

THE ROLE OF VALUES SYSTEM IN PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Anush Stepanyan¹

Abstract

Society peculiarities and values in particular, play important role in professional activity and career development. The values systems of educational, socio-economic, informational technologies and political fields are changing and, in some cases, the new ones are formed. The west models of social fields, especially education system, market relationships, human rights, are localized and legal and other changes are made. The mentioned changes directly reflect the demand in job market and professions, as well as the peculiarities of professional development. The society in Armenia is in stage of big changes. Those changes have a direct influence on the demand of professions, and the statistical data of higher education field. In order to find out the connections between society changes and career choices in the recent years current research has been conducted on the basis of the following methodology. In order to proceed this study, the document analysis research method has been used. Document analysis method let the researchers to get sociological information during the social processes researches. We analyzed the statistical data from Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia considering the quantity of applicants of different professions to state and non-state universities in 2000-2015 years. The publications about the socio-economic situations in RA through the mentioned years have been reviewed. The quantities of applicants each year have been summed and compared. As a result, the research shows that changes in the quantities became visible after 2009, when the importance of informational technologies appeared in different fields of working activity. A big demand in informational technologies started after 2009. The service field is a subject of interest and the amount of applicants is growing every year. This can be considered as the moment when our industrial society transformed to informational society. Relying on the findings of the research we have concluded that the changes in the society have direct influence on the personal and professional development of individuals. Those changes define people's attitude and notions about the professions and also form new values system, which becomes a cause of change of professional development process.

Points for Practitioners

The research is aimed at professionals in education system, and professional activity researchers in public administration. The peculiarities of professional development have changed essentially due to several global events. With the changes in the society individual and social values are being changed. The mentioned changes have to be taken into consideration while developing the educational programs in high schools and universities. In the world of rapid changes the educational systems can't stay aside. While developing educational programs the peculiarities of job market demands and professions requirements must be considered. The requirements towards professionals are subject to change in contemporary world, so the methods of developing professionals have to be changed. Due to globalization processes, socio-economic changes and emerging of new professions the society in Armenia is considered to be transformational. Thus, the educational systems and career trainings have to be actual and up to date. This has led us to make a research considering changes in preferences of professions and career choices in Armenian society.

Keywords: career, professional development, professions, society, values.

Introduction

The professional activity and the processes connected to it are of first importance for the modern society's individual. The essence of professional activity is made for individual and society's peculiarities. The attitude towards the profession or work activity, the peculiarities towards the values system of the members of the society make influence on the process of professional development. Each person is lead by his own values system, which plays a deciding role in a person's behavior. The values are formed under the influence of society peculiarities. According to the knowledge that the values have a determining role in the professional development process, they also define the peculiarities and the direction of professional activity. That is why thorough research and full value information about the preferences in careers and professions, changing values are important in different areas of professional activities. Mainly this knowledge is helpful in developing the educational programs in high schools and universities to keep up with the challenges of modern world to the future professionals.

¹ PhD student, Public Administration Academy of RA, Yerevan, Armenia

Main body

Methodology

In order to proceed the research the document analysis research method has been used. Document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment topic (Bowen, 2009). This method is widely used in sociology and social psychology in order to get sociological information during the social processes study. Document analysis may be proceeded in different ways and includes various options. Documents are divided in official and non-official types. In addition to this the research processes may vary according to analyzing type – statistical, verbal, and other types. We analyzed the statistical data from Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia considering the quantity of applicants of different professions to state and non-state universities in 2000-2015 years. The publications about the socio-economic situations in RA through the mentioned years have been reviewed. The quantities of applicants each year have been summed and compared. The results are provided as a graph.

1. Changes in society and values formation

The changes, taking place in the society play a crucial role in the formation process of persons' attitudes and values. The peculiarities of professional development have changed essentially due to several global events, which are as follows:

- growth of informational flows,
- social-political changes,
- revolutions and wars,
- the destruction of Soviet Union,
- formation of new countries [1].

Those events and their influence on the societies were thoroughly studied by sociologists, politologists and psychologists. As a result the idea of global society was formed, and researches about it were made by F. Fukuyama, S. Hantington and A. Toffler. The mentioned processes have influence on the process of professional development as well. With the scientific and technical development, the essence of work activity changes and becomes more creative, requires creative decisions and approaches.

New professions appear, and not only the requirements of job market change, but also the notions about different professions in the society. These processes define the level of professional selection.

The attitudes towards special work activity of the person and the society are important in the process of professional development. The attitude in the society can play an important role in the process of professional selection in particular. According to job social psychology specialists the attitude towards work reflects the work satisfaction. Hence, if the employee is positive minded, his/her work is more productive and his/her work efficiency is high. In order to determine the level of job satisfaction number of researches were conducted. The results of those researches have interesting conclusions [7]. One of the most common methods of measurement is studying several certain job elements and their dominance. Those are job essence, salary, promotion possibilities, colleagues, management [5].

The results of the research made according to the survey showed number of connections. Positive attitude to work forms when the employee has loyal salary, when there is possibility for promotion, when there is good communication between manager and colleagues. The idea of equality is important regardless the salary amount. Research was made to compare the level of satisfaction of office and production workers. As a result, it was found out that the office workers are more satisfied while working in private organizations, while production workers, on the contrary, are satisfied in government sphere [5]. Such kind of researches are specific and applicable only in the mentioned society in order to determine the work activity tendencies.

1.1 Values peculiarities

The values system peculiarities play crucial role in the process of professional development. The formation of values and values system have always been in the point of attention of different disciplines. According to this, the directions of researches essentially vary. According to anthropologists, values help people to find the meaning of life, answer to existential questions. For example, studies have shown, that individual effort and reward are values in the American society. This occurs because of the Americans' strive to their goals [2]. According to economists, material goods are values and according to personal preferences the hierarchy of

those goods is formed. According to sociological approach the values help to relief the conflicts between individuals and groups. Thus, the society goals may essentially vary from the individual goals. Though the individuals may yield and sidestep for the common values. In addition to this, values may be formed or become vital, when there is a fear of losing something.

According to research directions, the values definitions vary. R. Smith and S. Schwartz define the values as:

- beliefs, not objective ideas, which accompany with emotional expressions,
- standards and norms which help to assess the behavior, people and events [6].

In addition to this, values serve to the chosen goals and are ordered by their importance. But the arrangement of the values may vary in different societies and cultures. That's why the researches upon values cannot be accepted as common and has to be arranged in every society. Regardless some methods that were cultivated, the ideas of which can be considered as common and can be used in different cultures in order to make researches.

Regardless values as subjective concepts, they can play an essential role on behavior formation process. According to this, researches were done to understand the possibility of forecasting one's behavior being familiar with his values. Thus, the connection between values system and behavior becomes important, but still it remains as a point of discussions.

According to S. Schwartz the values reflect the biological needs of individual, social interaction needs and the satisfaction of group needs. The aim of values system research is to understand how the values influent on behavior and actions. For this certain directions are determined:

- the values people hold,
- how strongly people hold those values,
- compare with those of others,
- compare with values of other societies.

According to this points a research method was cultivated, which assumes that the values are divided into two groups according to their direction:

- the pursuit of self-interest,
- the welfare of others.

According to this, the person's motivation is formed, which the author divides into few types of motivational values:

1. universalism: understanding, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature,
2. benevolence: preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact,
3. conformity restraint of actions likely to harm others and violate social expectations or norms,
4. tradition: respect and acceptance of the customs and ideas that certain culture or religion imposes on the individual,
5. security: safety, harmony and stability of society, of relationships, and of self,
6. power: attainment of social status and prestige and dominance over people and resources,
7. achievement: personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards,
8. hedonism: pleasure or gratification for oneself,
9. stimulation: excitement and challenge in life,
10. self-direction: independent thought and action-choosing, creating, exploring [6].

According to S. Schwartz, the values and motivational types form a common system and are interrelated with each other. This is an interesting method while studying the differences of individual and cultural values systems. Based on his researches, S. Schwartz discovered, that east Asian nations emphasize hierarchy and conservatism, whereas European nations emphasize egalitarianism and individual autonomy [4]. As a result Schwartz argues that in the values studies the researches have to be related not to individual values, but to cultural values instead.

Another research method is provided by M. Rokeach. He developed a universal instrument to measure values, as he believed that values are common and universal and can be measured with one instrument. M. Rokeach developed a value measurement survey which consists of two parts, each one measures certain set of values. The first ones are "instrumental values", which reflect modes of conduct such as politeness, honesty. The second set is "terminal values" that reflect desired end states such as freedom, equality, peace [3].

One of the purposes of studying values is finding out the conflicts between values and developing ways for resolving them. The M. Rokeach Values Survey has been used by many researchers who studied the relationship between values and behavior, the role of values in justifying attitudes and stereotypes. An important result of the researches is the fact that the interrelation between person and his environment has a direct influence on the formation of values system. For example the research that was done in Australian high schools, which resulted in fact that the students were the happiest when their values were congruent with those articulated by the schools they attended or the subjects they studied. The future research showed that the values don't have hierarchic order, but make a complex system in which they are interrelated to each other and to beliefs and attitudes. The changes of one values leads to changes in the whole system. According to M. Rokeach the values are more likely to change when they contradict to one's morality and one's behavior. Thus the values system can be changed according to the needs of external conditions. Regardless the fact that values have important role in forming one's behavior, the research shows that there is no direct connection between them and person's behavior is formed based on a complex system of certain points.

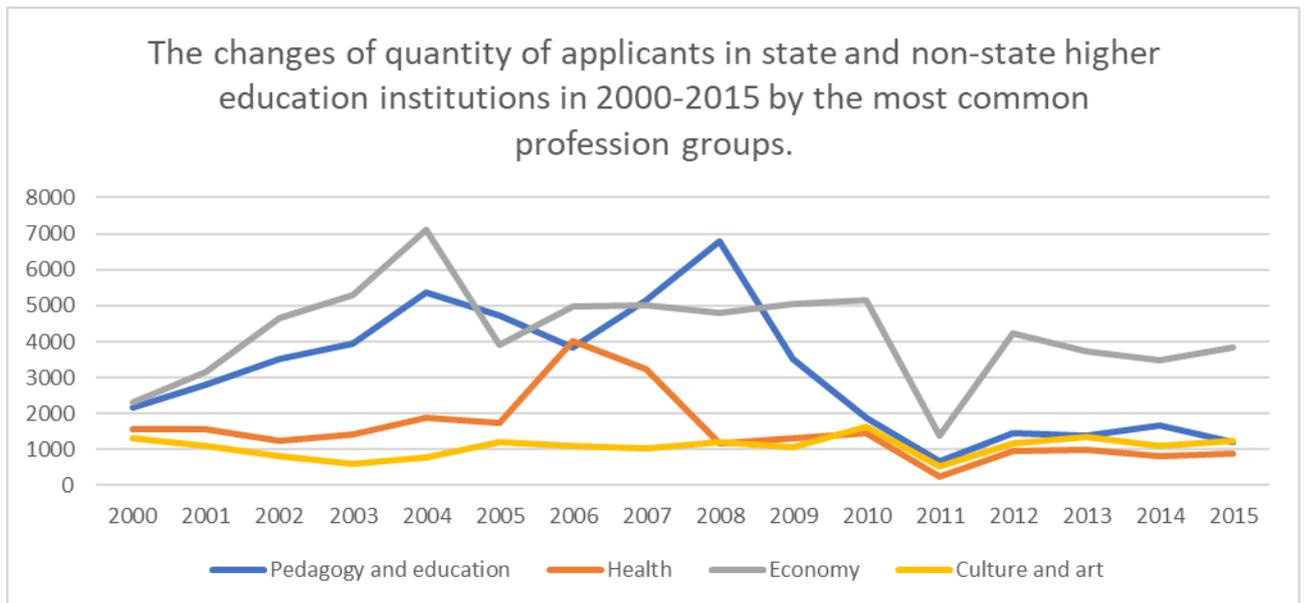
2. Preferences in professions in Armenia

To study the tendencies in a society we have to study the peculiarities of certain society and determine it. The historical events of last years let us conclude that after the destruction of Soviet Union and until now the postsoviet society is currently in a period of changes. The values systems of educational, social-economic, informational technologies and political fields are changing and in some cases the new ones are formed. The west models of social fields are localized, especially education system, market relationships, human rights, legal and other changes are made. The mentioned changes directly reflect the demand in job market and professions, as well as the peculiarities of professional development. The society in Armenia is in stage of big changes. Those have a directly influence on the demand of professions, and the statistical data of higher education field.

In order to find out the changes in primary professions we studied the quantity of applicants of different professions to state and non-state universities in 2000-2015 years. First of all the education system is changing and new professions appear and the professional distinguishments of past are destructed. Because of this the research results have been summarized and classified between professional groups.

The research shows that the changes became visible after 2009, when the importance of informational technologies appeared in different fields of working activity. In other words, this is the moment when our industrial society transformed to informational society. Thus, the most common professional groups in 2000-2009 were economy and pedagogy, where is growth of the quantity of applicants during these years. The other common groups for those years are law and health. In 2008-2009 the interest upon pedagogy and education falls and the quantity of applicants becomes nearly equal to the quantity of applicants in arts and culture. Some professional groups need to be mentioned, which are greatly influenced by the changes in society.

Thus, for example, the group of agricultural sciences being popular until 2009 was divided into narrow professions and there was big amount of applicants till 2015. The transport and communication professions group is interesting as well, because there was a division into two subgroups after 2009. These were transportation systems and informational technologies. This kind of changes were caused by technogenic development, which caused the need for a big amount of professionals in informational communications. The service field is a subject of interest and the amount of applicants is growing every year. This process is caused by the fast development and spread of tourism in the world. Those processes are actual in Armenia as well and are conditioned with reforms and investments in tourism as priority in Armenian economy. The important field for growing economy is the field of industry and construction, which was divided into two professional groups, which was caused with the fast development of those fields. So we can conclude that the professions gain interest in the society because of growth of their meaning for the society, the investment and development programs by the government, scientific and technical changes. The overall picture of professions priority changes are presented below in graph 1.



Graph 1.

Conclusion

Based on theoretical and practical researches we can conclude that the changes and developments that take place in the society have direct influence on the personal and professional development of individuals. Those changes define people’s attitude and notions about the professions. They also form new values system, which becomes a cause of change of professional development process. Thus the interconnection between the manifestations of values system and behavior have prior importance in research of professional activity. Those results have to be taken into consideration, while developing the educational process, mainly in high schools and universities. In addition to this, the professional coaches and trainers should reckon the changes happening in the society as a base of their training programs.

References

1. Ուսումնառությունն ու դասավանդումը կրտսեր դպրոցում: «ԼՈՒՍԱԲԱՑ ՀՐԱՏԱՐԱԿԿՉՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ» Երևան: 2007:
2. Kluckhohn, Florence R., and Fred L. Strodtbeck 1961 Variations in Value Orientations. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.
3. Rokeach, Milton 1973 The Nature of Human Values. New York: Free Press.
4. Schwartz, Shalom H. "Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 25:1-65.
5. Smith, PC, LM Kendall, & CL Hulin. (1969). *The Measurement of Satisfaction in Work and Retirement*, Chicago. Rand McNally.
6. Smith, Peter B., and Shalom Schwartz 1997 "Values," In. W. Berry, M. H. Segall, and C. Kagitcibasi, eds., *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, vol. 3. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
7. Watson, David L., *Social psychology, science and application*. Scott, Foresman, and Company. 1984. – 584.