

## **PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT OF STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION**

Anastasia O. Luchinina<sup>1</sup> and Gulnaz R. Yunusova<sup>2</sup>

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The relevance of the study is due to the need of students; psycho-pedagogical support on the stage of preprofile training, the results of which should allow students to make preliminary determination concerning their education and future career. The leading research approach to the problems of basic schoolleavers; vocational choice training is a systematic approach. The article describes a developed and implemented complex programme of students; psychological and pedagogical support in the context of preprofile training, and provides empirical data on the results of testing the programme. The article reveals the content of preprofile training courses programmes. In this regard, the materials of the article can be useful to educators engaged in students; preprofile training.

**Keywords:** self-determination, preprofile training, psycho-pedagogical support

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **The Actuality of the Problem**

The actuality of students' professional self-determination problem is reflected in the system of basic education with regard to the idea of the profile on the senior level of training. A basic school leaver appears in a situation of responsible choices regarding the main directions of further activity. This choice is the basis of determining him for his future educational path, which will be implemented either in the organizations of secondary vocational education or upper secondary general education in the framework of specialized courses. Preprofile training which is implemented from class 7 to 9 is to help a student to make such a choice. The result of preprofile training should be a student's preliminary determination about his further education and future career. Moreover, the period of "designing the future" occurs at around the age of 14 years, and the only subject where such thoughts can move from the category of "dreams" to the category of goal-setting is education. Therefore, it is important to withdraw a student through the educational situation for the accommodation to social situations.

#### **Explore Importance of the Problem**

In order to help teenagers define their future professional activities on the foundation of personal characteristics knowledge, on the basis of Interschool Educational Complex No. 3 in Kirov (hereinafter IEC No. 3) a complex programme of

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<sup>1</sup> Vyatka State University of Humanities, Kirov, Russia, *E-mail: a8210@rambler.ru*

<sup>2</sup> Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, Kazan, Russia.

psychological and pedagogical support of self-determination in the conditions of preprofile training was developed and tested. IEC No. 3 implements the educational area "Technology", which is currently the only practice-oriented subject, providing training young people for work. For students, involved in the complex, the leading activity is educational-professional with a focus on productive labour, on the choice of profession. It is during the period of study in the complex that students' professional interests and inclinations are clearly manifested; the contradictions between the desire to master this or that activity and the individual's capacity and also the opportunities available in the complex are acutely perceived and experienced. At that, it is not enough for students to participate in some form of productive labour, it becomes important for them to consider the activities in which they are engaged, through the prism of their life plans. It is therefore necessary to combine the pre-vocational training with psycho-pedagogical support of students, designing their educational trajectory.

### **The Programme of Psychological and Pedagogical Support**

Under the programme of psycho-pedagogical support we understand the pedagogical, psychological and informational support of basic school students to facilitate their determination. The purpose of this programme is to establish the students' readiness to make a profile and professional choice that, on the one hand, would correspond to their personal characteristics, state of health, and, on the other hand, the requirements of the labour market and job opportunities. The developed programme is implemented through project and research activities, as well as elective courses. Psycho-pedagogical support in conditions as close as possible to the profession makes the process of students' self-determination consistent, rational and reasonable.

### **Status of a Problem**

Issues of personal and professional self-determination are considered in the works of such Russian scientists as O. B. Dautova (2006), E. A. Klimov (2004), A. M. Kukharchuk (2006), L. M. Mitina (2002). In contemporary Russian psychological-pedagogical practice of schoolchildren's professional orientation we apply gaming technologies by N. S. Brazhnikova (2005), methodical development of professional orientation guidance by S. N. Chistyakova (2005), modified psychodiagnostic tools of selection to specialized classes by G. V. Rezapkina(2004). In D. I. Berkutova's (2006) and A. V. Mordovskaya's (2000) works the theory and practice of vocational guidance are reflected.

The analysis of these and many other authors' works pointed to the need in the development of the author's programme of psycho-pedagogical support of students' self-determination with regard to the requirements of the modern labour market, the content of new educational standards, as well as using the potential of the interschool educational complex educational space.

### **The Hypothesis of the Research**

The analysis of theoretical works and practical activities in the developed aspect of the problem revealed that the issue of integrated psycho-pedagogical support of students in the process of technological preparation remains insufficiently studied and developed. This helped to formulate the hypothesis of this research: the process of students' readiness formation for professional self-determination will be more effective if the programme of psychological and pedagogical support of schoolchildren's self-determination is developed and implemented in the process of students' technological preparation.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

#### **The Directions of Psycho-Pedagogical Support**

The organization of psycho-pedagogical support of students' self-determination in the framework of preprofile training includes several areas of work. The **analytical and diagnostic** direction implies a psychological and pedagogical study of students, the diagnosis of their interests, aptitudes, abilities, psychological, pedagogical conclusions and recommendations to the participants of preprofile training - students, parents and a class teacher. Students record the results, obtained in the course of psycho-educational assessment, in the Diary of preprofile training, which is the basis for the discussion of self-determination issues at the professional consultation. Therefore, the next is the **consultative** direction, which involves the interaction of a teacher-psychologist with groups of students and individual consultations on specific personal issues that arise in the process of professional self-determination. The **educational** direction includes various activities aimed at providing a student with information and knowledge necessary for an informed choice of a training profile in relation to future professional activities. The **organizational** direction is based on the inclusion of students in various activities.

#### **The Stages of Psycho-Pedagogical Support**

The programme of psycho-pedagogical support is implemented through the preprofile training courses from class 7 to 9. The first step is the organization of the course "Learning to Choose" in class 7. The programme is the initial step in activating the work focused on the gradual development of students' internal readiness for an independent choice. In this programme, students focus on the specific issue of choosing a learning profile. The course programme is focused on students' mastering a new type of knowledge - knowledge about themselves.

At the second stage in class 8 the course "Preprofile Training" is held, which aims to study the characteristics of students' cognitive and personal spheres as they influence the choice of a learning profile. This course presupposes the involvement of a student's class teacher and parents. They, in turn, alternately

operate in the relevant section of the preprofile training Diary and record their reasoning on this topic, answering the questions of the questionnaires. Thus, information about a student is seen by a psychologist from three perspectives: the child, his parent and the classroom teacher, and that gives both the tested person and the teacher-psychologist an opportunity to obtain a more accurate picture of the personality.

The psychologist records the data, received from the class teacher and parents in a professional card. In the end, students get the characteristics of their psychological profile, taking into account not only their data, but also the results of questionnaires, completed by significant adults. The result of the programme at this stage will be getting new knowledge about yourself in the future professional activities.

In the third stage, in class 9, we realize our career guidance course “My Profession and Me” and the informative course “Your choice”.

### **The Programme of the Career Guidance Course “My Profession and Me”**

The analysis of research works on the problem suggests that to get ready for professional self-determination students need the necessary systematic knowledge, skills, ideas about their individual psychological characteristics, the analysis of professional activity. Taking into account these features of senior students; determination, we have worked out the programme of the course “My Profession and Me”. The aim of the course is providing psychological and pedagogical support to students in professional self-determination and on this basis - choosing a profile of training in high school and a future career.

The course “My Profession and Me” is divided into two sections: “The Image of “I”” and “The World of Professional Labour”.

The first section “The Image of “I”” promotes self-knowledge and an integrated, objective assessment of personality characteristics and identification of the missing qualities that will be formed to make successful professional plans.

This section contains the following topics:

1. Professional interests and inclinations.
2. The training “What I am like, or What I Think about Myself.”
3. Temperament and character.
4. The training “I’m a Unique Person.”
5. Abilities and their role in a career choice.
6. The training “Clarification of Life Values”.

The second section “The World of Professional Labour” is devoted to the study of the situation in today’s job market and setting personal and professional goals. In this section, students learn about a huge diversity of the world of occupations, specifics of professional labour, allowing to penetrate into the essence of professional activity.

It contains the following topics:

1. A variety of professional activities.
2. The training "What I Think about Professions".
3. The training "Towards a Professional Goal".
4. The training "A View from the Future".

The course programme "My Profession and Me" is focused on students; mastering the knowledge about themselves and the world of professional labour. Accordingly, two basic methods are used in class: developmental psychological-pedagogical diagnostics and social-psychological training.

A lesson, devoted to psycho-pedagogical educational diagnosis, has the following structure:

- 1) theoretical training: independent reading of theoretical material on the theme of the lesson in Workbooks and a subsequent discussion;
- 2) practical training: independent doing exercises with use of the following psycho-pedagogical techniques in Workbooks:
  - techniques, aimed at identifying vocational interests and aptitudes;
  - techniques, aimed at the analysis of a student's temperament and personality traits;
  - techniques, facilitating the study of general and special abilities and others.

Obtained during the diagnostic results are analysed by students with the participation of their consultant and will be recorded in the professional card of the Workbook. Based on the analysis of the professional card upon the completion of the course students fill in the final questionnaire "My Profession and Me".

It should be emphasized that the purpose of using psychological diagnostic techniques is not simply a diagnosis of interests, aptitudes and abilities, but also and enhancing a person's self-defining position, the creation of conditions for a detailed discussion of students; professional identity issues.

Alongside with developing diagnostics in the programme of the course training methods are used, in particular, a social-psychological training.

A social-psychological training is a type of methods of active social-psychological training, the essential characteristics of which are:

- the participants' group training, based on the potential of human development in group dynamics with use of the interpersonal relations mechanism;
- stages, due to social-psychological regularities of a small group's development. Typically, in the course of any training there are three main stages: the primary one, the working one and the end of the training;
- integrated application of a range of group work techniques (business games, group discussions, psychotechnical exercises);

- a wide target orientation of trainings on the development of the personality, his professional and life skills and qualities (Bykov, 2005).

In the programme of the training course “My Profession and Me” three types of social-psychological training are used: communication training, professional and life skills training, personal growth training.

We understand social-psychological training as a type of active social-psychological methods, based on focused, integrated using of a range of group work techniques.

In this training we use such methods of group work as:

- psychotechnical (psychogymnastics) exercises: to create an atmosphere of trust and openness in the group (the organization of meeting procedures); to remove tension and clamps; to form reverse personal communication; to promote the development of creativity and others;
- group discussions;
- game methods (business and role-playing games).

In determining the structure of training classes we relied on the approach of I. V. Vachkov (2007) and highlighted the following stages:

- 1) introduction (greeting, warm-up exercises);
- 2) the basic stage (introduction of new content, revision);
- 3) the closing stage (summarization, reflection).

Each stage of a training class has its purpose, time, and a set of methods aimed at implementing the goals of the lesson.

The inclusion of specially designed training exercises in the course is most preferred. In the group, in an atmosphere of emotional support and security, teenagers have an opportunity to express their views and discuss situations, involving professional future, as equals, without any pressure. During the training, students learn to express their reasoned thoughts, simulate various professional roles.

Helping reasonable career planning, training is a means of correction of students’ professional intentions and attitudes to the subsequent self-determination. Group experiences become an important emotional component of students’ social-psychological activity in choosing a career.

Thus, the specificity of this course lies in the combination of different methods in formation of students’ readiness for professional self-determination. On the one hand, it is a developmental psycho-pedagogical diagnosis, conducive to each student receiving information about their individual personal and professional qualities, on the other hand, it is a kind of socio-psychological training, developing these qualities.

**The Programme of the Information Course “Your Choice”**

The information (orientation) course “Your Choice” is a means of realizing an educational direction of psycho-pedagogical support of students; self-determination. The aim of the course is the definition of an educational route.

To achieve this goal the course uses a variety of teaching methods:

- informational influence;
- information (career-oriented) games and exercises;
- activating questionnaires (with special issues that provoke reflection on integrated value-semantic aspects of self-determination);
- individual consultations (with the use of activating issues, technologies for the analysis of self-determination situations etc.);
- collective class review of problems-situations, connected with professional self-determination;
- inviting other specialists to class (authoritative and interesting for the audience).

The theoretical part of the course includes the study of the world of occupations, specifics of the educational environment, the labour market, the basics of finding work and making a career.

Practical classes involve the study of job descriptions, evaluation and self-evaluation of personal qualities and preparation of educational programmes on the basis of acquired knowledge, the description of professions according to the scheme.

The programme of the course includes excursions to professional educational organizations and educational organizations of higher education. During excursions, special attention is drawn to learning the specifics of work organization and particular professions. When planning excursions, we rely on students' needs.

Based on these areas of study, the course includes the following topics:

1. Youth and the labour market. Components of success.
2. The analysis of professions.
3. The ways of getting a profession.
4. The motives of profession choice.
5. The mistakes of profession choice.
6. The factors of profession choice.
7. Professional career planning.
8. The technology of work search.
9. The development of an educational programme.

The result of this course is the development of an individual education programme.

To fix the results of psychological diagnostics and progress in solving the problems of self-determination, each student gets a Workbook to study each course. The primary aim of this data acquisition is the accumulation of material for analysis.

### **The Educational Map of the City**

One of the most successful approaches to inform students and their parents has also been the development and demonstration of an educational map of Kirov city.

An educational map is a map of the municipality, which includes all educational establishments, educational organizations of higher education, optional education and other organisations on the basis of which preprofile training and specialized education are carried out.

The educational map of Kirov includes:

- the general description of the district educational network, including a list of educational organizations, a specific character of their educational programmes, peculiarities of preprofile training and specialized education;
- the location of educational institutions on the map of the area with the routes of public transport, which takes you to the place of study;
- a business card of each educational organization with a detailed address, phone numbers, an organization structure, specific educational programmes, characteristics of specialization areas;
- information about the centres or establishments of vocational guidance, where you can get appropriate advice on optimizing the students' profile choice.

## **RESULTS**

### **Students' Profile Choice**

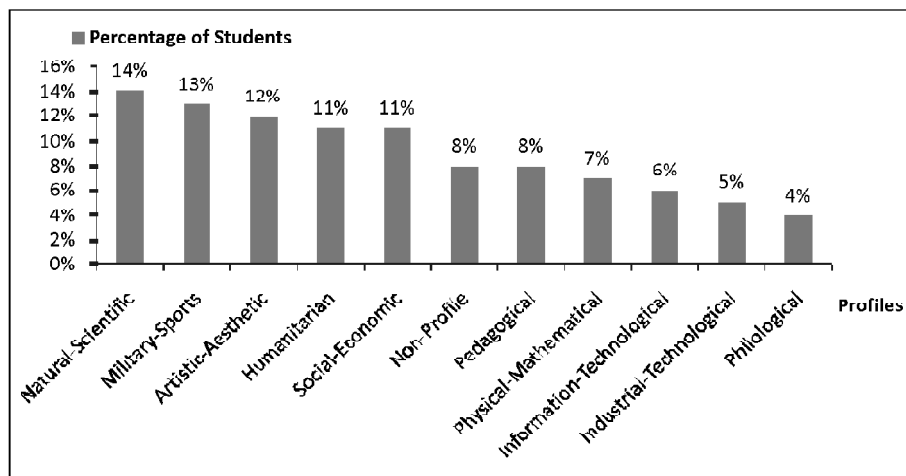
As a result of the psychological and pedagogical support programme implementation from 2011 to 2014 we analysed the choice of 433 class 9 leavers made in 2014 in Kirov schools №14, 22, 30, 32, 58, 59, 60, 70, 74 and Lyceum №21.

Here is an example of the students' choice in three areas: choosing a profile, choosing a profession, choosing an educational organization.

98% of 9 class leavers made a profile choice.

The leading positions in the students' choice have a natural-scientific profile, a military-sports profile and an artistic-aesthetic profile (**Fig. 1**). It should be noted that a social-economic profile, compared with the previous years, is losing its position, on the contrary, a natural-scientific profile and an artistic-aesthetic one have become more popular. A military-sports profile ranked the second place by the number of elections. Non-profile learning is gaining more and more choices,





**Figure 1:** The Choice of Learning Profiles

due to the students' focus on entering professional educational institutions. Some modern students opt for a pedagogical, physical-mathematical and information-technological profiles. As in the previous years, in the last position are the industrial-technological and philological profiles.

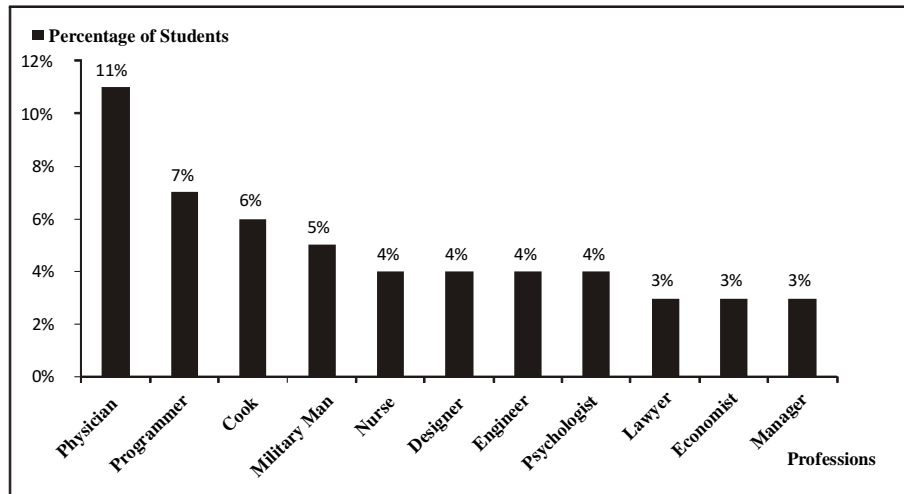
### The Students' Professional Choice

81% of students made a professional choice. The majority of class 9 students chose the profession of a physician (**Fig. 2**). We should note that the high rank of this profession has been observed for several years. The professions of a programmer and a cook have not lost their popularity either, they took the second and the third places respectively. Preferable among young people are a military profession, the job sofa nurse, a designer, an engineer, a psychologist. The professions of a lawyer, an economist and a manager are also preferred; however, compared with the previous years, the number of selections has declined significantly. Some students opted for the professions of a teacher, an educator, a pharmacist, a police officer and a builder.

It should be noted that most of the students' choices are reasonable and, most importantly, focused on the situation in the modern labour market: the most frequent ninth-graders' selections of professions are the most popular.

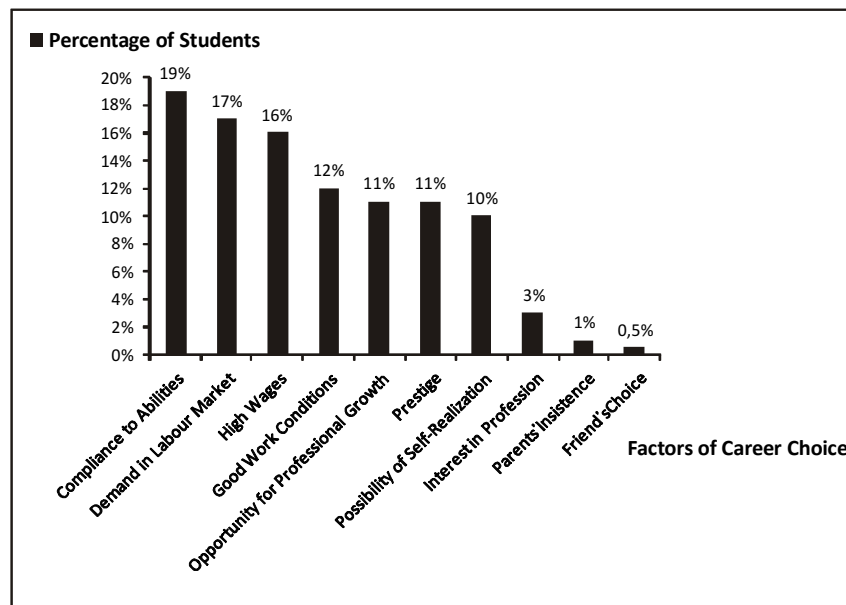
### The Factors of Career Choice

89% of students were able to justify their professional choices (**Fig. 3**). For most modern students in planning their future the compliance of a profession to their abilities, its demand in the labor market and high wage are important. It should be stressed that in the previous years, the students were focused, primarily, on a well-



**Figure 2:** The Choice of Professions

paid job, however, the compliance of a profession to their abilities always occupied the leading position, too. Important factors when choosing a career by young people are work conditions, an opportunity for professional growth, the prestige of a profession and the possibility of self-realization.



**Figure 3:** The Factors of Career Choice

Less significant factors, compared with the previous studies, have become parents' insistence and a friend's choice, which allows to make a conclusion about the students' orientation at the end of the courses on the objective factors of career choice.

### **The Choice of an Educational Organisation**

As a result of this work the goal of creation the conditions for an informed choice of an educational path is successfully realised: the majority of students are now ready to make their educational prospects. 85% of students decided on the main choice option of an education organization, 36% of students indicated a fallback choice of an educational organization. Most ninth-graders (54%) chose educational organizations of higher education, 46% of students preferred professional educational organizations. It should be marked that over the past five years, the situation with the choice of educational institutions does not change.

### **DISCUSSIONS**

The issues of psychological and pedagogical support of profession choice were studied by O. A. Makhaeva and E. E. Grigorieva (2006), who developed an integrated programme of students' active professional self-determination under the title "I am Choosing a Profession". This programme is a complex of 12 practical classes with the use of active methods: problem-gaming and educational-professional situations, group discussions and the method of peer group evaluation. O. G. Filimonova (2008) worked out a training programme for the development of ninth-graders' professional self-determination "How to Learn Choosing a Profession?". The programme combines the use of diagnostic techniques with gaming exercises and heuristic conversations. L. M. Mitina (2002) developed a series of psychological programmes of practical courses, workshops and consultations aimed at formation of a person's professional consciousness. In the framework of the developed programmes a lecture-training-seminar form of classes is applied, using express methods, exercises, and games.

We stick to the view of V. B. Uspensky (1999) that the earlier a young person makes a reasonable career choice, the more seldom he makes mistakes in professional self-determination. In this regard, we have developed a programme, which unlike the previous programmes, involves sessions of psychological and pedagogical support from class 7. This work goes on with classes 8 and 9 and includes career guidance and informational courses that promote the continuous support of teenagers' professional self-determination. Moreover, the programme is intended to assist in the selection of a profile and a profession in terms of technological training, as close as possible to professional work in the interschool educational complex.

## CONCLUSION

The content of psycho-pedagogical support of students; professional self-determination in terms of the interschool educational complex, described in the article, meets the following principles: the continuity of implementation at all stages of preprofile training, a complex approach to the choice of methods and means of maintenance; the use of psychological and pedagogical assistance to students in their professional self-determination in relation to technological training. The result of pre-specialization courses within the programme of support is determining the next steps for building educational and professional trajectories: the selection of a profile on the senior level of education, a career choice and its justification, the definition of an educational organization. The analysis of obtained results allows to conclude that when choosing a professional way, modern ninth-graders try to take into account the requirements of the labour market, employment opportunities, as well as their own interests and abilities, which is the purpose of students; psycho-pedagogical support.

### *Acknowledgments*

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University

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