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INTRODUCTION OF THE PROJECT METHOD IN PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF YOUTH COORDINATORS

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Theoretical grounds of the project method implementation in professional training of youth coordinators are considered in the Article. Also the practice of project activities of an academic department that conducts the professional training of future youth coordinators is described.

Key words: project activities, project, project method, training technology.

ВНЕДРЕНИЕ МЕТОДА ПРОЕКТОВ В ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНУЮ ПОДГОТОВКУ СПЕЦИАЛИСТОВ ПО РАБОТЕ С МОЛОДЕЖЬЮ

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В статье рассматриваются теоретические основы применения метода проектов в профессиональной подготовке специалистов по работе с молодежью. Также описывается практика проектной деятельности кафедры, осуществляющей подготовку специалистов по работе с молодежью.

Ключевые слова: проектная деятельность, проект, метод проектов, технологии обучения.

Realization of the state youth policy demands of personnel, engaged in the work with young people, deep insight into the goals and tasks of such work, into priorities in the youth environment, it takes skills for realization of the specified

projects, development and introduction of modern technologies, use of variative approaches and finding optimal, sometimes out-of-the-box solutions. In principle, further development of the younger generation largely depends on the professional readiness of the personnel. Under current conditions the training, retraining and personnel development for the sphere of the youth policy is becoming an efficient tool of the youth policy implementation on the whole. “Solution of practical tasks of improvement of various living environments of the Russian is directly dependent on the character of professional activities organization, motivation and training of personnel” – Krivosheev A. M. notes in his dissertation research Professional Activity and its Social Determinants [6, p.33]. Also the author specifies that “...the professional activities and the professional training refer to a number of important problems of a practice of life of any modern state” [6, p.70].

In accordance with the state educational standard for the higher professional education on professional nomenclature number 040104 Organization of Work with the Youth (“ORM”) put in force by Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, December 27, 2005, the spheres of youth coordinator professional activities are the following:

- organization of work with young people in youth communities at places of residence, study, work, employment, temporary stay of the youth;
- administration of cooperation and collaboration with unions and organizations being of interest for young people;
- organization of support for young people having difficulties in the process of integration into society;
- organization of information provision for youth and organization of scientific researches of the issues related to the youth policy, cooperation with the youth Mass Media;
- render assistance in search of job vacancies, provision of employment, entrepreneurship among the young people;

- assistance in development of international youth cooperation;
- participation in citizenship-and-patriotic education of the youth;
- participation in activities of sports and health youth organizations;
- organization of management and support of the youth projects and programmes;
- support of relevant and popular initiatives among young people [1].

As Korzhueva E.V. mentions in her dissertation *Formation of Professional Culture of a Future Youth Coordinator in the Process of Study in HEI (Higher Educational Institutions)*: “An expert in the sphere of the state youth policy is to be a professional in the sphere of social technologies, having skills of performing project activities in the sphere of the youth policy and work with the youth. He is to be able to manage informational-and-communicational processes in the youth environment, know and speak the same language with the young people, involve young people in programmes and projects being of public and national standing” [10].

One of the in-demand competences of a youth coordinator required by the employers working in this sphere is the project competence. The project competence is an integrative characteristic of a subject, which consists in ability and readiness of a person for independent theoretical and practical activities on development and implementation of projects in different spheres of social life. The project competence of a youth coordinator for introduction of the project activities should include both skills in development and realization of the projects themselves, as well as skills in consulting in the sphere of a youth initiative project planning.

The notion “project” for the basis for the project activities; it means “a time-limited activity (event), aimed at creation of unique products and services or obtaining completely new results” [9, p.8]. The project activities by their category can be referred as innovative creative type of activities, as they imply reality transformation and are built on the basis of an appropriate technology that can be unified, mastered and improved [4].

As a result of the research it was found out that the main directions of the youth coordinator professional activities in the sphere of the project planning are the following:

- support of the youth initiative projects;
- provision of guidance in point of social projects development among the young people;
- creation and introduction of independent projects in the youth sphere or participation in them in the capacity of an expert;
- creation and administration of special-purpose platforms for education of initiative young people, training in skills necessary for successful planning and promotion of projects (within the frameworks of social partnership)

Thuswise, these requirements are aimed to charging youth coordinators with new tasks in the sphere of professional training, in particular, with the task of special training techniques implementation. While studying different training technologies we have marked out several definitions different from each other. The majority of the authors, whose works and researches we have studied over the course of our research, consider the “training technology” as a system of actions, for example: “Training technology is a complex integrative system that includes an ordered set of actions and operations, providing a pedagogic goal determination, content-related and procedural aspects, aimed at acquisition of the knowledge, professional skills and formation of personal qualities of a trainee, specified by training goals” [2].

In the course of the youth coordinators training at Russian State Social University at the Academic Department of Family, Gender Policy and Youth Studies, engaged in training future youth coordinators (“administering academic department”) a special emphasis is made on the techniques of project training. At that: “Project training (group projects). The goal of such training is to provide conditions under which the students can: independently and willingly acquire missing knowledge using different sources: learn how to use the acquired knowledge in order to solve

cognitive and practical tasks; acquire communication skills, working in different groups; develop research skills; develop a systems thinking” [7, p.317].

The project training of the students is based on the project method, applied on all levels of professional education. The project method is not a new one in the international pedagogics. It came into being away back in the 1920s in USA. It was also related to the problem method, and associated with the ideas of humanistic approaches in philosophy and education, developed by an American philosopher and teacher J. Dewey, and also by his follower Kilpatrick W.C.. J. Dewey proposed to build a training system upon the active basis through goal-oriented activities of students in coherence with their own interests in this knowledge [5].

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The analysis of the problem of project activities allows us to define the project planning as one of its types and identify its specificity: this activity is associated with execution of the reproduction and creative tasks meant to be performed upon the given patterns and also including the element of search [4].

In the course of the youth coordinator training one of the important tasks is the creation of most favorable conditions for realization of intellectual and moral potential of a future coordinator. Introduction of a specific mechanism, providing plenary powers for student groups in management of the administering academic departments activities together with high responsibility for results of their work allows to solve this task more effectively. Mastering logic and technique of project activities can become the means of developing students’ social activity, allowing them to fulfill analytical, organizational and administrative functions more

effectively, provide them with a competitive ability in the labor market. The project competence in this context means “the ability of a future coordinator to function effectively in the professional community in the capacity of a subject of the professional activity, to fulfill tasks, assigned to him in the conditions of the system of social specialization of labor” [3].

The project activities of the students (future youth coordinators), therefore, serve as means of solving three main tasks: acquisition of the professional project competences, improvement of the student’s abilities for social activity and self-organization in the conditions of the academic department for fulfillment of its educational function. Mitrofanova I. A. gives the following definition: “A project activity of students is a continuous dynamic process of active involvement, conditioned by the integrated interconnections between its main stages and structural elements, providing the interpersonal motivation basing on the objectives, content of the concept design, its introduction and achievement of results in the form of creation of new creative projects” [4].

Based on these theoretical approaches to the content of the project method in the professional training (understood as the technology of formation of the project competence of future youth coordinators), the project activities under guidance of the administering academic department were organized. Starting from 2010 seven projects, in the development and realization of which the students of the academic department participated, have been launched. Among the projects were the following: Basic Course of a camp counselor, designed for preparing the second-year students for psychological and pedagogical practical training; it implies conduction of systematic lessons by the senior students, allowing, thuswise, to develop the necessary competences; the project Laboratory of Political Success bands together socially-active students, willing to run for municipal elections; the project Event-ORM that includes all the events held by the Academic Department and related to both scientific and socio-cultural spheres etc.

In January 2013 a large-scale project ORM is Yours! was launched, having become the platform for formation of the skills of future youth coordinators also on the basis of the administering Academic Department. One of the main directions of the aforementioned project is the organization of work of the students of the academic department with potential applicants by means of holding specifically arranged meetings in secondary educational institutions of Moscow. The goals of the project are promotion of the ORM speciality among potential applicants (e.g. pupils of the schools of Moscow) through presentation, delivery of trainings and master-classes by active students of the academic department; and another goal is the formation of the students' ability to successfully participate in preparation of empirical studies on the youth problems, improvement of their project activity and teamwork skills, as well as the ability to work with small youth groups. This project includes training of the students participating in the initiative group of the project and taking part in the two-days training. The students can master basics of the communicative technologies, skills of planning the project activities, of working with small groups and teamwork, develop feedback acquisition skills.

Thus, the activities on creation and realization of the projects allow the students to actualize their potential both in individual and in group work, try themselves in applying their knowledge in practice, be socially productive and publicly demonstrate the achieved result. "This is an activity, directed to a solution of an interesting problem, and its nature is not purely practically-oriented, it has an important practical importance. And this activity can also be of interest and importance for the discoverers themselves. When assessing result the achieved by the students in result of their project or research activities, the teacher shouldn't forget that the most significant recognition for a student is public recognition of consistency, and that results of any level are worth positive assessment" [8]. This practice of the the project method use in the activities of the administering academic department can

be used in the activities of other academic departments of social and humanitarian profile as well.

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