

The Impact of New Educational Standards on Improving the Quality of Professional Student Training

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Abstract: The article addresses the problem of the quality of professional training of future bachelor of advertising and public relations, which is based on isolation from practical reality. Despite the fact that universities have switched to the third-generation federal educational standards, the opinion of industry employers remains the same – improving the quality of students' training. Therefore, it is necessary to provide a practice-oriented orientation of student learning. The article presents a study of the level of professional competence of future bachelor of advertising and public relations. In total, the study involved 12 employers, 6 teachers, 50 students of the department of advertising and public relations. Questionnaires and questionnaires were developed for the first time for the experimental work of the authors. The findings of the results indicate low self-esteem of students and poor practice-oriented training. It is suggested that the new educational standards will allow harmonizing professional competencies taking into account the views of employers and to choose such methodological approaches to teaching students that will provide practice-oriented orientation.

1. Introduction

The education system of the Russian Federation is the most important institution that determines the requirements for the educational process in Russian society. An example is one of the most relevant areas of training today – 42.03.01 “Advertising and public relations.” Its emergence in 1991 was due to a social order for the education system for the training of specialists whose functional responsibilities were the establishment and maintenance of effective relations of the organization with the external environment, the promotion of a favorable image of the enterprise, the formation of demand and the promotion of sales of goods. The pedagogical practice has shown a lack of orientation towards the definition of theoretical and methodological approaches in the process of training and education of future bachelors of advertising and public relations.

The study of existing research in the theory and practice of domestic and foreign pedagogy [6, 9, 12, 13] showed an insufficient description of theoretical and methodological approaches to professional training. According to the scientists of the Russian Higher School of Advertising and Public Relations [6], the set scientific tasks to improve the professional training of future graduates must be addressed comprehensively. It is necessary to analyze the experience of scientific and methodological approaches used in regional universities that develop the existing scientific, methodological, and methodological ideas of the Petersburg school of PR, taking into account regional specifics. In her scientific works, E. A. Osipova [9] presented an analysis of modern scientific approaches, paying particular attention to the analysis of transformations of public communications in the context of globalization.

In the context of modern realities, the requirements for the preparation of future bachelors of advertising and public relations are already presented in three federal state educational standards (in 2017, the federal state educational standard 3++ was adopted). However, these federal state educational standards do not fully suit employers by their isolation from practical activities. The opinion of industry practitioners [5, 6, 7] points to the appeal of the professional community, which proposes to take into account in the federal state educational standard for fourth-generation higher education a list of necessary professional competencies that are not included in the existing federal state educational standards for higher education in training direction 42.03.01 “Advertising and Public Relations.” These competencies should be paid attention to in the process of studying at a university to increase the effectiveness of students' research and independent work.

In the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), advertising and public relations as a specialty have appeared relatively recently. In 1998 on the basis of the scientific and educational laboratory of advertising and public relations of the philological faculty (M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University), the first set for the specialty “Philological Support of Advertising Activities” was opened. In 2001, the laboratory was transformed into the Department of Advertising and Public Relations, providing training in the direction 42.03.01 Advertising and Public Relations in two profiles (in the system of state and municipal administration and the commercial sphere).

The problem of theoretical understanding of vocational training of students is described in scientific works [1, 2, 10, 13]. At the same time, the study of theoretical and methodological approaches that contribute to increasing the level of professional competencies of future bachelors of advertising and public relations has not formed the subject of particular scientific research. And this despite the fact that the opinion of practitioners indicates a not entirely satisfactory state of vocational training of graduates. Theoretical analysis and the experience of pedagogical practice revealed a contradiction between the need to choose methodological approaches in the context of implementing changing federal state educational standards and the lack of development of theoretical foundations that ensure the effectiveness of the educational process in the direction 42.03.01 “Advertising and Public Relations.”

2. Theory and Methodological Framework

The state of the problem under study and the specifics of implementing changing federal state educational standards of higher education in advertising and public relations remain poorly understood. To determine practical theoretical and methodological approaches [7, 10, 11, 13] for the training of future graduates who would become universal (in context of changing federal state educational standards), it is necessary to move from non-program activities to purposeful systematic organization of the educational process at the Department of Advertising and Public Relations of the Philological Faculty at the M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University.

Based on the scientific problem identified by the authors, the aim of the study is to determine the main theoretical and methodological approaches to increase the level of professional training of students. A competency-based approach to teaching students contributes to the formation of professional competencies, taking into account the professional standard. The integrative approach is based on direct interaction with the learning environment. According to E.E. Makarova, the integrative approach is based on “the integration of education, which is presented as a process of rapprochement and integration of various components of the content of education, educational areas and institutions, as well as subjects of the educational process” [8]. This approach allows one to combine educational and professional experiences, scientific thinking, and social interaction in the process of activity [4].

M. E. Serebrovskaya believes [10] that integration in education is an interdisciplinary synthesis of industry knowledge in the discipline. In the process of this training, the student is an active figure, s/he is included in the research work in which it is necessary to develop knowledge, personal skills, and professional skills. The problem-information approach ensures the development of students by solving problem problems using computer technology. It should be noted that the problem of the transition to learning environments as an urgent need for education informatization was set by scientists in the late 70s. However, only recently, this task has become the subject of active discussion [9, 12, 13].

Theoretical analysis suggests that the selection and implementation of theoretical and methodological approaches will be effective based on the phased implementation of the experimental work carried out from 2016 to 2019. More than that, the selection and implementation of theoretical and methodological approaches will be successful if the following is done at the heart of the work: (1) applying competency-based, integrative and problem-informational approaches; (2) ensuring continuity of the formation of students' professional competencies in the educational environment of the federal university from 1 to 4 courses; (3) the phased development of professional competencies, taking into account the impact of the information environment on students, identifying university capabilities and diagnosing the formation of professional skills of students; (4) activation of students through various forms of work in the educational information environment of the university; (5) ensuring dialogism, which is manifested in the constant communication of students in the educational environment with each other, with teachers, in the internal dialogue.

3. Results

In the course of the pilot work, we consider it appropriate to divide all educational activities into the following levels: regional, federal, and international. At these levels, the next classroom and extracurricular activities will be implemented: research and independent work of students; educational, industrial, and undergraduate practice, contributing to the achievement of the research objective.

Our pilot work was carried out in three stages: preparatory (2016-2017), main (2017-2018), final (2018-2019). The purpose of the experimental work was the testing of integrative, competency-based, problem-informational approaches in the educational space of the Department of Advertising and Public Relations of the Philological Faculty of the M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University from 2016-2019. A distinctive feature of the experimental work was the active participation of the authors in the study.

The preparatory stage implied the creation of a special educational environment in which the teachers of the department studied the federal state educational standard of higher education, determined the necessary theoretical and methodological approaches for the professional training of students, developed scientific support for the classroom and extracurricular work of students, and created information and technological resources. The method of expert evaluation of employers in the industry contained the question of choosing the main professional competencies. The following four professional competencies became the most sought-after employers: the ability to implement projects and the possession of methods for their implementation; the ability to participate in the creation of an adequate communication infrastructure of the organization, ensuring internal and external communication; the ability to participate in the planning, preparation, and conduct of communication campaigns and events; the ability to organize preparation for the release, production and distribution of promotional products, including text and graphic, working and presentation materials, in the framework of traditional and modern means of advertising. A survey of teachers of the department of advertising and public relations showed the coincidence of their opinions on priority professional competencies.

A survey of students of 2-3 courses of the Department of Advertising and Public Relations in the amount of 50 people showed the following results: 8% of students have a high assessment of their capabilities in the implementation of professional competencies, an average of 52%, a low of 40%. Teachers should do introduce new forms and methods of training into the training process for future graduates, strengthen interdisciplinary communications, develop inter-university network interaction programs, improve qualifications in the context of changing federal state educational standards, improve working curricula, working programs, create workbooks in the main disciplines, intensify students' research work, and involve students in participation in grant competitions.

The main stage consisted of testing and verifying the integrative, competency-based, problem-informational approaches in the experimental work. The educational potential of work syllabuses, work programs of disciplines, work programs of practice for improving the professional training of students was studied. In the format of round tables with industry employers, the necessary professional competencies were discussed; passports of professional competencies were compiled; the most effective forms of classroom and extracurricular activities were identified; a network form of interaction with the Baltic Federal University named after Immanuel Kant and the Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M. V. Lomonosov was developed; the research work of teachers and students was optimized; monitoring of the effectiveness of experimental work was carried out.

The experimental work contributed to the activation of the research work of students. The creation of a scientific circle at the department "Agency of Students in Public Relations" testifies to this. Every year, its members won at scientific and practical conferences, in All-Russian Olympiads and professional competitions (2016-2019). Agreed with employers, the main educational programs have gained a research and practice-oriented orientation, which has contributed to solving specific production problems, such as, for example, blogging in the modern media space, convergence of PR and SMM, development of activities of national enterprises, creation of corporate identity, implementation of electronic projects and SMM promotion, scientific support of educational and tourist projects, etc.

The third, final, stage of the experiment allows us to conclude that it is advisable to choose the competency-based, integrative, and problem-informational approach in the process of training bachelors in the field of

“Advertising and Public Relations.” And this stage proves their effectiveness in the formation and development of students of professionally essential competencies. At this stage, the same research methods were applied. They made it possible to note an increase in the level of formation of professional skills among students in the direction of training 42.03.01 Advertising and public relations. Fifty students participated in the survey. The study showed fairly high self-esteem of students’ professional knowledge and skills (87%), a high degree (83%) of students’ professional training according to employers.

The data obtained indicate that during the study, teachers chose the optimal and sufficient theoretical and methodological approaches in order to increase the level of professional training, which were used in the preparation and scientific support at the M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University.

4. Discussion

The vocational training of future bachelors in advertising and public relations at the Department of Advertising and Public Relations of the Philological Faculty of the M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University, relying on the competency-based, integrative, and problem-information approaches, has been tested for five years. The testing was carried out in the following main directions of the implementation of theoretical and methodological approaches to the professional training of future bachelors of advertising and public relations: informing on the planning and conduct of scientific research in the field of advertising and public relations in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia); presentation and discussion of the main results of scientific research in the framework of the northeastern school (#thePRtime); holding scientific conferences and scientific competitions; preparation of scientific publications, including monographs on pedagogy and collective monographs on advertising and public relations; formation of a database, including collections of scientific and practical projects on regional communications and pedagogical practice in the system of higher professional education of the M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University. A total of 6 teachers, 12 employers, and 50 students took part in the experimental work.

5. Conclusion

As a result of the study, it was found that in the opinion of the professional community and industry employers, changing federal state educational standards of higher education are divorced from practical reality. The most effective theoretical and methodological approaches in the educational process of the Department of Advertising and Public Relations of the Philological Faculty of the M. K. Ammosov North-Eastern Federal University are identified by the authors (namely, competency-based, integrative, and problem-informational). This is explained by the need to create a special pedagogical system for training future bachelors of advertising and public relations in the context of changing federal state educational standards and is explained by the specifics of the regional policy of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

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