

TERMINOLOGICAL APPARATUS OF DESIGN RESEARCHES OF CONSULTING ACTIVITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Summary

The article reveals the issues of designing consulting activities in a higher education institution and describes the features of providing consulting services in conditions of uncertainty. An analysis of the theoretical foundations and classification identification of the design of consulting activities in a higher education institution is carried out. The essence and conceptual and terminological apparatus of the researched topic are highlighted. The content of the concepts "consulting", "consulting activity", "management consulting" are considered. Attention is focused on the conditions of uncertainty of our state, which today drive the economy, science, culture, education, industry and determine the development of educational consulting. The rapid growth of consulting services is emphasized, which determines the development of consulting activities, which precedes significant losses caused by mistakes made by managers in management activities, etc. The scope of consulting activities in the higher education system of Ukraine has expanded from professional training to solving problems in educational institution management, labor relations, service in state authorities, social security, etc. The article highlights the specifics of consulting, discloses the features of management consulting in modern educational activities, and highlights the features of providing consulting services to the participants of the educational process. The issues of the essence of the consulting function, which is based on providing assistance to education managers, analysis, development, provision and monitoring of the effectiveness of the implementation of the requested positions, are revealed. The main functions of consulting in institutions of higher education are highlighted. Arguments for the effectiveness of cooperation between consulting companies and institutions of higher education are presented. Emphasis is placed on legal support of educational activities, scientific and methodical support of the educational process, and management consulting. Large-scale transformations in all spheres of human life are outlined, which enable higher education institutions to effectively adapt to the conditions of a changing external environment using consulting activities in the education system, based on the need to use professionalism and deeper experience of professional managers of higher education institutions. Difficulties and contradictions inherent in the formation of an informational and advisory environment of an educational institution and the implementation of management consulting in a higher education institution are considered.

Key words: consulting, consulting activities, consulting functions, educational industry, higher education institutions, management, education managers.

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1. Introduction

The sphere of education of Ukraine is at the stage of radical and large-scale changes related to the current conditions, integration into the European and world space, modernization of state support for education, the emergence of new opportunities for the development and provision of educational services, an increase in relevant risks and the commercialization of education. In the conditions of uncertainty, frequent changes in legislation are observed, especially in terms of the relevance of the functioning of the higher education institution, competition in the labor market, anti-crisis management, and ensuring the provision of quality educational services. It should be noted that the division of the management process as the main field of activity of the educational institution and consulting as an additional one is an objective necessity. Institutions of higher education occupy one of the largest niches of educational consulting, expert activity and consulting in the field of fundamental research and innovative development. Systematic integration of scientific knowledge, management needs and public interests, whose adequate and rational use is recognized as a prerequisite for the effective functioning of a higher education institution based on project activity, is recognized as an effective way of optimizing the management activities of a higher education institution.

2. Conceptual and terminological apparatus for the study of consulting activity in a higher education institution

The state of life of institutions of higher education is characterized by constant updating of content, forms, methods, adaptation and transformation of participants in the educational process to work in conditions of uncertainty. For the productive development and functioning of the institution of higher education in the given conditions, a reorientation of the management model to a more adaptive, innovative one is necessary.

The innovative management model is based on the design of the consulting activity of the manager of the educational institution. In particular, the issue of the formed concept of consulting activities requires separate attention.

In the "Great Interpretive Dictionary of the Modern Ukrainian Language" the following definition of consulting is given – consulting services, consulting activities (*Busel, 2001*). In the economic encyclopedia, consulting is interpreted as the activity of specialized companies to provide intellectual services to manufacturers, sellers, and buyers (advice and recommendations) on various issues of production activity, finance, foreign economic activity, creation and registration of firms, research and forecasting of the markets for goods and services, development of business projects, marketing programs, innovative activities, finding ways out of crisis situations, preparing statutory documents in case of creation of new enterprises and organizations, etc. (*Mocherny, 2000*).

In his work, M. Bezkorovainy notes that consulting is defined as a complex of knowledge that enables the support of scientific research, research, setting up experiments and experiments organized for the purpose of expanding existing and obtaining new knowledge, scientific substantiation of various projects, verification of scientific hypotheses, establishment of regularities and construction scientific generalizations, which is carried out for the purpose of successful development of the organization (*Bezkrivnyi, 2015*).

According to the definition of L. Dashutina, consulting is the activity of advising managers, managers on a wide range of issues in the field of financial, commercial, legal, technological, technical, expert activities (*Dashutina, 2020*).

Based on the analysis of the approaches of different authors to the interpretation of the concept of "consulting", it can be concluded that there is no ambiguity in the understanding of the essence and content of the single concept. As for the problems and prospects of the development of consulting in Ukraine, this issue has not yet been sufficiently considered.

The main goal of consulting is to help, for example, in formulating a real goal of activity, or in achieving defined goals and solving set tasks, etc.

On the basis of the analysis of scientific sources and taking into account the above, consulting is proposed to be understood as activities carried out by professional consultants and aimed at serving the needs of managers in consultations, training, and research on the problems of their functioning and the development of the educational institution.

3. Theoretical foundations and classification identification of the design of consulting activities in a higher education institution

Many Ukrainian and foreign works are dedicated to the study of theoretical and practical aspects of the development of consulting, as well as the effectiveness of consulting services. Thus, among Ukrainian scientists, it is appropriate to single out L. Antonyuk, M. Bortnikova, O. Brintseva, V. Verba, I. Gontareva, V. Hrytsenko, V. Davydenko, H. Yelnikova, O. Karpenko, S. Kozachenko, A. Kononyuk, V. Korostelova, V. Kremenyha, O. Marchenko, T. Reshetnyak, T. Rybakov, Z. Ryabov, L. Skrypyk, N. Surzhenka, V. Khomenko and many others. Among the foreign researchers, M. Alvesson, E. Beich, T. Ambuster, B. Kornow, J. Poor, A. Sturdy, F. Stille, F. Wickham and others should be singled out.

The theoretical and methodological foundations of the use and expediency of the implementation of consulting activities in the field of higher education are substantiated in the works of Ya. Bolyubash, I. Bratzenk, T. Vlasyuk, V. Verba, A. Harmash, I. Hryshchenko, L. Dovgan, S. Korzhyk, V. Kremen, A. Kuharchuk, V. Lypov, D. Makatory, O. Okhrimenko, Z. Ryabova, V. Ponomarenko, V. Khomenko and others.

However, despite a significant number of works devoted to the research of consulting services, most of them are focused on efficiency from the point of view of consulting interaction, and the issue of evaluating the effectiveness of designing consulting activities from the point of view of the educational sector has remained practically unsolved, in particular, for institutions of higher education.

4. Methodological bases of designing consulting activities in institutions of higher education in conditions of uncertainty

The main goal of consulting activities in general and educational activities in particular is to help the management system (for example, a higher education institution) to identify problematic moments in the life of the institution that interfere with the achievement of defined goals and the resolution of set tasks. The described aspects determine the use of educational consulting in order to ensure the effectiveness and productivity of the life activities of the educational institution and to promote the quality of the provision of educational services (*Ryabova, 2022*).

Important for our research is the analysis of professional literature regarding the concept of "consulting activity", which is characteristic of different spheres of life, has a complex and multidimensional character, depends on the absence of implementation activity, is influenced by external and internal environmental conditions.

It is believed that consulting activity can include those circumstances that are created in the management process and should ensure its most effective course.

Differences in approaches observed in the scientific literature cause certain difficulties in the interpretation of this term. Taking into account the content characteristics of the concept of consulting activity, we will highlight its main categorical features. The method of content analysis turned out to be the most appropriate for this purpose. We analyzed the definition of the concept in 30 sources.

Consulting services, which are characterized by management consulting on any issues at the local or global levels and include the construction of development strategies and the implementation of innovations. Consulting services also play a significant role in the field of education, which is due to its reformation as a result of the transition of countries to a market economy, the cultivation of new opportunities for the development of educational services and the increase of modern requirements for educational institutions and persons who receive education.

The relevance of consulting for higher education is determined by the multifaceted functions it performs. Contrary to the term "consulting", quite often, in practice, the term "management consulting" is used. The leading idea of consulting is to make a managerial decision with the help of professional consultants. Most education managers, combining administrative and scientific functions, do not have sufficient experience and modern professional knowledge in the field of management and administration. At the same time, a significant part of the management staff of higher education institutions lacks the economic justification of management decisions, which, in combination with the implementation of the educational process, affects the quality and content of the effective management of a modern educational institution.

The developed author's approach allows you to consider consulting taking into account four aspects: scientific, conceptual, adaptive, systemic, technological. In our opinion, consulting is a conceptual system of designing adaptive management activities in an institution of higher education, which is presented in the form of consulting services for solving problems of management, development and functioning of the educational structure, etc. It is appropriate to distinguish between the concepts of consulting services and consulting activity, substantiating the latter as an element for designing management activities by the manager of an educational institution.

As for the design of consulting activities in education, it is worth simulating the features that are determined by the specifics of the education system. Separate educational structures provide consulting services of various nature, both to individuals and to population groups. However, educational institutions and employees of the education system are potential consumers of consulting services in the field of professional self-improvement and personal development, resource provision of the educational process and scientific developments and research, positioning in the market of educational services (*Khomenko, 2020*).

Using the methods of analysis, comparison and abstraction of the practice of consulting activity, educational structures engaged in consulting can include: higher education institutions, scientific and educational centers, agencies, etc. These institutions provide the following types of consulting services:

- assistance in developing strategies for the development of schools, colleges, institutions of higher education through the prism of corporate and individual group counseling or training;
- implementation of innovative developments in the field of education of children and adults under the conditions of state and contractual orders;
- carrying out various types of diagnostics and local socio-pedagogical research for scientific and methodical centers, educational institutes of innovative type and experimental sites

with the aim of summarizing work experience and determining potentially promising directions of development;

- summarizing the results of research and experimental work in the field of education, including corporate training and remote technologies;
- psychological-pedagogical audit and independent humanitarian expertise of methodological and technological means of education;
- informational support in the preparation of grant applications in the scientific and educational field;
- helping students of different ages (or their parents or guardians) in choosing educational routes and solving difficulties that arise in the educational process;
- implementation of various programs for improving the qualifications of education workers, including the organization and conduct of individual and group internships;
- services for scientific and methodological support of research in various fields of science;
- assistance in developing publishing projects, creating and republishing scientific and scientific-methodical texts;
- development of information resources;
- scientific, methodical and organizational assistance in holding conferences and seminars on educational issues;
- consultations in the field of educational and labor legislation;
- assistance to representatives of national diasporas in adapting to study conditions (Khomeiko, 2020).

With the development of the higher education system, there was a need for various services specific to a specific institution, such as: consulting on the organization of educational activities; conducting various researches (sociological, psychological-pedagogical, marketing, etc.) in the field of education or for the needs of the field of education; legal support of educational activities in educational institutions of various types and levels; support of licensing, attestation and state accreditation processes; development of educational programs, curricula and programs, educational and methodological materials, etc.

However, given the fact that a significant number of higher education institutions feel the need for management consulting assistance, the demand for consulting services in Ukraine remains low. The main reasons for this situation are:

- a difficult macroeconomic situation and a general decline in business management activity in Ukraine;
- lack of a culture of working with independent experts;
- low solvency of service customers;
- failure to assess the usefulness of consulting services;
- lack of guarantees of specific results and positive effect from counseling;
- the difficulty of obtaining objective information about consulting firms and their capabilities (Kapytsova, 2010).

The analysis, conducted on the basis of an expert survey of specialists of higher education institutions, made it possible to determine the weight of the segments of the managed and managing system, taking into account the specifics of the education system. For institutions of higher education, the segments of the managerial system have a greater weight (0.57) than the segments of the management (0.43), which is explained by the specifics of the activity, the duration of the operating cycles, and the role of the higher education system in the national economy. Among the segments of the managed system, the educational functional component has the

greatest weight, because it is the basis of operational activity. On the basis of this distribution, it is proposed to determine the integral parameter of the level of problems of the higher education institution, which is based on the decomposition of the problems of the segments of the controlling and controlled systems, takes into account the level of occurrence (perceived by the staff) of the problem (strategic, tactical and operational), the functional areas of problem detection and allows evaluating the components of the problem management for a specific institution.

To determine the effectiveness of consulting services in a higher education institution, it is proposed to differentiate three indicators using four parameters on a methodological basis, in particular: the problems of the enterprise, the purpose of consulting, the results of consulting services, and the costs of implementing a consulting project.

We fully agree with Z. Ryabova, who offered key recommendations to the head of the institution regarding the effective use of consulting technologies in educational institutions in conditions of uncertainty. In particular, it is:

1. Determine the needs of the team of the educational institution (through personal communication, group meetings);
2. Conduct an analysis of the activity of the educational institution, the contingent of applicants and their needs, together with the team, identify priority tasks;
3. Analyze the state of professional activity of team members based on factor-criterion modeling;
4. Contribute to the prolonged improvement of qualifications, participation of team members in the activities of professional organizations, groups, etc.;
5. Find out the condition and needs of everyone, if possible, organize the provision of assistance (especially psychological);
6. Involve the team in team performance of tasks (rotating project groups), agree on the possibility of performing the assigned tasks;
7. To organize a project-based mastery of the content of education by students. Initiating projects, applying for grants;
8. Implement contextual group meetings: team trainings, project work from any direction, holding fitback, etc.;
9. To ensure the stability of the institution's presentation activities;
10. Constantly informing the public about the successful activities of the institution and participants in the educational process (Ryabova, 2022).

5. Conclusions

Consulting in Ukraine is necessary to ensure the efficiency of higher education institution management and increase its competitiveness in the market of educational services through the introduction of innovative technologies. The development of consulting in the system of higher education will be successful if the macroeconomic situation improves, the managers of educational institutions realize the economic benefits from interaction with consulting companies, the popularity of consulting services increases, and trust in the expected results of consulting activities increases, etc. Further research perspectives will be aimed at developing recommendations for designing consulting activities in institutions of higher education in conditions of uncertainty.

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