



Влияние волонтерства на профессиональное развитие студентов, обучающихся на юридических и экономических специальностях

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АННОТАЦИЯ

Введение. Актуальность темы исследования обусловлена растущей потребностью в специалистах, обладающих не только профессиональными знаниями, но и развитыми soft skills. В условиях высокой конкуренции на рынке труда волонтерская деятельность может стать одним из важных факторов, которые будут способствовать повышению конкурентоспособности выпускников юридических и экономических специальностей.

Влияние волонтерства на профессиональное развитие студентов является предметом многих исследований, однако они в основном сосредоточены на медицинских и социальных специальностях. В то время как роль волонтерской деятельности в становлении будущих медиков и социальных работников очевидна и хорошо изучена, ее значение для профессионального развития будущих юристов и экономистов остается малоисследованным.

Цель статьи – выявить на какие профессиональные качества влияет волонтерская деятельность студентов.

Материалы и методы. В опросе приняло участие 200 студентов студентов 2-4 курсов экономических и юридических специальностей, разделённых на четыре группы в зависимости от опыта волонтерства. Респонденты представляли три вуза из России: Московский государственный университет технологий и управления имени К. Г. Разумовского, Кубанский государственный аграрный университет им. И. Т. Трубилина и Южный федеральный университет. Качественные данные были собраны с помощью 20 полуструктурированных интервью (по пять на каждую группу). Методы математической статистики: U-тест Манна-Уитни, критерий хи-квадрат, корреляционный анализ Спирмена и факторный анализ.

Результаты. Основными мотивами участия в волонтерской деятельности являются приобретение нового опыта и возможность личностного роста, а также желание быть полезным и участвовать в социально значимых проектах, причем у женщин эти мотивы выражены значительно сильнее. Выявлены статистически значимые различия в самооценке профессиональных компетенций и мягких навыков между студентами с опытом волонтерства и без него ($p < 0,05$). Качественный анализ выявил, что наиболее частыми эффектами волонтерства являются развитие коммуникативных навыков (90% респондентов) и повышение уверенности в себе (80% респондентов).

Заключение. Полученные данные о влиянии волонтерской деятельности на развитие профессиональных и личностных качеств студентов могут быть использованы для совершенствования программ внеучебной активности, а также для повышения вовлеченности студентов в трудовую деятельность в условиях дефицита квалифицированных кадров.

КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА

влияние волонтерства, социальный проект, профессиональное развитие, профессиональные качества

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Лицензия «С указанием авторства — С сохранением условий». Позволяет перерабатывать, исправлять и развивать произведения при условии указания авторства и лицензирования производных работ на аналогичных условиях.



Influence of volunteering on the professional development of economics and law students

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ABSTRACT

Introduction. The relevance of the study is determined by the growing demand for specialists who possess not only professional knowledge but also developed soft skills. In the highly competitive labor market, volunteering activities may become one of the significant factors enhancing the competitiveness of graduates from law and economics programs.

While the impact of volunteering on students' professional development has been the subject of many studies, they predominantly focus on medical and social specializations. The role of volunteering in shaping future medical and social workers is evident and well-researched; however, its significance for the professional growth of future lawyers and economists remains understudied.

The aim was to identify which professional qualities are influenced by students' volunteering activities.

Materials and methods. The survey involved 200 economics and law students from the 2nd to 4th years of study, divided into four groups based on their volunteering experience. Participants were students from three Russian universities: K.G. Razumovsky Moscow State University of Technologies and Management, Kuban State Agrarian University named after I.T. Trubilin, and Southern Federal University. Qualitative data were gathered through 20 semi-structured interviews (five interviews per group).

Statistical methods employed in this study included the Mann-Whitney U-test, Chi-squared test, Spearman's correlation analysis, and factor analysis.

Results. The primary motives for participating in volunteering activities were gaining new experiences, opportunities for personal growth, and the desire to contribute to socially important projects, with female students expressing these motives significantly more strongly. Statistically significant differences were found in the self-assessment of professional competencies and soft skills between students with and without volunteering experience ($p < 0.05$). Qualitative analysis revealed that the most common effects of volunteering were the development of communication skills (reported by 90% of respondents) and increased self-confidence (reported by 80% of respondents).

Conclusion. The findings regarding the influence of volunteering on students' professional and personal qualities can be utilized to enhance extracurricular programs and increase student engagement in professional activities, especially in the context of qualified workforce shortages.

KEYWORDS

social project, professional development, professional qualities

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INTRODUCTION

Volunteering is gaining importance, becoming an inseparable part of civil society and an important aspect of personal development [1; 2]. International organizations put forward initiatives with an emphasis on the role of volunteering in promoting sustainable development and ensuring inclusive community-driven progress [3]. The United Nations recognizes volunteering as a powerful tool for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [4]. The UN Volunteers program (UNV) emphasizes that volunteerism is "an essential way to achieve Sustainable Development" [5; 6]. The UN's Plan of Action to Integrate Volunteering into the 2030 Agenda focuses on enhancing the recognition of volunteers, integrating volunteerism into national and global SDG implementation strategies, and measuring the impact of volunteerism [7].

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) also underscores the role of volunteering in its global strategy. The IFRC notes that volunteers play a crucial part in humanitarian aid and developing the resilience of communities to crises [8; 9]. These global initiatives showcase the growing recognition of volunteerism as a powerful factor in social and economic development [10].

Centers in Russia (Moscow Student Volunteer Center, the Student Volunteer Marketplace project, etc.) aim to support volunteer movements at universities, recruit volunteers for events, and develop competencies necessary for volunteers' work. Thus, our research focuses on the experience of participation in volunteer activities among university students.

The study's relevance owes to the growing need for specialists with professional knowledge and soft skills. Volunteering is an effective tool for gaining practical experience and developing interpersonal communication skills important for future specialists [11; 12].

Our literature review demonstrates that plenty of studies focus on the influence of volunteering on the professional development of medical students. M.L. Mott et al. [13] show that the participation of medical students in volunteer hospice care programs facilitates the development of empathy and personal reflection skills, critical for medical practitioners. This finding agrees with a more general trend in medical education, which focuses on integrating humanitarian values into medical training [14]. A study by K. Zhang et al. [15] conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic shows that medical students who participated in volunteering programs acquired valuable experience and demonstrated high responsibility and readiness for professional work in extreme conditions.

Medical students are not the only ones who need to develop responsibility and readiness for professional practice under extreme circumstances [16; 17]. Volunteering expands students' understanding of their future profession [18]. Iu.I. Nosova [19] analyzes the impact of volunteering on students' professional identities. Nosova found a connection between volunteer activities and a clearer understanding of one's future professional role, which is especially important for students on the verge of choosing a career path. A. Khasanzyanova [20] demonstrated that volunteerism helps students develop soft skills, such as communication skills, teamwork ability, and leadership qualities. These skills are highly valued by employers and improve graduates' competitiveness in the labor market [21].

V. Fajardo et al. [22] explore the impact of volunteering on the experience of Latin American students in private colleges. The study finds that volunteering allows these students to better integrate into the academic environment, develop leadership qualities, and reinforce their cultural identity. R.A. Cnaan et al. [23], comparing motivations and advantages of student volunteerism in five countries, conclude that despite cultural differences, volunteering universally contributes to personal growth, soft skills, and social connections. C. Holdsworth and J. Quinn [24] in their study of student volunteerism in higher education in England demonstrate that volunteering facilitates the development of students' civil responsibility and social activity. This improves their professional prospects and builds a more active civic position [25].

Volunteering has a significant impact on students' professional competencies. The role of volunteering for students of medicine, pedagogy, and social work is well-researched; studies targeting the impact of volunteering on the professional development of future economists and lawyers are virtually nonexistent.

This gap in research is significant given the fact that economics and law do not involve direct work with people to the same extent as medicine [26] or pedagogy [27]. Nevertheless, soft skills, teamwork experience, and understanding of social problems and the ethical aspects of professional practice are important for these specialties.

The study aims to fill this gap and poses the following key research questions:

1. What are the leading motives of economics and law students for engaging in volunteering?
2. How does volunteering affect the development of professional competencies in economics and law students?
3. What are the long-term effects of volunteering on the professional development and career growth of economics and law students?

Our study seeks to contribute to the understanding of the multifaceted impact of volunteering on the professional development of economics and law students, considering potential benefits and limitations. The results can be used to improve educational programs and encourage volunteering activities in higher education institutions training future economists and lawyers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We employed a cross-sectional study design with elements of comparative analysis. The quantitative section is represented by a survey with a standardized questionnaire, and the qualitative section includes semi-structured interviews.

The sample consisted of 200 2nd- to 4th-year economics and law students, including law students from K.G. Razumovsky Moscow State University of Technologies and Management (the First Cossack University), economic students from Kuban State Agrarian University named after I.T. Trubilin, and mixed group of law and economic students from Southern Federal University (Table 1).

Table 1

Distribution of students by groups

No.	Group	N
1	Economics students with volunteering experience	50
2	Economics students without volunteering experience	50
3	Law students with volunteering experience	50
4	Law students without volunteering experience	50

The groups were formed through stratified random sampling to ensure representativeness by gender and year of study. The criterion for inclusion in the group with volunteering experience was participation in volunteer activities for at least 3 months in the last year.

All respondents completed an online survey including several blocks (Figure 1).

Twenty semi-structured interviews (five for each group) were conducted to investigate the experience of volunteering and its influence on professional development and motivation to volunteer in more detail.

Data analysis was conducted using the following statistical methods:

1. Descriptive statistics: medians and interquartile ranges for quantitative variables and frequencies and percentages for categorical variables were used to present the overall picture. This method allowed us to characterize the sample and the distribution of key variables.

2. Factor analysis was applied to determine the primary components in motivation for volunteering. This method enabled us to group motives into larger factors, providing a better understanding of the structure of students' motivation for volunteering.
3. Comparative analysis: non-parametric methods were used to compare different groups (with and without volunteering experience, comparison between genders and specialties):
 - Mann-Whitney U-test to compare two independent groups based on quantitative and ordinal variables.
4. Correlation analysis: Spearman's correlation coefficient was used to assess connections between variables (e.g., volunteering experience and the development of personal competencies). This method allowed us to determine the presence and strength of relationships between the variables without assuming these relationships' linearity.

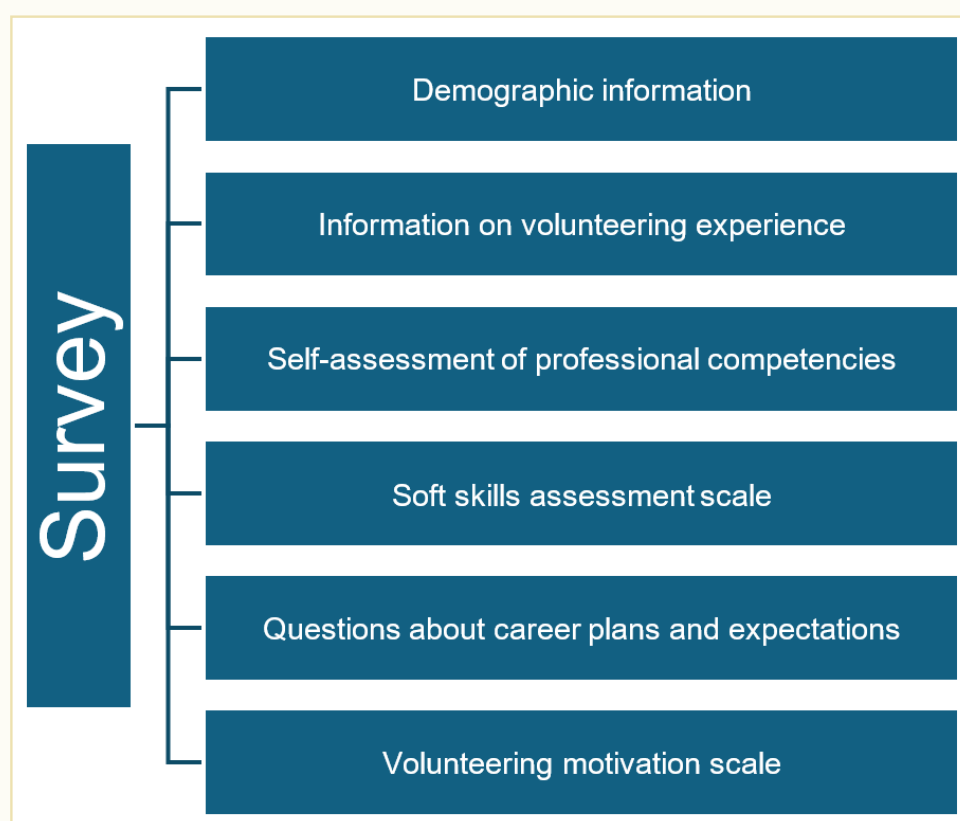


Figure 1 Key blocks of the survey

All statistical tests were performed with a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. The data were analyzed using the SPSS statistical package version 25.0.

Qualitative data from the interviews were processed using thematic analysis [28] and an open coding method to identify key themes and patterns.

The final step was to compare and integrate the results to form a holistic picture.

All study procedures were approved by the ethics committee. The respondents provided informed consent to participate in the study.

The study involved 200 students, with an equal distribution between the economics and law departments (Table 2).

The gender distribution was relatively even, with a slight predominance of women (53.5%) in both specialty groups.

Table 2

Gender distribution of study participants

Specialty	Men, n (%)	Women, n (%)	Total, N (%)
Economics	45 (45%)	55 (55%)	100 (50%)
Law	48 (48%)	52 (52%)	100 (50%)
Total	93 (46.5%)	107 (53.5%)	200 (100%)

RESULTS

The analysis of volunteering experience (Table 3) demonstrates that in terms of duration and frequency, economics and law students have similar experiences.

Table 3

Characteristics of students' volunteering activities

Characteristic	Economics students (n=50)	Law students (n=50)	p-value
Duration (months), Me [Q1; Q3]	7 [4; 12]	6 [3; 11]	0.62
Frequency (hours/month), Me [Q1; Q3]	10 [6; 18]	9 [5; 16]	0.57
Type of activity, n (%)			0.73*
- Social assistance	22 (44%)	20 (40%)	
- Environmental projects	15 (30%)	13 (26%)	
- Cultural and educational programs	8 (16%)	10 (20%)	
- Legal support	5 (10%)	7 (14%)	

*p-value for chi-squared test

No statistically significant differences between the groups were found ($p > 0.05$, Mann-Whitney U-test for duration and frequency, chi-squared test for the type of activity). Thus, the analysis of volunteering experience shows that economics and law students have similar experiences in terms of the duration and frequency of participation.

The analysis of the distribution of types of volunteering activities between economics and law students using the chi-square test did not reveal statistically significant differences ($\chi^2 = 1.29$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.73$), indicating similar patterns in the choice of volunteering directions among students of both specialties.

Table 4

Motivation for volunteering (median values on a 5-point scale)

Motive	Economics students (n=50)	Law students (n=50)	p-value
Desire to be useful, to participate in socially important projects	5 [4; 5]	5 [4; 5]	0.842
Gaining new experience and the opportunity for personal growth	4 [3; 5]	4 [4; 5]	0.681
Expanding social connections and diversifying leisure activities	4 [3; 4]	4 [3; 5]	0.753
Opportunity to find a paid job, receive benefits, bonuses	4 [3; 5]	4 [3; 5]	0.924

Opportunity to participate in projects that one could not otherwise take part in	5 [4; 5]	5 [4; 5]	0.876
- Cultural and educational programs	8 (16%)	10 (20%)	
- Legal support	5 (10%)	7 (14%)	

No statistically significant differences in motivation were found between the two groups ($p > 0.05$, Mann-Whitney U-test) (Table 4).

The analysis of gender differences in Table 5 shows that women tend to have stronger motivation in the aspects of "desire to be useful, to participate in socially important projects" and "gaining new experience and the opportunity for personal growth" compared to men ($p < 0.05$).

Table 5

Gender differences in motivation for volunteering (median values on a 5-point scale)

Motive	Men (n=93)	Women (n=107)	p-value
Desire to be useful, to participate in socially important projects	4 [4; 5]	5 [4; 5]	0.032*
Gaining new experience and the opportunity for personal growth	4 [3; 5]	4 [3; 5]	0.751
Expanding social connections and diversifying leisure activities	4 [3; 5]	4 [3; 4]	0.218
Opportunity to find a paid job, receive benefits, bonuses	4 [3; 5]	4 [3; 5]	0.863
Opportunity to participate in projects that you could not otherwise take part in	4 [4; 5]	5 [4; 5]	0.041*

* $p < 0.05$, Mann-Whitney U-test

The rest of the motives show no statistically significant differences.

The analysis of the relationship between participants' gender and their motivation for volunteering using the chi-square test revealed statistically significant differences in the distribution of high ratings (4-5 points) for the motives "Desire to be useful" ($\chi^2 = 6.84$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.032$) and "Opportunity to participate in projects" ($\chi^2 = 6.37$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.041$) between men and women.

As can be seen from Table 6, students with volunteering experience rate their professional competencies and soft skills significantly higher than students without such experience.

Table 6

Self-assessment of professional competencies and soft skills (median values on a 5-point scale)

Skill	With volunteering experience (n=100)	Without volunteering experience (n=100)	p-value
Professional competencies	4 [3; 5]	3 [2; 4]	<0.001*
Communication skills	5 [4; 5]	4 [3; 4]	<0.001*
Teamwork	5 [4; 5]	4 [3; 4]	<0.001*
Leadership qualities	4 [3; 5]	3 [2; 4]	<0.001*
Problem-solving abilities	4 [4; 5]	3 [3; 4]	<0.001*
Emotional intelligence	4 [3; 5]	3 [3; 4]	0.002*
Adaptability	4 [4; 5]	3 [3; 4]	<0.001*

* $p < 0.05$, Mann-Whitney U-test

The differences observed across all considered skills were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Correlation analysis demonstrated statistically significant positive relationships between volunteering experience and the development of the examined skills, with Spearman's correlation coefficients ranging from 0.21 to 0.35 ($p < 0.05$ for all correlations). The highest correlation coefficients were found for communication skills ($r = 0.35$) and teamwork ($r = 0.32$). However, these correlations explain only a limited portion of the variance in skill development, suggesting the influence of additional factors beyond volunteering experience.

The analysis of career expectations in Table 7 shows that students with volunteering experience have higher expectations across all parameters compared to non-volunteering students. The differences are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

Table 7

Students' career expectations

Indicator	With volunteer- ing experience (n=100)	Without volun- teering experi- ence (n=100)	p-value
Expected starting salary (ths. rubles), Me [Q1; Q3]	45 [40; 50]	40 [35; 45]	0.012*
Expected career growth rate (1-5), Me [Q1; Q3]	4 [3; 5]	3 [3; 4]	0.008*
Confidence in employment (1-5), Me [Q1; Q3]	4 [4; 5]	4 [3; 4]	0.003*

* $p < 0.05$, Mann-Whitney U-test

Qualitative analysis of 20 semi-structured interviews uncovers several key themes related to the impact of volunteering on professional development.

Table 8

Key themes detected in the qualitative analysis of interviews

Theme	Frequency of mentions	Quote examples
Development of communication skills	18/20	"Volunteering has taught me to communicate with different people"
Increasing self-confidence	16/20	"I have become more confident in my abilities after participating in volunteering projects"
Expanding professional connections	15/20	"Through volunteering, I have gotten to know people in my future profession"
Practical application of theoretical knowledge	14/20	"Volunteering has allowed me to apply what I learned at university"
Development of organizational skills	13/20	"I have learned to organize events and manage a team"
Improving time management skills	12/20	"Volunteering has taught me to plan my time better"
Increasing empathy	11/20	"I have become more understanding of other people's problems"
Difficulties in balancing studies and volunteering	10/20	"Sometimes it was difficult to combine volunteering with studies"

As can be seen from Table 8, the most frequently mentioned effect of volunteering is the development of communication skills (18 out of 20 respondents). Many students also note improved self-confidence (16/20) and expanded professional connections (15/20).

Fourteen out of 20 respondents point out the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in practice. This indicated the important role of volunteering in strengthening the connection between academic education and practical experience.

Developed organizational skills and improved time management skills are also noted by a considerable number of respondents (13 and 12, respectively), which sheds light on the contribution of volunteering to the development of important professional competencies.

However, we should note that 10 out of 20 students report difficulties balancing their studies and volunteering work, which highlights the need to support students in managing their time and responsibilities efficiently.

Qualitative data supplement and deepen the understanding of quantitative results, offering a more detailed understanding of how students perceive the influence of volunteering on their professional development.

DISCUSSION

The study answers the research questions and presents additional data concerning the influence of volunteering on the professional development of economics and law students.

Answers to research questions

1. What are the leading motives of economics and law students for engaging in volunteering?

Our study shows that the leading motives to participate in volunteering are "desire to be useful, to participate in socially important projects" and "gaining new experience and the opportunity for personal growth". These motives are common for both student groups, pointing to the universal nature of altruism and self-development aspects in volunteering.

2. How does volunteering affect the development of professional competencies in economics and law students?

The findings demonstrate that students with volunteering experience rate their professional competencies significantly higher than students without this experience. Particularly noticeable is the impact of volunteering on the development of communication, teamwork, and leadership skills. Our qualitative analysis shows that volunteering offers students an opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in practice, which is particularly important for economics and law specialties [29].

3. What are the long-term effects of volunteering on the professional development and career growth of economics and law graduates?

Although our study is not longitudinal, we discovered that students with volunteering experience have higher career expectations. They expect higher starting salaries and faster professional growth and show more confidence in employment in their field. These results indicate the potential long-term effects of volunteering on professional development.

Analyzing students' motivation for volunteering, we found that the leading motives are "desire to be useful, to participate in socially important projects" and "gaining new experience and the opportunity for personal growth". This finding agrees with the results of R.A. Cnaan et al. [23] and Jazadi et al. [30], who found that regardless of cultural differences, volunteering universally facilitates personal growth. Our study discovered no significant differences between economics and law students, which might indicate the universality of these motives.

Notwithstanding, our results show gender differences in motivation: women tend to have stronger motivation in the aspects of "desire to be useful, to participate in socially important projects" and "gaining new experience and the opportunity for personal growth". This finding partially aligns with the conclusions of C. Einolf [31], who also notes gender differences in motivation for volunteering, although in a somewhat different context. These results underscore the importance of accounting for the gender factor when developing programs to support volunteering among students.

The findings indicate that students with volunteering experience rate their professional competencies and soft skills significantly higher than non-volunteering students. This is consistent with the conclusions of A. Khasanzyanova [20] and Tleuova et al. [32] that volunteering helps students develop soft skills, such as communication skills, teamwork, and leadership qualities.

Particularly strong differences were found in the assessment of communication and teamwork skills. This may be especially important for economics and law students, as these skills are critical in

their future professional practice. This result supports the conclusions of V. Fajardo et al. [22] and Fithroni et al. [33] that volunteering helps students develop their leadership qualities and better integrate into the academic environment.

The qualitative analysis of interviews discovered that many students (14 out of 20) highlight the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in practice. This observation is important in the context of economics and law, where the connection between theory and practice is not always apparent to students. This result extends the findings of Iu.I. Nosova [19] about the influence of volunteering on the formation of professional identity, adding the aspect of practical application of knowledge.

Our study shows that students with volunteering experience have higher career expectations. This is consistent with the conclusions of C. Holdsworth and J. Quinn [25] that volunteering improves students' career prospects. Our study expands these findings by specifying them for economics and law students.

Despite the numerous positive aspects, our study also shows difficulties facing volunteering students. Ten out of 20 interview respondents mention difficulties balancing their studies and volunteering work. This points to the need to develop support programs for student volunteers that would help them manage their time and responsibilities efficiently [34].

The findings have important practical implications. First, they emphasize the importance of integrating volunteering programs into the educational process of economic and law departments. Second, they indicate the need to create specialized volunteering projects that allow students to apply their professional knowledge.

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The primary limitation of this study is its cross-sectional design, which does not allow establishing cause-and-effect relationships. Further studies could use the longitudinal design to track the impact of volunteering on the professional development of students in the long term.

The study is limited to economics and law students. Continued research could expand the sample to compare the effects of volunteering on professional development in different spheres.

CONCLUSION

Our study confirms the prominent role of volunteering in the professional development of economics and law students. Volunteerism facilitates the development of professional competencies and soft skills and helps students better understand their future profession and elevate career expectations. Our findings emphasize the need to support and encourage volunteering among students and integrate volunteering programs into the educational process of higher education institutions.

Appendix 1: Survey

Dear respondent! Please, answer the following questions. Your answers will help us study the influence of volunteering on students' professional development. The survey is anonymous, and all data will only be used in a summarized form.

1. Demographic information:

1.1. Enter your age: ____ years old

1.2. Enter your gender: ☐ Man ☐ Woman

1.3. What year are you in? ☐ 2nd year ☐ 3rd year ☐ 4th year

1.4. What specialty are you in? ☐ Economics ☐ Law

2. Volunteering experience:

2.1. Have you ever participated in volunteering? ☐ Yes ☐ No (If not, proceed to section 4)

2.2. If yes, how long have you been volunteering? _____ months

2.3. On average, how many hours per month do you devote to volunteering? _____ hours

2.4. What type of volunteer work are you predominantly involved in? (choose one answer option)

☐ Social assistance ☐ Environmental projects ☐ Cultural and educational programs ☐ Legal support ☐ Other (please, specify) _____

3. Motivation for volunteering:

Please rate how important the following motives for volunteering are for you on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 – not important at all, 5 – very important: 3.1. Desire to be useful, to participate in socially important projects 1 2 3 4 5 3.2. Gaining new experience and the opportunity for personal growth 1 2 3 4 5 3.3. Expanding social connections and diversifying leisure activities 1 2 3 4 5 3.4. Opportunity to find a paid job, receive benefits, bonuses 1 2 3 4 5 3.5. Opportunity to participate in projects that you could not otherwise take part in 1 2 3 4 5 3.6. Other (please, specify) _____ 1 2 3 4 5

4. Self-assessment of professional competencies:

Please rate your level of development of the following professional competencies on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 – very low level, 5 – very high level:

For economics students: 4.1. Analytical skills 1 2 3 4 5 4.2. Financial planning skills 1 2 3 4 5 4.3. Understanding of market mechanisms 1 2 3 4 5 4.4. Economic forecasting skills 1 2 3 4 5

For law students: 4.1. Knowledge of legislation 1 2 3 4 5 4.2. Skills in drafting legal documents 1 2 3 4 5 4.3. Ability to argue a legal position 1 2 3 4 5 4.4. Legal analysis skills 1 2 3 4 5

5. Assessment of soft skills:

Please rate your level of development of the following skills on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 – very low level, 5 – very high level:

5.1. Communication skills 1 2 3 4 5 5.2. Leadership qualities 1 2 3 4 5 5.3. Teamwork skills 1 2 3 4 5 5.4. Problem-solving abilities 1 2 3 4 5 5.5. Empathy 1 2 3 4 5

6. Career expectations:

6.1. What starting salary do you expect to earn after graduation? (in ths. rubles) ☐ Up to 30 ☐ 30-40 ☐ 40-50 ☐ 50-60 ☐ Over 60

6.2. How would you rate the expected speed of your career growth on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 – very slow growth, 5 – very fast growth? 1 2 3 4 5

6.3. How confident are you that you will be able to find a job in your specialty after graduation? (1 – completely unsure, 5 – completely sure) 1 2 3 4 5

Thank you for participating in the study!

Appendix 2: Structured interview guide for volunteering students

1. Volunteering experience 1.1. Please tell us about your volunteering experience. When did you start volunteering? 1.2. What specific projects or activities have you participated in? 1.3. What motivated you to start volunteering? What were your main motives? 1.4. How often do you engage in volunteering? Is it a regular practice or one-time activities?

2. Professional development 2.1. In your opinion, has volunteering affected your professional development? 2.2. Can you give specific examples of volunteering experience helping you in your studies or understanding your future profession? 2.3. What professional skills have you gained or improved thanks to volunteering?

3. Development of soft skills (personal qualities) 3.1. Which of the following personal qualities and skills do you consider the most important for your future profession:

- Communication skills (ability to communicate with different people)
- Teamwork
- Leadership skills
- Problem-solving abilities
- Critical thinking
- Emotional intelligence (understanding one's own and others' emotions)
- Time management
- Adaptability (ability to adapt to new situations)
- Creativity
- Responsibility

3.2. How are you developing these qualities and skills without volunteering?

4. Difficulties and overcoming them 4.1. What difficulties have you faced when volunteering? 4.2. How did you overcome these challenges? What did they teach you?

5. Influence on career plans and expectations 5.1. How has volunteering affected your career plans? Have they changed? 5.2. Do you believe that volunteering experience will increase your chances of employment? Why?

6. Recommendations and plans 6.1. What advice would you give to other students about volunteering? 6.2. Do you plan to continue volunteering in the future? Why? 6.3. In your opinion, what improvements can be made to the organization of volunteering activities for students in your field?

7. Concluding questions 7.1. Is there anything else you would like to add about the influence of volunteering on your professional development? 7.2. What is the most important lesson you have learned from your volunteering experience?

Appendix 3: Structured interview guide for students with no volunteering experience

1. Attitude to volunteering 1.1. Have you ever considered the opportunity of volunteering? 1.2. What reasons have affected your decision to not volunteer? 1.3. Are there any types of volunteering that could interest you? 1.4. What conditions might encourage you to volunteer?

2. Ideas about professional development 2.1. In your opinion, can volunteering affect the professional development of a student in your specialty? 2.2. In your opinion, what professional skills can be developed through volunteering? 2.3. Do you believe that your lack of volunteering experience could have any impact on your professional development?

3. Development of soft skills (personal qualities) 3.1. Which of the following personal qualities and skills do you consider the most important for your future profession:

- Communication skills (ability to communicate with different people)
- Teamwork
- Leadership skills
- Problem-solving abilities

- Critical thinking
- Emotional intelligence (understanding one's own and others' emotions)
- Time management
- Adaptability (ability to adapt to new situations)
- Creativity
- Responsibility

3.2. How are you developing these qualities and skills without volunteering?

4. Ideas about the challenges of volunteering 4.1. In your opinion, what difficulties can students face when volunteering? 4.2. In your opinion, how can these difficulties affect professional development?

5. Influence on career plans and expectations 5.1. In your opinion, could your lack of volunteering experience affect your career prospects? 5.2. Do you believe that students with volunteering experience can have some advantages in employment?

6. Recommendations and plans 6.1. What advice would you give to other students about volunteering? 6.2. Do you plan to volunteer in the future? Why? 6.3. How do you think volunteering can be made more attractive to students in your specialty?

Concluding questions 7.1. Is there anything else you would like to add about the influence of volunteering on students' professional development? 7.2. In your opinion, what is the most important aspect in the professional development of students in your specialty?

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