова: образование, инновационная эффективность, инновационное образовательное пространство, профессиональная мобильность, инновационный вуз, инновационное мышление.

The Bologna process is targeted at creating common European educational environment that catalyzes innovative change in education. Now, when Russia is included into common European economic and educational framework, it faces the following tasks when devising and implementing development strategies of a modern innovative university:

- 1) modernization of the educational process;
- 2) modernization of research;
- 3) human resources development through the introduction of a new human resources policy that develops the staff's professional competencies and which introduces a new type of division of labour;
- 4) development of technical facilities and infrastructure;
- 5) modernization of the university structure and management system.

In education the beginning of the 21st century was marked by an intensifying contradiction between the constantly increasing amount of innovative knowledge and skills, needed for competent professional activity on the one hand and the limited opportunity to master them, which the old-style educational systems offer on the other hand. [1] Improvement of the individual's innovative potential through the advancement of innovative elements of education is a key to the development of enterprises, regions and the whole country. Innovative thinking as a key characteristic of economy and education is viewed as the basic means of transforming knowledge into societal well-being and information into final product.

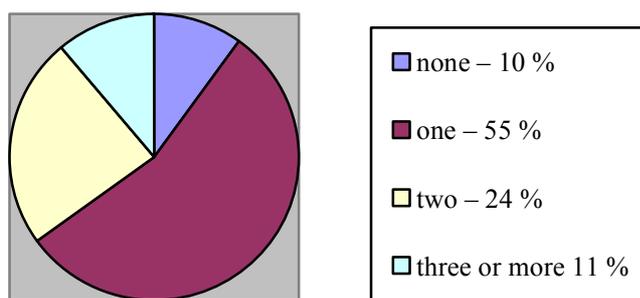
We may side with V.V. Kadakin's opinion that in education 'innovative processes have to be viewed within the context of its social determination, which presupposes compliance of educational system with vital social needs; its integrity and acceptance of all its constituent elements by the society; the system's fostering progressive development of the society; its social dimension and young people's need for education'. [2, p. 9]. Attempts to manage innovative projects by the universities that try to find their place within common European educational framework and in the educational market have led to the evolvement of innovative structures alongside with traditional ones. Among such innovative educational institutions are Common Use Centre Mordovian Basic Centre for Teacher Training Education based at Federal State-Funded Educational Institution of Higher Professional Education M.Evseviev Mordovian State Teacher Training Institute. The Centre's goal is to develop continuous teacher training, create favourable conditions for continuity of professional education programmes of various levels and give students a chance to choose their educational route to suit their needs. Improving the quality of education; psychological, pedagogical, scientific and methodological support of educational system; social, cultural, psychological, pedagogical support of professional and personal growth of the teaching staff, fostering development of the region's human resources are also important features of the Centre's goals.

The Centre encompasses a number of research and implementation centres (Acmeological Centre, Centre for Physical Education and Healthy Lifestyle, Advisory and Educational Centre for students, philology teachers, heads of academic subject groups); research groups (in physics and mathematics, biology and chemistry, history and social science, foreign languages, philology); After-school Centre; Education and Research complex; educational and research centres; research laboratories [see more about Mordovian Basic Centre for Teacher Training Education: 3].

At a first glance the innovations at the university are unrelated and it requires

thorough analysis to detect their effectiveness, shortcomings and prospects for further development. For this purpose we conducted an opinion survey among the staff of M.Evseviev Mordovian State Teacher Training Institute during 7 – 21 June, 2012. 317 of teacher staff were polled, which makes 81% of the total number of teachers. The survey suggests that innovative projects attracted the most mobile and active part of the university staff.

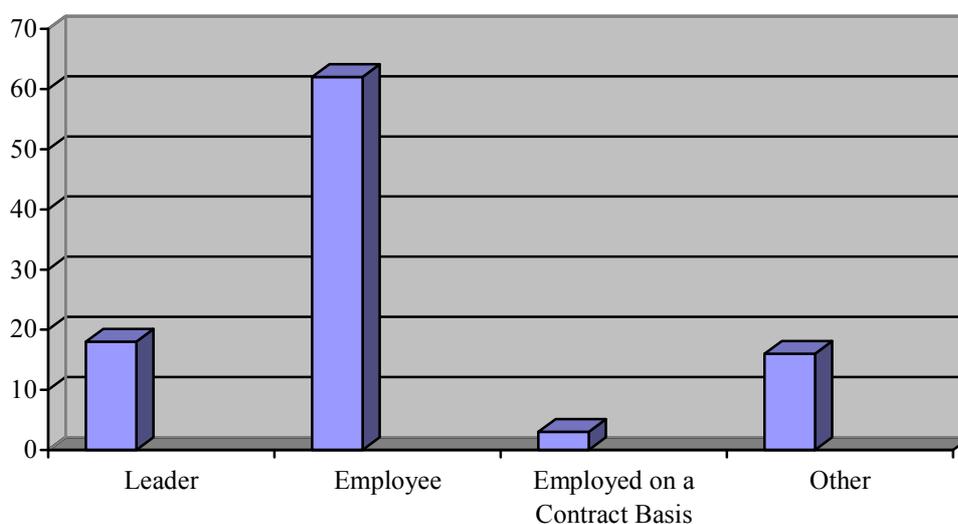
The survey results show the efficiency of innovative activities at M.Evseviev Mordovian Teacher Training Institute. One of the main indicators of openness for innovation is the staff mobility and their readiness to participate in small research groups. The main part of the questionnaire comprised three groups of questions to detect the staff attitude to innovative activities; the staff opinion of innovative activities at Mordovian State Teacher Training Institute; and the results of innovative activity. The survey showed that nearly 90% of the Institute's staff are involved in innovative projects, the majority work for one innovative subdivision (55% or 174 people), 24% (or 77 people) work for two subdivisions, 11% or 34 people work for three or more subdivisions. Only 10% of the staff are not engaged in any activities of innovative subdivisions (Pic.1).



Pic. 1. Respondents' Participation in the Activity of Innovative Subdivisions

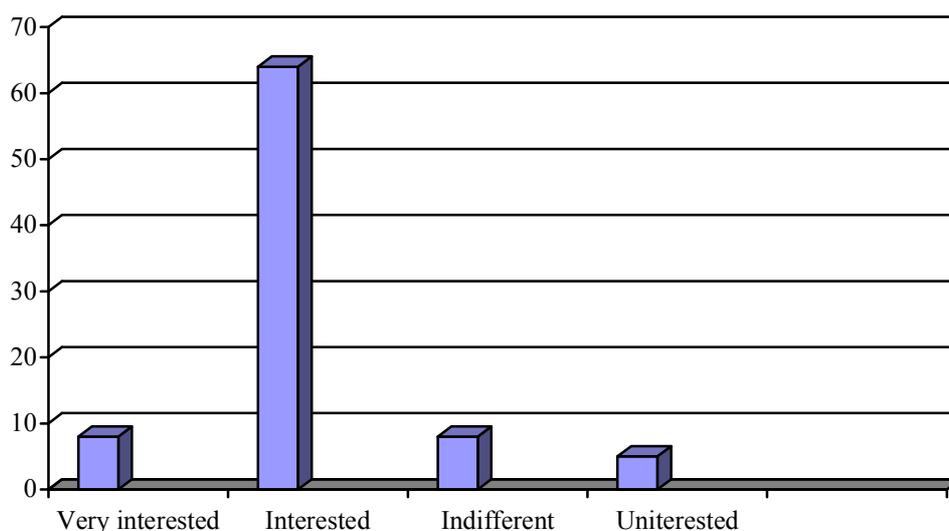
Only through the support of human resources and promotion of cultural values and social capital can Russia innovate development. A.I. Prigozhin views innovation as a unit of social organization [4 p. 28] and as a process of the goal-oriented activity

of innovators [the same source]. This factor is considered when conducting innovative activities at Mordovian State Teacher Training Institute. 18% of employees (57 people) are engaged in the activities as group leaders who determine the mobility of research groups and consistency of processes; 62% (192 people) perform actual work; 3% (9 people) work on a contract basis and 16% (50 people) participate on as needed basis (pic.2)



Pic. 2. Status in Innovative Subdivisions

Modern culture has a huge impact on economic choice and employee behavior. It can provoke the change of informal rules and habits of everyday public life. Participation in innovative projects has influenced the value system of the Institute's employees. They became more diligent about their work. With 64% (199 people) innovative activities stimulated work interest and only 8% (24 people) of respondents remained indifferent to their work, for 5% (15 people) it was uninteresting (pic.3).



Pic. 3. Respondents' Answers to the Question about their Attitude to Work for Innovative Subdivisions

Employee mobility within innovative projects presupposes sharing experience, which in its turn affects mobility and competence level. The survey showed that this aspect of innovation remains unexplored. Only 2% (6 people) are ready to share their experience with their colleagues from other Russian cities.

To ensure the success of innovative processes it is especially important that a university should be included into regional and national social and economic paradigms. The innovative policy of Mordovian State Teacher Training Institute which is tailored to the region's needs has influenced the professional consciousness of its employees. Many professors now react to society's needs and take an active part in educational and socio-economic life of Mordovia and the Volga Region. The opinion poll showed that the employees are ready to form small research groups to meet the needs of the market and are ready to provide additional educational, extra-curricular and other services: to students – 64% (198 people); to their colleagues – 6% (19 people); to the population – 9% (30 people). Most specialists are ready to provide assistance in teaching methodology (33% or 105 people) and further teacher training in the use of innovative techniques (7% or 22 people).

An important indicator of the effectiveness of innovation at the Institute is its facilities and technical infrastructure. Most respondents think that facilities and

technical infrastructure of the Institute are at the advanced level (155% or 64 people), average level – (145% or 62 people). The cornerstone of innovation is how the staff estimates the overall efficiency of their innovative activity. The staff of Mordovian State Teacher Training Institute has estimated the Institute’s activity against a five-point scale:

Table 1

Respondents’ Answers to the Question about the Effectiveness of Innovative Activities

Points	Number of People	Number of People, %
1	10	3
2	28	9
3	96	31
4	63	20
5	115	37

One of the peculiarities of the Russian mentality is that material values have the least priority. The thesis about unique Russian spirituality (as opposed to the one about individualistic Western culture) is probably not groundless. Innovative processes could not have changed archetypes or deep subconscious beliefs of the Russian society (B.S. Gershunskiy). Despite any social change community spirit, mutual help, responsiveness and moral values remain dominating characteristic features, and this is shown in the monitoring results. It has been discovered that participation in the work of innovative organizations has influenced employees’ income. 32% (98 people) have noted some growth. Most employees highly appreciate the acquisition of new theoretical knowledge and practical skills while participating in innovative activities. They have acquired: new theoretical knowledge – 19% (60 people); new practical knowledge – 18% (57 people); practical skills of using new equipment – 3% (11 people); opportunity to have more scientific publications – 9% (28 people); opportunity to participate in various kinds of educational research – 11%

(35 people); to try new kinds of activity – 14% (32 people); to master new IT technologies – 10% (32 people) and upgrade their skills – 9% (19 people).

Monitoring has detected shortcomings of innovative activity at the university. Despite all change an average modern Russian person is not capable of independent entrepreneurial moves. Most respondents lack time to put into life their ideas and projects (62% or 190 people) and 9% (27 people) need support on the side of management, 4% (12 people) are unsure about success. This social factor very often thwarts economic development. This suggests the problem is in optimization of social management of innovations in professional education. Change in workload of professors and teaching them effective time management techniques could foster further introduction of innovative methods in university education.

The respondents listed the following innovative aspects, which are not given enough attention:

- modernization of educational process (17% or 53 people);
- modernization of scientific research (9% or 27 people);
- human resource development (25% or 78 people);
- improvement of facilities and material resources (9% or 28 people);
- modernization of university structure and management (7% or 21 people).

The following conclusions can be derived from the study of innovative activities at Mordovian State Teacher Training Institute: the institute is innovative; it has innovative structure, it has adopted a new management system and has mobile work groups ready to perform particular tasks. There has been considerable positive change towards innovation in the staff mentality. The staff are ready for further modernization of the college and their ability to work in an innovative educational environment would mostly depend on efficient and competent management.

At the beginning of the 21st century education is ‘the force, which can more than any other force influence the future’ [5, p. 4]. Nowadays it acts as a locomotive that is pulling science and economy. There is an important correlation between the

development of education and science and market economy. Innovation in education becomes a paradigm vital for socio-economic and spiritual change of the society and the means to overcome lagging.

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