

# Life plans of graduates of technical and vocational education institution

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**Abstract.** The article analyzes the life plans of graduates of technical and vocational education institutions. The sociological study was conducted in 5 cities of the Republic of Tatarstan, which is a part of the Russian Federation. At present there is a significant contradiction in the labor market. On the one hand, Russia's national economy needs workers. On the other hand, Russian young people are very skeptical about working professions, although there is much demand for workers. The study shows that graduates are not professionally oriented, i.e. they are not likely to work in their professions after graduating from colleges. The findings of the study show that professional self-determination of graduates of technical and vocational education institutions depends on the type of parental environment. The authors conclude that the key thing that determines the nature of the parents' influence on the plans of graduates is the educational background of the parents.

## 1 Introduction

The issue of professional self-determination has always been among the national interests. The Law of Education in the Russian Federation has introduced some innovations that affect the structure and content of professional plans of young people.

Russia's joining the Bologna Process, establishing the new universities, teaching the conjuncture professions in educational institutions, the monetization and modernization of education are not fully accepted by the population: there are open letters of public associations to the Education Committee of the State Duma of the Russian Federation in support of reforms as well as protest actions of the population in a number of regions and development of some alternative laws of higher education. Although unemployment among graduates is increasing, the number of fee-paying students is increasing too.

Market transformations developing the new technologies have resulted in the structural change of the national economy sectors of the Republic of Tatarstan. These factors have

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affected the labor demands of enterprises. The main mechanism regulating the quantity of specialists and quality of their training in a market economy is the labor market. But under the conditions of an imperfect market, there are contradictions in the field of professional training of labor resources for the national economy, both in the quantitative and qualitative aspects:

1. The lack of joint regulating the quantity of specialists according to the demands of the national

economy. Under the conditions of paid education professional educational institutions take into account the needs of the population when establishing new specialties. In the 60-s of the XX century it was proved that professions wanted by the population are inversely proportional to the demands of the national economy. As a result, there are a lot of young unemployed professionals in the labor market. More than half of college graduates have to take any jobs, because they cannot find the positions satisfying the specifics and level of their professional training.

2. The imperfect mechanism for meeting employers' needs for the content of professional training of specialists. Most college graduates do not work or do not plan to work at all, entering higher education institutions. Neither the young professionals' motivations for employing, nor their motivations for entering higher education institutions are studied. This fact makes it difficult to take decisions in the sphere of regulating the quantity of specialists trained in technical and vocational colleges.

Professional self-determination is an extremely responsible, long and difficult stage in a person's life. The choice of the future profession does not take place at a certain moment, after leaving school or under the influence of an impression. Often people, who spare no effort, time and opportunities to get their education, then work in profession for many years, finally find themselves in a completely different professional field. Professional self-determination involves the choice of a career, the sphere of putting forth effort and realizing personal potential.

At present both a young person of 14-16 years old and family members are responsible for choosing the future profession. The family does not only invest in their children's education, but also often consults and advises in matters of choosing a profession, searching and taking a job.

Technical and vocational education institutions are a key source of working force. What are the life plans of their graduates? What are their motivations for entering colleges? Do they plan to work after graduating from colleges?

## **2 Materials and methods**

In 2018-2019 we conducted a comprehensive survey into the college graduates' life plans across the Republic to study the issues mentioned in the introduction. The survey was carried out at the institutions of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in the towns of Naberezhnye Chelny, Nizhnokamsk, Yelabuga, Zainsk, and Sarmanovo. A total of 775 graduate students and 68 college teachers were interviewed.

The aim of the study is to forecast of the nearest life plans of college graduates in 2018-2019.

The objectives of the study are:

1. To determine the graduates' motivation for choosing a profession they plan to receive in educational institutions.
2. To determine their motivation for entering this or that college.
3. To determine the proportion of graduates who plan to work after graduating from colleges (in the context of specialty, industry, and locality).

4. To determine the proportion of graduates who plan to continue their education after graduating from colleges (in the context of specialties, the level of further education, and the type of training).

5. To determine the motivation for getting higher education.

6. To determine the specialties that those who plan to enter universities are guided by.

7. To determine the attitude to the institution of further education.

8. To assess the intentions of graduates to work in the professions they are trained.

The range of the objectives and the complex nature of the study involve implementing a number of main stages:

1. Assessment of how college staff is aware of their graduates' professional and educational plans. The desk study of the graduates of the 2018-2019 academic year was conducted to gather and analyze the information.

2. Survey of graduates into their orientation to the profession, education, and employment. The employed method is a questionnaire. To gather the necessary information, a survey of college graduates of the 2018-2019 academic year as well as first-year students, and working young professionals was conducted.

The following methods are employed in the study:

- Questionnaire survey of college students. The authors have developed an original questionnaire consisting of 67 questions aimed at studying the motivation for entering colleges and the students' life plans after graduating from colleges.

- Expert survey of college teachers based on the Expert List developed by the authors.

- Analysis of the annual reports on the graduates' employment over the past 10 years.

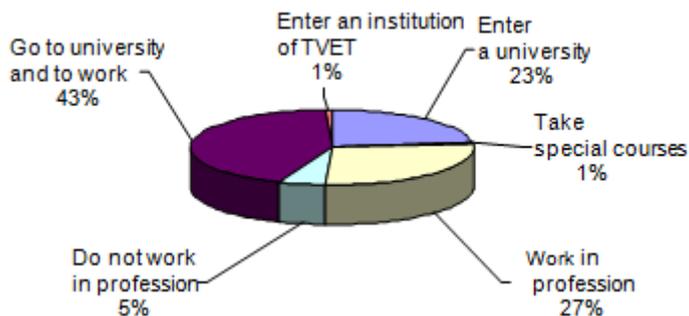
### **3 Results**

The statistical data show that students of technical and vocational education institutions are young people whose parents mostly do not have higher education [1, 2, 3]. As a rule, family members work as employees, workers, and service personnel in different organizations. The average income in these families, as a rule, does not exceed the living wage.

Probably, a combination of such factors as the social status of parents, the level of their education, their financial well-being influence the young people when implementing their professional and life plans. 43% among those who plan to go to work after graduating from colleges just wish to be financially independent.

The very fact of studying at a technical school or a college says that there is some certainty in professional planning. But it says about the orientation to professional activity rather than about the orientation to the definite profession. The study shows that only about 20 % of respondents believe that they have finally made their professional choice.

Every third graduate just orientates to some professional activity. The proportion of graduates who believe that their choice will depend on some circumstances is quite high (29%). Half of them respond that their parents' opinions will play a decisive role in choosing professions. Most likely, their plans depend on whether their parents will be able to pay for further education. This is confirmed by the fact that every third person from this category chooses this or that institution of technical and vocational education and training because their parents want it so.



**Fig. 1.** Plans of the graduates of institutions of TVET for the next year.

Figure 1 shows that most graduates have not finally orientated by the time they graduate from colleges. However, more than 70% of them plan to get a job. This ratio suggests that due to the difficult financial situation, young people have to work: the place of work and the profession do not matter as the main thing is to get wages. By the time of graduating from colleges about 10% of graduates work somewhere. However, it is important to note that only one of five graduates plans to work in profession. More than 40% of graduates plan to combine their work with studies at universities. It is also important to note that more than 80% of those who plan to enter universities will change their positions and work in new professions.

70% of graduates do not think about the future place of work. This situation needs a more detailed analysis. The majority of graduates (70%) have a good attitude to specialties that they are trained in educational institutions. About 20% enter colleges to get diplomas and plan to work in some other professions. However, only one of three graduates strives to work in their profession. The rest (40%) continue their education in the chosen specialties. The specialty is primarily chosen for reasons of being interested in it and building a career. Being able to find a job with ease and communicating with interesting people are in the second place. The opportunity to enter some educational institutions without taking any exam is in the third place. There are not any abilities to do some work and desire to be useful in society among the three significant motivations for choosing professions. Thus, it is important for the respondents to enter this or that educational institution rather than to choose the right profession. Professional self-determination adapts to the situation in the market of educational services and it is the condition for enrolling. This tendency of leveling professional self-determination is also observed among high school students. As a result, both the content of technical and vocational education and training in comparison with its status (type, prestige, etc.) and the future place of work is of minor importance.

It is obvious that it is necessary to have at least the idea of the future profession to make a choice of the profession. In the course of our study, the respondents were asked the question, "How much information do you have about the professions you are interested in?" The results of the study show that 42,6% of respondents have insufficient information about the professions they are interested in and they are eager to learn the professions. 32,7% of respondents are sufficiently informed and 23,8% of them have a general idea of the professions they are interested in.

The following data help understand which sources are used by graduates of technical and vocational education institutions to obtain the information about professions. Almost a third of respondents receive the information about professions of interest from the media, and 11% of respondents are guided by public opinion. The most influential sources are parents and relatives. 19% of respondents receive the information having personal contacts

with professionals. It can be assumed that they have a more real idea of the profession, and consequently make a more conscious choice. We can also argue that about 10% of respondents who purposely study special literature make a conscious choice. It is alarming that staffs of technical and vocational education institutions are not considered to be reliable consultants in professional self-determination. The information received from relatives may not be realistic. Parents cannot know everything about all professions. Their practical experience is also limited by their professions.

Every second graduate of TVET institutions after receiving a diploma seeks to continue their studies at university. Firstly, according to young people, this will give them an opportunity to receive training of a higher quality and have a higher level of education. Secondly, they may have the opportunity of promoting to a higher social group due to the status and prestige of the university. Building a successful career is in the third place. Thus, they choose universities where they can be trained in the specialties that are in demand and help make promotion in the future. Half of the graduates make their decisions to enter the university during their studies at the TVET institutions.

The key motivation of the graduates of the TVET institutions for entering the university is the desire to have an interesting profession, which allows them to have material well-being in the future. The status of the profession and the ability to communicate with interesting people are in the second and the third places. The purposes of about 20% of respondents are to receive a higher education.

The findings of the study show that the reasons why the graduates of the TVET institutions go to work relate to the financial situation in the graduates' families. This fact proves that in some situations young people have to hunt for jobs and it is confirmed by the data of other studies in this area [4-9]. This does not encourage them to develop their professional skills. Graduates look for any jobs rather than grow as professionals. Most of them (60% of young professionals) do not work in their professions. Thus, the reasons for changing professions relate to the unsatisfactory employment situation (the demand for specialists in the labor market). Only about 60% of employed young professionals are really satisfied because they like their profession and are satisfied with their salaries.

## **4 Discussion**

The main findings of the study were reported and discussed at the scientific and practical conferences of international, all-Russian, and regional levels. The methodological provisions of the study are used in the educational courses when giving lectures on "Sociology", "New and Modern History of Russia", "World Economy".

## **5 Conclusion**

Thus, the findings of the study show that professional self-determination of the TVET institutions graduates depends on the type of parental environment. The key thing that determines the nature of the parents' influence on the plans of graduates is the level of education of father and mother. Parents' educational background is of great importance as they regard university as a step to take a higher social position. Educated parents are more likely to make their children go to university. The higher the level of parents' education, the more important for their children the quality of university education is. The lower the level of parents' education, the more often university is considered to be just a formality in today's life. It is more important for their children to receive full-time education and have the prospects of further employment rather than to have a high-quality education and develop their professional skills. Moreover, their children often choose this or that specialty

to go to university rather than to work or because it is sometimes chosen by their friends (just keep the friends' company).

Despite the fact that the family tradition is not considered by young people to be significant when making life plans, the professional and social status of their parents have an influence on their decisions. Thus, the higher the social position of a parent, the more often the education of their children is regarded as a standard of safe and successful future, the more important for them the university's status is. The lower the social position of parents, the more important it becomes for their children to go to university, so that there is something to do in the next 5 years. In addition, taking a highly-paid job after graduating educational institutions is also of great importance for their children.

The material well-being of the family is the third factor that, according to the surveys, affects the plans of school leavers regarding the choice of the level of education and profession. The higher the level of material well-being, the more important a successful employment is. The lower the level of material well-being, the more often university education is considered to be an opportunity to occupy oneself with something for the next few years.

## 6 Recommendations

The issue of life choice of college graduates is rather urgent, so it is necessary to continue a sociological and pedagogical study in this area. An important step towards the study of this problem will be a major scientific and practical conference, which takes place in 2021 in the Naberezhnye Chelny State Pedagogical University.

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