

Formation of legal competence of future economists in conditions of continuous university education

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神戸学院経済学論集

第53巻 第3号 抜刷

令和3年12月発行

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to determine the state of preparedness of future economic professionals for the conscious use of legal knowledge in professional activities. To achieve this goal, general scientific methods of theoretical level are used: analysis of scientific literature on issues related to the formation of legal competence of future economists, as well as methods of empirical level: observation, interviews, testing, questionnaires, methods of expert evaluation, etc.

The essence of the formation of legal competence of future economists in the conditions of continuing university education is clarified. The results of diagnosing the state of formation of legal competence of future economists in the conditions of continuing university education are presented which showed that students are mostly at passive and reproductive and standardized and established levels of awareness of the organization of such activities which determines the ability to navigate in the legal framework of current legislation, the ability to think in legal terms, conscious use of legal knowledge in professional activities.

Key words : *economic education, future economists, continuing university education, legal competence, training.*

Introduction. The system of training of future economists in Higher Education Institutions is regulated by the Laws of Ukraine “On Education”, “On Higher Edu-

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cation”, the provisions of the National Qualifications Framework, Sectoral Standards of Higher Education, which determine the educational and qualification characteristics of higher education graduates. Modern professional training of future economists in higher education also takes into account the requirements of international educational standards and qualifications, included into the “European Space in Higher Education Area” Bologna Declaration, Recommendations of the European Parliament and the “On a single Community Transparency Scheme” Council. “On further European cooperation in ensuring a quality higher education system”, “On Establishment of the European Qualification Framework for Lifelong Learning”, etc.

In the context of the study, considerable attention deserve the works of scientists devoted to this problem of professional training of economic specialists, and in particular: O. Anufrieva [1], N. Boyarchuk [6] (formation of professional competence of future economists); N. Babkova-Pylypenko [3], L. Skibitska [21] (development of leadership qualities of students-economists), O. Varganova [7] and E. Ivanchenko [12] (practical training of economic specialists); M. Vievskaya [8], L. Dybkova [10], G. Kovalchuk [13], O. Naboka [16], T. Poyasok [17], L. Pukhanova [18] and N. Tkalenko [23] (problems of development of higher economic education); M. Atamanchuk [2], V. Riznyk [19], O. Romanovsky [20] and G. Cherednichenko [25] (readiness of future economists for professional activity). Thus, the organization of independent work of students of economics is the object of research by O. Yegorova [11], D. Tyurina [24] and K. Yaresko [24].

A number of scientific works is aimed at studying the professional competence of future economists in various aspects: A. Spitsyna [22] (by means of interactive learning technologies); O. Yakovenko [26] (in the process of practical training); T. Krutous [14] (in the process of teaching natural sciences); I. Vlasyuk [9] (in the process of studying professional disciplines); K. Mikhasyuk [15] (in the

process of training and production practice in colleges of economic profile); N. Bolyubash [5] (by means of network technologies); N. Balovsyak [3] (in the process of professional training). The above-mentioned scientific investigations are an undoubted contribution to solving the research problem, but they did not substantiate the concept of formation of legal competence in the context of continuing university education.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the state of preparedness of future economic professionals for the conscious use of legal knowledge in professional activities.

The task:

1. To determine the criteria and indicators for the formation of legal competence of future economists in terms of continuing university education.
2. To present the methods and technologies of step-by-step preparation of future economists for the formation of legal competence in the conditions of continuous university education.

Research methods:

Within the framework of theoretical research of the raised problem general scientific methods of theoretical level were used: the analysis of scientific literature for the purpose of definition and theoretical substantiation of pedagogical conditions of formation of legal competence of future economists; as well as the methods of empirical level: observation, interviews, testing, methods of expert evaluation; a survey were conducted among third-year students majoring in "Accounting and auditing" and "Management"; abstraction, idealization, formalization and generalization – for systematization and formulation of conclusions, identification of areas for further study of the problem.

In order to determine the state of readiness of students of the Faculty of Economics of "Vasyl Stefanyk Prykarpethian National University," Izmail State Hu-

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manitarian University» for the before-implementation of legal activities diagnosis
was conducted which was attended by 160 students.

The levels of formation of legal competence of future economists in the conditions of continuous university education were determined by by value-guiding method (with the following indicators: the presence of positive motivation for future professional activity; the presence of motivation for personal legal behavior; interest and need to master the necessary legal knowledge); knowledge (with such indicators as: awareness of legal concepts; awareness of the rules of law and state-building documents; awareness of the need for legal education by specialists in the economic sphere); effective (with the following indicators: the ability to apply legal knowledge in professional activities; the ability to make responsible legal decisions; the ability to resolve legal industrial conflict situations in the professional activities of economists); reflexive (with the following indicators: the ability to assess their personal qualities (image – “I”), the ability to assess their professional qualities (“I am an economist), the ability to assess the professional qualities of their colleagues (future economists) criteria.

The results of the research.

The university education of the future specialist is the main stage of the professional training. From the point of view of the uniqueness of the professional profile of specialists in economics, the formative influence of the educational environment of a modern university on the positive dynamics of the process of development of a competent personality of student is extremely important. According to the current legislation on education, the system of continuing education creates opportunities to: master the profession of an economist of various educational degrees (“Bachelor”, “Master”); to give the opportunity for future specialists to independently choose the logic, terms and forms of professional training; the possibility of continuing learning process, if for some reason it was not completed;

have the possibility to change the form of education; master additional specializations and get an additional specialty.

In the context of the study, continuing education acts as a holistic pedagogical system that organizationally, methodologically and technologically provides the individual's need for learning, spiritual and cultural development, professional competence in general and legal in particular.

Thus, the pedagogical concept of continuing education of future economists is not so much in the organization of a continuous learning process, but in a purposeful and gradual combination of individual standards of competence, which could lead to maximum effect and ensure a high level of legal competence. Continuity of university education of future specialists in economics in the study is considered in the “Bbachelor-Master” system.

The results of diagnostics of the levels of formation of legal competence of students of educational level “Bachelor” and “Master” in the conditions of continuous university education at the ascertaining stage of the experiment are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Comparative data of the levels of formation of legal competence of Bachelor and Master students in terms of continuing university education (by χ - arithmetic mean value, in per cents)

Levels	Groups	Education Specialty “Bachelor” χ	Education Specialty “Master” χ
Initiative and productive	Experimental group	7,8	16,7
	Control group	7,9	16,3
Standardized and fixed	Experimental group	18	29,3
	Control group	18,2	28,9
Passive and reproductive	Experimental group	74,2	54
	Control group	73,9	54,8

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According to the results of the Table, χ initiative and productive level of formation of legal competence in the conditions of continuing university education was found in 7.8 per cent (Experimental group) and in 7.9 per cent (Control group) of future bachelors, compared to the number of master's students – 16.7 per cent (Experimental group) and 16.3 per cent (Control group), which indicates a slight difference between the legal knowledge of Master's and Bachelor's students. The arithmetic mean of the standardized level for Bachelor's students was 18 per cent (Experimental group) and 18.2 per cent (Control group), for Master's students, χ was 29.3 per cent (Experimental group) and 28.9 per cent (Control group). As we can see, the majority of Bachelor's students were at the passive and reproductive level of legal competence: $\chi = 74.2$ per cent (Experimental group) and $\chi = 73.9$ per cent (Control group). The arithmetic mean of the passive and reproductive level of future Masters was 54 per cent (Experimental group) and 54.8 per cent (Control group) of students.

As a result of the diagnosis, we came to the conclusion that not a higher level of formation of legal competence among Master's students was shown than among future Bachelors.

Experimental work aimed at improving the level of legal competence of future economists and which was conducted in three stages.

At the first stage, information and enrichment stage, future specialists were enriched with the necessary amount of knowledge in legal disciplines.

At this stage, an elective course "Formation of legal competence of the future economist" was introduced (for students with a Bachelor's degree) which provided the application of information technology training. At the lectures, future economists mastered such basic concepts as "Law", "Legislation", "Legal consciousness", semantic content of the concepts of "Labor law", "Legal responsibility" and "Legal competence". During the lectures, future Bachelors compiled indi-

vidual terminological dictionaries of basic concepts of law. During practical classes, vocabulary work was aimed at quantitative replenishment of students' vocabulary with basic legal concepts. Future economists were involved in independent work, during which they worked on recommended literature, composed and solved crossword puzzles.

The purpose of the second, reproductive and activity stage was the development of students' positive motivation and values to the formation of legal competence in future professional activities.

Future specialists in economics worked on scientific sources on the problem of legal training, compiled a portfolio of professional achievements, they were involved in writing an essay "I am a professional". Students sought to know their own reserve potential, to master the ways of obtaining specific results of professional self and realization in the activities of a modern economist.

Scientific and research activities foresaw participation of students in the scientific and practical conference "Actual problems of legal competence of future economists", preparation of essays, reports, abstracts, presentations of the studied construct with the use of information and communication technologies.

The purpose of the third, productive and creative stage: actualization of the need for professional self and realization and formation of their personal legal culture.

All lectures of the elective course were based on a dialogue form, which required prior independent training of students. The leading at this stage was the project technology which foresaw the development of educational and professional projects by future economists: the research ("What is law?"), creative ("Legal challenges for economists"), information ("Legal field"), practice-oriented ("Official crimes").

The use of game technologies served to solve complex problems in the acqui-

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sition of legal knowledge, consolidation of material, development of creative abilities and the formation of legal competence. Business games consisted of the following stages: the stage of preparation (future economists developed a scenario, plan, general description of the game); a stage of the event (entry into the game was based on the results of the work with legal sources, during group work on the tasks students discussed legal topics); the stage of analysis and generalization (future economists entered into an intergroup discussion, analyzed the results of solving legal problems and summarized the acquired legal knowledge, the acquired skills and abilities in the context of their own legal competence).

The purpose of the fourth, evaluation and regulatory stage was forming the skills of future economists to carry out reflection, as well as mutual and self and assessment of one's own legal competence.

To intensify the evaluative and reflective activities, Master's students created a Startup (a group in Messenger called "Ambulance"), the idea of which was to provide legal assistance to future Bachelors in solving urgent economic problems. Future Masters conducted legal consultations to Bachelor students in completing financial statements, writing audit and forensic accounting reports, and assisting in regulatory and legal acts.

After conducting of the formative stage of the experiment, it was re-diagnosed to determine the dynamics of changes in the levels of formation of certain indicators. The results obtained are presented in Table 2.

As the results in the Table testify, the χ of the initiative and productive level of formation of legal competence in the conditions of continuous university education was found in 22.2 per cent (it was 7.8 per cent) in Experimental group and in 11.4 per cent (it was 7.9 per cent) in Control group of future Bachelors, compared with the number of Master's students – 31.6 per cent (it was 16.7 per cent) in Experimental group and 20.6 per cent (it was 16.3 per cent) in Control group,

Table 2

Comparative data of the levels of formation of legal competence of Bachelor's and Master's students in terms of continuing university education (by χ – arithmetic mean, in per cent)

Levels	Groups	Education Specialty “Bachelor” χ		Education Specialty “Master” χ	
		before	after	before	after
Initiative and productive	Experimental group	7,8	22,2	16,7	31,6
	Control group	7,9	11,4	16,3	20,6
Standardized and fixed	Experimental group	18	32,8	29,3	42
	Control group	18,2	22,9	28,9	32,8
Passive and reproductive	Experimental group	74,2	45	54	26,4
	Control group	73,9	65,7	54,8	46,6

which indicates a slight difference between the legal knowledge of Master's and Bachelor's students. The arithmetic mean value of the standardized and fixed level for Bachelor's students was 32.8 per cent (it was 18 per cent) in Experimental group and 22.9 per cent (it was 18.2 per cent) in Control group, for Master's students, χ was 42 per cent (it was 29.3 per cent) in Experimental group and 32.8 per cent (it was 28.9 per cent) in Control group. As we can see, the majority of Bachelor's students were at the passive and reproductive level of legal competence: $\chi = 45$ per cent (it was 74.2 per cent) in Experimental group and $\chi = 65.7$ per cent (it was 73.9 per cent) in Control group. The arithmetic mean of the passive and reproductive level of future Masters was 26.4 per cent (it was 54 per cent) in Experimental group and 46.6 per cent (it was 54.8 per cent) in Control group students.

The dynamics of the levels of formation of legal competence of future econo-

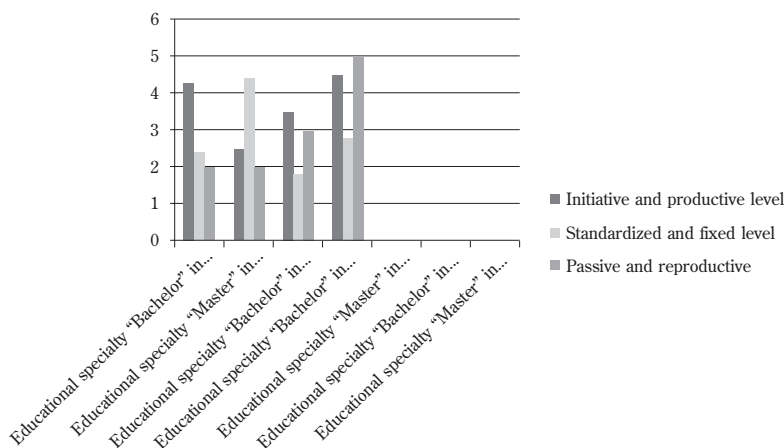


Fig. 1. Dynamics of levels of formation of legal competence of Bachelor's and Maaster's students in the conditions of continuous university education (by χ - arithmetic mean value, in per cent)

mists in the conditions of continuing education is clearly shown in Figure 1.

As can be seen from the figure, after conducting of purposeful work at the formative stage of the experiment in the levels of formation of legal competence of future economists there were positive changes: Bachelor's results of the initiative and productive level increased by 14.4 per cent; standardized and established level – by 14.8 per cent; passive and reproductive level – decreased by 29.2 per cent. For Masters, the results of the initiative and productive level increased by 14.9 per cent; standardized and established level – by 12.7 per cent; passive and reproductive level – decreased by 28.4 per cent.

Conclusions

1. On the basis of the analysis of scientific literature, the essence of legal competence of future economists in the conditions of continuous university education which is understood as integral quality of the person defining its ability to be

guided in normative and legal base of the current legislation, the ability to think by legal categories, conscious use of legal knowledge in professional activities are determined.

2. Criteria for the formation of legal competence of future economists in continuing education with relevant indicators has been determined: value and setting (personal and value attitude to legal education), (availability of motivation of professional activity); availability of motivation of legal behavior; interest and need to acquire the necessary legal knowledge), knowledge (awareness of legal concepts; awareness of knowledge of legal norms; awareness of the need for legal education), effective (ability to apply legal knowledge in professional activities; ability to make responsible legal decisions; ability to resolve legal industrial conflicts), reflexive (ability to assess one's own personal qualities ("I" am an image), the ability to assess one's own professional qualities ("I" am an economist), ability to assess professional qualities of one's colleagues (future economists) criteria.

3. The method of step-by-step (information and enrichment, reproductive and activity, productive and creative, evaluation and regulatory) preparation of future economists for legal activity in the conditions of continuing education has been presented, which provided obtaining by the students the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities during a press conference. role and business games, use of educational technologies (design, game, training, information, case technology, portfolio, coaching and experience, etc.).

4. The comparative analysis of the results obtained at the statement and final stages of the study showed positive changes in the results of the formation of legal competence of future economists after purposeful work at the formative stage of the experiment.

We see the promising areas of further research in the study of the problem

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