

Interaction of the University with the Community and Stakeholders as a Factor of Quality Professional Training of Future Teachers

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Abstract

The article reveals the forms of extracurricular work of university students to ensure the cooperation of the graduation department with stakeholders. Extracurricular work with the participation of community representatives and stakeholders performs educational, regulatory, corrective, communicative, compensatory, evaluation and correction functions. The experience of the Department of Pedagogy and Education of the Mariupol State University regarding the organization of cooperation with representatives of the Mariupol community and stakeholders of the educational program "Primary Education" at the bachelor's and master's levels is described. The work is carried out in the direction of attracting external stakeholders (representatives of the Department of Education of the Mariupol City Council and the Centre for Career Development, heads and deputy heads of the city's educational institutions, primary school teachers) and internal stakeholders (students of higher education) to participate in the scientific and methodological seminar "Pedagogical workshop of the future specialist". The experience of reviewing and examining student scientific reports and presentations by stakeholders, presented within the framework of the seminar, is described. Emphasis is placed on the fact that such an examination provides a comprehensive impact on the motivational, intellectual, emotional and activity spheres of students. Based on the expertise, stakeholders formulate conclusions regarding the degree of readiness of future primary school teachers for pedagogical activity, the relevance and practical significance of qualification works in the speciality "primary education"; offer recommendations for improving educational and professional programs. An example of one of the seminar programs, which includes a pedagogical assembly and discussion platforms on the subject of student presentations, is given in the article. The analysis of the experience of conducting the ongoing scientific and methodological seminar "Pedagogical workshop of the future specialist" allowed us to draw a conclusion about its effectiveness as an active form of extracurricular work and a means of involving stakeholders in the process of ensuring high-quality professional training of specialists.

Introduction

In September 2018, the implementation of a large-scale reform of general secondary education "New Ukrainian School" began in Ukraine. The reform is focused on changing the principles of general education institutions, which provides for: new educational content based on enabling the competencies necessary for successful self-fulfilment in society; teaching based on partnerships between the student, the teacher and parents; focus on student's needs in the educational process, i.e. child-centred education; a new school structure that allows to master the new content and acquire life competencies; decentralization and effective administration that will bring real autonomy to schools; a modern educational environment that will provide necessary conditions, means, and technology for education of students, teachers, and parents, not only in the premises of the educational establishment (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2016).

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primary school teacher, stakeholder, educational and professional program, extracurricular work, scientific and methodical seminar

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Cooperation of the university with the community and stakeholders is today a mandatory condition for ensuring quality professional training of modern pedagogical staff for the New Ukrainian School. Moreover, such cooperation is considered today as a strategic resource for the development of the university itself.

The relevance of higher education institutions' cooperation with employers is determined by the requirements of time and key documents for the development of education in Ukraine. In particular, the international standard ISO 26000:2010 "Guidance on social responsibility" (International Standard for Standardization, 2010) contains recommendations on social responsibility. The Standard emphasizes that companies and organizations that are responsible to society for their product must take a number of important steps, namely: identify stakeholders for organizing joint activities and making decisions, taking into account who these decisions affect or can affect; find understanding and show respect for the interests and needs of interested parties, adequately respond to their concerns in solving common issues; take into account the possibility of stakeholders to contact the institution or organization on issues of joint activity and to assign responsibility to it; take into account the interrelationship of stakeholders' interests with public interests and interests of the community, as well as the interests of the organization or enterprise and the principles of sustainable development; take into account the beliefs of the stakeholders themselves (International Organization for Standardization, 2010). Focusing on the challenges that Ukraine is currently experiencing, the principles of university management have been significantly updated. The main directions are strengthening their responsibility to society as a whole and responsibility for breach of agreements, ensuring honesty and trust in business relations, meeting the requirements and demands of the labour market, etc. Functioning of the university, based on these principles, includes the active involvement of interested parties in the procedures for improving the quality of the educational process and ensuring the competitiveness of the modern specialist in general. Active use of the potential of stakeholder theory in the practice of management of higher education institutions directly affects the quality of education, as well as the sustainable development of the university generally.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned, the problem of involving stakeholders in the process of professional training of future specialists becomes more relevant. It contributes to the formation of strategies for the development of universities in the context of taking into account the interests of various interested subjects who interact with each other in the field of a certain industry market. The stakeholder theory directly concerns the university as an open social system with all its various internal and external dependencies and connections that actualize the social responsibility of the educational institution.

Therefore, the conditions of reform and autonomy of the sphere of higher education, increasing the social responsibility of universities, make it necessary to solve the problem of interaction between higher education institutions and stakeholders. From another perspective, the strengthening of the third (public) mission of the university determines its activity as a centre of functioning and development of the community, the concentration of educational, scientific and public potential around it. Such a change in the role of the institution of higher education actualizes its cooperation with various groups of interested parties within the community and outside it. This is done in order to ensure the quality of professional training of specialists for a certain field.

The problem of interaction between higher education institutions and stakeholders in the context of ensuring high-quality professional training of specialists is actively studied in modern science and practice. Nesterova et al. (2019) thoroughly analysed the issues of social cohesion in university communities and their impact on the future of educational institutions. Cooperation between universities and stakeholders is considered a significant means of improving educational and professional programs. Zadorozhna-Kniahnytska (2020) and Dielini et al. (2021) revealed the content of social responsibility and social cohesion as driving forces

of sustainable development of universities. According to Mozgin (2019) social interaction with the community and stakeholders is a condition for the successful operation of a modern university. Svyrydenko et al. (2022) identified changes in social cohesion in university communities in the context of crisis phenomena in society. Practical aspects of taking into account the interests of stakeholders in the process of university management were revealed by Kharchuk et al. (2021). The stakeholder approach, which was studied by Kravchenko (2018), Piskurska (2019) and Vasynova (2022), plays an important role in modelling the strategic development of the university.

The problem of interaction between the university and stakeholders is not new for foreign scholars. Mitchell et al. (1997) researching the theory of stakeholder identification, determined the main principles of the university's interaction with stakeholders in the management of an educational institution. Watson (2012) raises the same questions in his research. The role and importance of external stakeholders in ensuring quality professional training is revealed by Labanauskis et al. (2017). Schlesinger et al. (2017) emphasize the importance of building trust between the community, stakeholders and universities, and also reveal the importance of the image of the university and the shared values that the university carries.

The above-mentioned scientists singled out aspects that ensure positive results of cooperation between universities, communities and stakeholders: development of educational programs that take into account the needs of the labour market; consistent improvement of the quality of educational services in accordance with the requests and needs of stakeholders and the community; improving the position of the university in international rankings; growth of the social role of the university and deepening of mutual relations in general; involving additional ways of financing educational programs, increasing their attractiveness; improvement of professional competences of university teachers and administration.

The modern practice of universities convinces that the majority of higher education institutions more often involve stakeholders in educational process. This can be in the form of public discussion of draft educational programs, questionnaires or round tables on current problems of professional training of specialists in a certain field, consulting future teachers during their practical training in schools, carrying out individual educational and research tasks, reviewing qualification papers etc. However, the university has significant potential for involving internal and external stakeholders in other forms of work, which increases their influence on the quality of training future specialists. In this context, the use of opportunities for extracurricular work with students and involvement of external stakeholders is considered in this work.

The paper **objective** is to substantiate the relevance of the use of extracurricular work as an effective form of cooperation with external stakeholders in the process of training specialists in the speciality "Primary Education" in the context of Ukrainian social, political, economic, and cultural realities.

Methods of research

The research uses theoretical methods, namely: analysis, systematization and generalization of the components of pedagogy and scientific knowledge in the field of social work and social engineering; empirical methods (interviews and observations) conducted at the Mariupol State University. Surveys were implemented among teachers and students of higher education at the bachelor's and master's levels, heads of educational institutions and primary school teachers within the Mariupol society and pedagogical community.

Results and their discussion

Extracurricular work is a set of extracurricular activities that are not carried out according to educational programs, and therefore do not require mandatory implementation and

verification of the level of knowledge assimilation, the formation of skills and abilities. But these activities are organized with the aim of deepening and expanding professional training, giving this process a personal touch through activation of the subjective position of the future specialist, consolidation of an active civic and professional position, development and implementation of communication potential etc. (Chernilevskyi, 2010). By combining educational, research and practical activities of higher education students, extracurricular work becomes an important component of the professional training of future primary school teachers.

Kurliand's (2008) opinion is valid regarding the dominance of the element of self-realization in extracurricular work, which enables students of higher education to harmonize internal and external factors of the formation of professional culture, creates additional conditions for the realization of internal potential, satisfaction of those needs that are not satisfied in the process of classroom work. Under the conditions of the correct organization of extracurricular work, which maximally takes into account the interests of students, the level of their readiness for independent educational and research activities increases. A stable positive motivation for extracurricular work is formed in students. Koval (2009) considers extracurricular work as a system of interconnected activities of the subjects of the educational process and believes that it is an integral component of professional training. Some scientists claim that extracurricular work of students is a logical continuation of classroom classes or takes place in parallel with them, contributes to successful learning. Furthermore, extracurricular work develops the initiative of future specialists, contributes to their mental, physical, and aesthetic education, satisfies cultural requests and interests, and directs students to creative activities.

Abdulov (2004) emphasizes the multi-functionality of extracurricular work and believes that it performs the following functions:

- informative and educational, which helps students of higher education to learn, expand and deepen professional knowledge, to fill it with a valuable meaning;
- mobilization-regulatory, which ensures the process of mobilization and further development of the emotional and volitional qualities of the personality of the education manager;
- corrective, which makes it possible to direct the influence of the surrounding reality on the quality of the educational process due to the norms developed and adopted by the institution of higher education and the specific student body;
- communicative, which ensures the development of professional communication skills;
- compensatory, which contributes to the formation of confidence and conviction in students of higher education, helps to form adequate self-esteem, to satisfy the need for success in professional activities (Abdulov, 2004).

The realization of these functions is provided by such forms of extracurricular work as a scientific and methodical seminar, open preliminary defence of qualification works, acmeological and deontological trainings (group form of work, which involves the development of students' valuable attitude to pedagogical activity, understanding of professional responsibility, skills of proper professional behaviour). Such forms reflect the focus of the educational process on the assimilation of the system of basic knowledge of management theory and related problems by students of higher education. They are revealed within the framework of normative and elective educational disciplines of general and professional training; formation of a system of professional skills and abilities; generalization of basic professionally relevant qualities.

It is clear that the informational and educational, mobilization-regulatory, corrective, communicative, compensatory functions of extracurricular work acquire additional significance under the condition of direct participation of external stakeholders. They are representatives of the city's Department of Education, headmasters and deputy headmasters of general secondary education institutions, primary school teachers of the highest category who provide

methodical support to young colleagues in schools. The participation of such specialists as experts within scientific and methodical seminars, open preliminary defences of qualification papers, final conferences on pedagogical and work placement practices is a significant factor in improving the professional training of specialists.

The Department of Pedagogy and Education of Mariupol State University has significant experience in organizing cooperation with stakeholders. Such cooperation is implemented, in particular, within the framework of the ongoing scientific and methodical seminar "Pedagogical workshop of the future specialist". Such a seminar is held twice during each academic semester and is aimed at discussing topical issues of modern theory and practice of a modern primary school. The seminars are based on the following principles:

- 1) interdisciplinarity (consideration of the content of extracurricular work in interdisciplinary connections with educational disciplines of normative and variable cycles, interconnections of all components of the educational and professional program);
- 2) hierarchies (identifying the core of knowledge, abilities and skills of future primary school teachers, developing a hierarchy of content elements of extracurricular work by importance, etc.);
- 3) personal adaptation (direction of the content of extracurricular work on the development of an individual pedagogical style in future primary school teachers).

The relevance of the interaction of Mariupol State University (MSU) with the community and external stakeholders who are members of this community has increased after the full-scale invasion of Russian troops on the territory of Ukraine and the territorial relocation of the university. For almost 2 years, MSU has been operating in Kyiv and has positioned itself not just as a temporarily relocated educational institution, but as a centre of community transformation, an ambassador of Mariupol in Ukraine and the world. Under the conditions when the members of the Mariupol community temporarily live in different regions of Ukraine, and a significant part of them went abroad, the Mariupol State University became the centre of cooperation of the community members. Representatives of the university are in constant contact with Mariupol educational institutions that work remotely. This communication is carried out both face-to-face and in a remote format, which makes adjustments to the content and form of the interaction itself.

Considering the above-mentioned, the purpose and functional characteristics of the scientific-methodical seminar "Pedagogical workshop of the future specialist" have also changed. The workshop performs a number of important functions, namely:

- contributes to the implementation of the tasks of students' professional training;
- performs the role of a presentation platform for the results of research work of teachers and students of MSU, methodological materials of teachers;
- ensures coordination of research work of university professors and experienced teachers of general secondary education institutions;
- contributes to the filling of the methodical portfolio of practising teachers;
- creates conditions for propaedeutic work regarding the admission of future applicants to study at MSU under the educational program "Primary Education".

As an example, we attach the plan for one of the meetings of the "Pedagogical workshop of the future specialist" (second semester of the 2022-2023 academic year):

Pedagogical assembly (15.00-16.20)

Moderator 1: program director of the "Primary Education" educational program at the second (master's) level.

Moderator 2: program director of the educational program "Primary Education" at the first (bachelor's) level.

Experts: main specialist of the Department of Education of the Mariupol City Council; Director of the Professional Development Centre of Mariupol.

Thematic presentations: “Educational complex “gymnasium-school”: creation of an educational space”, “Intercultural communication and practice of foreign language learning in primary school”, “Use of non-traditional forms of organization of the educational process in the New Ukrainian School”, “Interaction of primary school teacher with families on the basis of partnership pedagogy”.

Discussion platform “Primary education in challenging conditions” (16.30-18.00)

Moderator: the headmaster of the General education school of the I-III levels № 10 of Mariupol.

Experts: the headmaster of the Mariupol educational complex “Lyceum School № 48”, the headmaster of the Gymnasium with the structural division of the primary school № 17 of Mariupol.

Thematic areas for the participants of the discussion: “Organizational and pedagogical conditions for the formation of emotional intelligence of younger schoolchildren”, “Implementation of integrated education in primary school (on the example of mathematical and artistic educational fields)”, “Using interactive technologies in Ukrainian language lessons in primary school”, “Organizational and pedagogical conditions for the formation of media literacy of primary school students”, “Emergent literacy: a comparative analysis of the readiness of children of senior preschool and junior school age to read”.

Final session (18.10-18.40)

Moderator 1: program director of the “Primary Education” educational program at the second (master’s) level.

Content of the final session: analytical presentations of expert stakeholders.

An important component of the scientific and methodological seminar “Pedagogical workshop of the future specialist” is the presentation of the results of research conducted by students on the basis of a specific educational institution. The topics of such studies are offered by schools based on their needs and problems. From the list of these topics, each student chooses a topic that interests him, familiarizes with the conditions of the school or the peculiarities of the work of an individual teacher, and works on solving the problem. As the practice of organizing and carrying out such an examination during 2020-2023 proves, it creates additional opportunities to ensure the quality of professional training in the form of interaction of learners with expert stakeholders. All of them have significant experience in managerial and pedagogical activities, and within the framework of expertise, they have a comprehensive influence on the motivational, intellectual, emotional and activity spheres of the personality of higher education students. Stakeholders also ensure the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation function of professional training of specialists through examination of the content and practical significance of qualification papers and recommendations for improving their subject and the curriculum as a whole, proposals related to the addition or removal of certain components from the educational and professional program.

Surveys among students and external stakeholders, conducted at the end of each academic year, testify to the high evaluation of the scientific-methodological seminar as a significant form of improving the quality of professional training of future primary school teachers. According to the results of the survey in May 2023, 62% of students found it interesting and useful to participate in a scientific and methodological seminar together with expert stakeholders; 28% of students consider this form of cooperation difficult, but useful; only 8% are not sure of the importance of such a seminar. 82% of students positively assessed the role of external stakeholders as consultants and experts, 12% of students believe that such experts are too demanding of their projects, and 6% — that such experts are too lenient. At the same time, according to the results of the survey, no students were identified who consider interaction with practicing teachers or headmasters unnecessary.

A survey among specialists of the Mariupol Department of Education, teachers, headmasters invited to participate in scientific and methodical seminars showed that the vast majority (89%) of stakeholders are convinced of the importance of their cooperation with future teachers. They believe that the scientific and methodical seminar not only contributes to better training of future teachers, but is also a form of preliminary acquaintance and evaluation of them as potential teachers of a certain school. 11% of respondents testified that they consider such activities useful, but they do not have enough free time to participate in them. However, all the respondents testified that they have a positive attitude towards holding such seminars and expressed their willingness to participate in them.

Thus, the experience of the interaction of the Department of Pedagogy and Education of the Mariupol State University with the stakeholders of the educational and professional program "Primary Education" convincingly proves that such interaction ensures the multifunctionality of extracurricular work of future primary school teachers, its focus on modelling professional and pedagogical activities, creating an individual trajectory of higher education students' professional training, assessment of its effectiveness.

Conclusions

The article highlights only one of the forms of extracurricular work of students with the participation of external stakeholders. However, the experience of such work carried out by the Department of Pedagogy and Education of Mariupol State University, as well as the results of the survey of students and external stakeholders based on the results of participation in scientific and methodical seminars, confirm their significance for the professional training of future primary school teachers. It is established that the potential of the above-mentioned regular seminar in providing professional training of future primary school teachers is as follows:

1. The topic of the New Ukrainian School is an integral part of the content of the seminar and is realized in the performances of the students. They reveal the problems of organizing the educational process in the context of the implementation of the Concept of the New Ukrainian School, the requirements for the personality of the teacher, the essence of the pedagogical culture in general and its behavioural aspect in particular, the ways of building and implementing the personal trajectory of the professional development of the primary school teacher, creating the image of the educational institution, personality-oriented educational technologies, the essence of the innovative activity of the teacher, the formation of corporate culture in the educational institution, the development of the personality of the primary school teacher as a leader of changes, ethical and deontological aspects of pedagogical activity, etc.
2. Reports prepared by students of higher education are interdisciplinary in nature and reflect the level of their mastery of the skills of selection, processing, analysis, generalization and systematization of relevant educational material, as well as its presentation in new communication situations for the purpose of their further improvement and development.
3. The unique structure of the seminar, which includes thematic presentations within the framework of the pedagogical assembly and discussion platforms, provides equal opportunities for all participants to express their own opinion on the discussed issues, develops a culture of discussion, promotes the development of interest, creates an environment of communication, which is necessarily organizational and methodical condition for ensuring professional training of future primary school teachers. Under such conditions, communication takes the form of regulation (establishing and maintaining the mode of activity and behaviour of its participants in accordance with existing activity requirements) and cooperation (joint activity in which the goals and interests of its participants coincide).

It was concluded that the implementation of the above-mentioned measures with the wide involvement of external stakeholders in their participation is a significant factor in improving the quality of professional training of future primary school teachers. Among the **promising areas of further research**, the following can be distinguished: the approbation of effective modern forms and methods of cooperation of graduation departments with stakeholders, the development of scientific and methodological support for such cooperation in order to ensure the quality training of a modern specialist that meets the requirements of the labour market and social demands.

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L. Zadorozhna-Kniahnytska: conceptualization, methodology, project administration, writing (review & editing); I. Khadzhinova: validation, formal analysis, writing (original draft).

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Data availability

The research data used in this study is not publicly available because it is part of a larger study that has not yet been completed. However, they can be obtained from the authors (l.zadorozhna-knyahnytska@mdu.in.ua, i.hadzhinova@mdu.in.ua) upon a reasonable request.

Competing interests

No potential competing interest was reported by the authors.

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Анотація

У статті розкрито форми позааудиторної роботи студентів університету для забезпечення співпраці випускової кафедри зі стейкхолдерами. Позааудиторна робота за участі в ній представників громади й стейкхолдерів виконує просвітницьку, регулятивну, корегувальну, комунікативну, компенсаторну, оцінювальну-корегувальну функції. Описано досвід кафедри педагогіки та освіти Маріупольського державного університету щодо організації співробітництва з представниками маріупольської громади та стейкхолдерами освітньої програми «Початкова освіта» за першим (бакалаврським) та другим (магістерським) рівнями. Цей досвід полягає у залученні зовнішніх стейкхолдерів (представники Департаменту освіти Маріупольської міської ради та Центру кар'єрного розвитку, керівники та заступники керівників закладів освіти міста, вчителі початкових шкіл) та внутрішніх стейкхолдерів (здобувачі вищої освіти) до участі у науково-методичному семінарі «Педагогічна майстерня майбутнього фахівця». Описано досвід рецензування та експертизи стейкхолдерами наукових доповідей та презентацій здобувачів освіти, представлених у межах семінару. Акцентовано на тому, що така експертиза забезпечує комплексний вплив на мотиваційну, інтелектуальну, емоційну та діяльну сфери здобувачів вищої освіти. На основі здійсненої експертизи стейкхолдери формують висновки щодо ступеня готовності майбутніх учителів початкової школи до педагогічної діяльності, актуальності та практичної значущості кваліфікаційних робіт за спеціальністю «початкова освіта»; пропонують рекомендації щодо вдосконалення освітньо-професійних програм. Наведено приклад однієї з програм семінару, що містить у собі педагогічну асамблею та дискусійні платформи з тематикою виступів здобувачів вищої освіти. На основі аналізу досвіду проведення постійно діючого науково-методичного семінару «Педагогічна майстерня майбутнього фахівця» зроблено висновок щодо його ефективності як активної форми позааудиторної роботи та засобу залучення стейкхолдерів до процесу забезпечення якісної професійної підготовки фахівців.

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Ключові слова:

вчитель початкової школи, стейкхолдер, освітньо-професійна програма, позааудиторна робота, науково-методичний семінар

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