

**ORIENTATION TO PRACTICE: ORGANIZATION OF NETWORKING IN THE HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION (ON THE EXAMPLE OF YELABUGA INSTITUTE OF KAZAN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY)**

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**Abstract.** The formation of a modern prospective education system is impossible without the introduction of a close link between different-level educational institutions and employers. The quality of the educational process and further employment of graduates depend largely on the provided conditions for their joint participation. All this causes an increased interest in these issues in theory, and, especially, in practice of introducing these mechanisms into the system of Russian education. In this regard, the objective of this paper is to study the theoretical aspects of the introduction of networking, as well as its application and improvement in Yelabuga Institute of Kazan (Volga region) Federal University.

The study of these issues became particularly relevant in the Russian scientific community in the past 10-20 years. Several interesting studies have been devoted to these aspects. In particular, the scientists engaged in general issues of interaction between educational organizations and the prospects for their development were *V.N. Alekseev* (Alekseev, 2013), *M.Iu. Baryshnikova* (Baryshnikova, 2012), *E.V. Golovinskaia* (Golovinskaia, 2014); theory and practice of network interaction of universities – *R.A. Zaiakina* (Zaiakina, 2013), *E.A. Neretina* (Neretina, 2013), *N.A. Chikildina* (Chikildina, 2012), and others.

The author of this paper comes to the conclusion that the network form ensures increase in the university's competitiveness on the market of educational services, improves the quality of education, promotes educational cooperation and integration of science, education and production.

**Keywords:** Russia, education system, networking, practice-oriented forms of interaction

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Modern education in Russia is going through a difficult period of modernization, which is focused primarily on ensuring quality, effective education, increasing the potential of educational organizations, as well as creating a unified cultural and educational space. The main task of the educational policy in these conditions is the reorganization of the education system at all levels, revision of the structural and social status of education and restructuring of the education system on the basis of effective integration of science, education and production. And here the network organization of interaction of educational institutions can become the most productive form of achieving these tasks.

This innovation, which creates additional opportunities for improving the quality of education, was consolidated after the new Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" (dated December 29, 2012 No. 273-FZ). According to Article 15 of Chapter 2 of this law, the network form provides an opportunity for students to master the educational program using the resources of several institutions that carry out educational activities.

## 2. METHODS

The methodology of the study is constructed both on the basis of empirical (observation, comparison) and experimental-theoretical methods of scientific cognition (analysis).

## 3. RESULTS

### 3.1 Theoretical features of networking

#### 3.1.1 The concept of networking

Modern pedagogical science operates several definitions of the concept of "networking". The most significant, in our opinion, are:

- it is the joint work of educational institutions, which allows students to get an educational program of a certain level and focus with the use of resources of several educational institutions (Rozhdestvenskaia, 2014).

- it is the unification of several independent individuals, social groups and/or institutions working together on a long-term basis to implement agreed goals and objectives, and having a unified

corporate image and common infrastructure (Alekseev 2013).

Based on these and some other definitions, we proposed our own version. According to this version, "networking" is the focus of the educational organization on a practice-oriented approach in the education system, based on close interaction and intertwining of interests of all levels of education and organizations of the real sector of the economy.

Organization of networking of educational institutions contributes to the solution of the following tasks:

- deliver a high quality educational services,
- create an educational environment by combining the efforts of institutions;
- improve the optimality of using the resource potential of educational institutions;
- analyze the range of requests of social partners for networking;
- ensure the share with experience, implement jointly educational projects and social initiatives;
- expand the circle of communication of students allowing them to gain social experience and form their worldview;
- form a large number of organizational forms of the educational process reflecting the needs of the population of the region; and
- provide conditions for the social success of graduates, form their more solid knowledge base, skills, education of morality, civic consciousness, patriotism.

#### 3.1.2 Networking multilevel approach

The implementation of educational programs using a network form, in addition to educational organizations, may involve scientific organizations, enterprises, medical, cultural, physical culture and sports institutions and other organizations that have the resources necessary to conduct training and production practices and other types of learning activities. Therefore, researchers distinguish the following options for network interaction by the type of subjects involved in networking

(Zhukovitskaia, 2011; Baryshnikova, 2012; Golovinskaia, 2014; Zaiakina & Romm, 2013):

- 1) "Vertical" interaction – the subjects of such interaction are institutions of general education, vocational education (secondary and higher), enterprises and organizations of economic and social spheres. Due to this interaction, the social partnership of the educational institution evolves, which implies the expansion of the social situation of the development of students by attracting the resources of the educational environment (personnel, scientific, methodological, laboratory, etc.).
- 2) "Horizontal" interaction – a number of educational institutions act as partners of such network interaction. The most common type of "horizontal" network is the municipal network of subject-oriented education, that is, the system of networking of educational institutions of one municipal interaction.

### *3.1.3 Networking models of higher education institutions*

We identified the following modern models of networking between educational organizations:

- cooperation of secondary schools and universities ("school - university");
- cooperation of colleges and universities ("college-university");
- cooperation of universities ("university-university");
- cooperation of universities and enterprises ("university-enterprise");

### **3.2 Features of the introduction of networking by Yelabuga Institute of KFU**

Yelabuga Institute of Kazan (Volga region) Federal University (2012) participates quite actively in the policy of networking among educational institutions. The institute has formed and effectively implemented a ramified system of network interaction. It is worth noting that only at the beginning of 2016 Yelabuga Institute of KFU concluded about 40 agreements on cooperation. Among them are not only the domestic educational institutions, but also universities in Turkey, Germany and the United States.

The author identified the following models: "university-school", "university-college", "university-university", and "university-enterprise".

#### 1. "University-school" model

At present Yelabuga Institute of KFU actively expands its cooperation with schools. This is due, first of all, to the goal to recruit higher-quality, prepared for getting higher education applicants. This model of cooperation implies broad interaction between the school and the university to create a unified educational space, by combining the available resources of secondary and higher education institutions. In the course of interaction, a mechanism for coordinating resources is being practiced to improve the quality of education in the region.

One of the directions for implementing this model of interaction is cooperation with the basic schools of the university. Basic schools at universities are a relatively new phenomenon for Russian education. At the same time, the forms of interaction of Yelabuga Institute of KFU with basic schools are very diverse. Teachers and students of basic schools can use laboratories, libraries, as well as other resources of the institute, participate in events organized in the university (olympiads, business games, seminars, conferences, etc.). In addition, the pedagogical staff of schools has the opportunity to undergo retraining and raising qualifications within the walls of Yelabuga Institute.

#### 2. "University-college" model

The urgency of considering the "university-college" networking model is conditioned by the need to train qualified personnel for developing industries and enterprises. This model of organizing networking between Yelabuga Institute of KFU and the regional schools is implemented using the following tools:

- 1) vocational-oriented activities - meetings with students of the colleges of the Kama region of the Republic of Tatarstan;
- 2) academic staff exchange;
- 3) organization of business games, seminars;
- 4) educational (fact-finding), production and pre-diploma practices in secondary vocational institutions. At the same time, it should be noted that the "university-college" cooperation model

is not a strong point of organizing the networking of the YeI KFU. This is evident from the limited forms of interaction between educational organizations. Therefore, this requires doing much work in that direction.

### 3) “University-university” model

In recent years, the development of interaction between educational organizations of higher vocational education has been actively developed. The motivation for participation in the organizations of various networks is the interest of higher education institutions in maintaining their status, orientation to dynamic development and enhancement of the efficiency of the use of available resources. Participation in the network is one of the most effective tools for achieving its strategic goals.

Yelabuga Institute of KFU cooperates with a wide range of domestic organizations in the educational, scientific and socio-cultural spheres. Due to the professionalism and long-term experience of the staff joint projects with YeI KFU are mutually beneficial for all network members.

Pedagogical universities occupy a large share among the partner universities, and this is not accidental: Yelabuga Institute of KFU is the "outpost" of the pedagogical education of the eastern region of Russia. Pedagogical universities perform one common task – they prepare highly qualified pedagogical staff for the entire country. One university is unable to solve the tasks and problems in the field of pedagogical education, therefore, the establishment of networks of educational organizations that train teachers is a necessity within a modern system of pedagogical education.

### 5) “University-enterprise” model

The modern economy requires the orientation of graduates to specific practical conditions of work, which, in turn, necessitates the close connection of certain areas of training of Yelabuga Institute with the enterprises of the republic. At the moment, close cooperation is established between the university and dozens of production sites, which allows students to take internships and practice at the leading enterprises of the Republic of Tatarstan during their studies.

### 3.3 Problems of organizing networking of Yelabuga Institute of KFU

Despite serious work aimed at ensuring the communication of the higher educational institution with the educational organizations and enterprises of the republic, there are a number of problems in the practice of networking. This conclusion was made on the basis of the following data:

1. Insufficient number of partner organizations. The partnership agreements cover an insufficient number of educational institutions and enterprises of the republic. In general, these are organizations located within 100 km of the university.
2. Limited forms of interaction between this type of educational organizations.
3. Insufficient number of joint projects and activities (Achcaoucaou, 2014; Ordorika & Lloyd, 2015; Ibatova, et. al., 2016).

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of theoretical and practical aspects of networking has led to the conclusion that networking is a certain system of interrelations that allows developing, testing and offering new models of the content of education, the education economy, the management of the education system and educational policy to the professional community and society as a whole.

With all the diversity of approaches to the definition of the essence of “networking” in education, scientists agree that the network form of organizing the educational process is an important aspect that allows in the present society solving various multifactorial problems in the field of education by integrating efforts, pooling available resources, and cooperation.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

As recommendations for improving the system of organization of networking of YeI KFU can be as follows:

- 1) At the level of educational organizations:
  - enhancement of accessibility and improvement of the quality of educational services;

- addition of several forms of networking and the development of social and communicative competencies in the educational process;
- ensuring continuity between elementary, secondary and higher vocational education;
- ensuring the effective development of the graduate's competence in the secondary vocational education, raising the level of its competitiveness;
- expansion of cooperation, interdepartmental interaction, social partnership of vocational education institutions, scientific, social and cultural organizations;
- formation of a positive image of educational organizations - participants in the educational network;
- maintenance of a positive image and raise of the rating of educational organizations in the republic, country and the world.

## 2) At the regional level:

- provision of high quality product of Yelabuga Institute of KFU activities in accordance with the requirements of the present time;
- development of the regional education system on the basis of changing the structure and content of education as innovative-active educational institutions;
- formation of a system of interaction between educational organizations in order to strengthen the quality of the educational process, motivate students to research and project activities, support talented youth;
- development of competitiveness of educational institutions in the educational network of the region;
- enhancement of control over the effectiveness of the use of funds received from budgetary and extrabudgetary activities;
- improvement of the quality and accessibility of information provided by the educational organization; and

- the appearance of an educational network of innovative-active educational institutions on the regional map.

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