

MÜASİR MƏKTƏBDƏ GƏNCLƏRLƏ İŞ: QAZAXISTAN NÜMUNƏSİ

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ANNOTASIYA

Müasir məktəbdə gənclərlə işin təşkilinin aktuallığı orta məktəb mühiti çərçivəsində gənclərin pozitiv yöndə sosiallaşması prosesinin əhəmiyyətinin artması ilə bağlıdır. Tədqiqatda empirik məlumatlar əsasında paytaxtın nümunəsində Qazaxıstan Respublikasının təhsil müəssisələrində gənclərlə işin mövcud vəziyyəti və perspektivlərini təhlil etmək məqsədi qoyulub. Məqalədə 2020-ci ilin yazında həyata keçirilən sosioloji tədqiqatın nəticələri təqdim olunur. Araşdırma ümumilikdə 12 orta, orta ixtisas və ali təhsil müəssisəsində aparılıb. Astana, Kokşetau və Stepnoqorskda üç focus-qrup təşkil edilib. Tədqiqat əsasında belə bir nəticəyə gəlinib ki, formal qruplar (şagird, tələbə qrupu) daxilində şəxsi identifikasiya zəifləyir, əksinə, qeyri-formal ünsiyyət və asudə vaxt qrupları isə artır. Yuxarıda ifadə edilən bu şərtlər çərçivəsində gənclərin ictimai birlikləri gənclərin ictimai fəallığının legitimləşməsi üçün aparıcı qurum kimi çıxış edir. Lakin respondentlər yerli gənclər təşkilatlarının fəaliyyətini səmərəsiz olaraq dəyərləndirirlər. Tələbələr gənclər işinin təşkilatçısı kimi təhsil təşkilatlarını görür. Təhsil müəssisələrində gənclər işinin vasitələri və formaları müxtəlifdir. Onlardan ən qabaqcıl olanları tələbə özünüidarəsi, gənclər parlamenti, könüllü fəaliyyət və digərləridir. Gənclərlə işin əsas faydalı formalarından biri də eyni dövrdə var olan pedaqoji texnologiya prinsipləri əsasında qurulmuş Məktəb Vasitəçilik Xidmətidir. Müəllif gənc tələbələrlə bu qeyd olunan iş formasının təşkilinin əsas mərhələlərini və məzmununu təsvir edir.

Açar sözlər: Gənclər, dövlətin gənclər siyasəti, yunoqogiya, gənclərlə iş, məktəbin təhsil potensialı, tələbələr, gənclərin ictimai birlikləri/ təşkilatları, tələbə özünüidarəsi, məktəb vasitəçilik xidmətləri.

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YOUTH WORK IN THE MODERN SCHOOL: KAZAKHSTANI EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

The relevance of organizing youth work in a modern school is because of the growing importance of the process of positive socialization of young people in the conditions of a secondary school. The purpose of the study is to analyze, based on empirical data, the state and prospects of youth work in educational institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the case of the capital region. The results of a sociological study conducted as a part of the research project in the spring of 2020 are presented. The study was conducted within 12 secondary, secondary specialized, and higher education institutions. Three focus groups were held in the cities of Astana, Kokshetau, and Stepnogorsk. As a result of the study, it was concluded that personal identification within formal groups (class, student group) is weakening and on the contrary, identification with informal communication and leisure groups is increasing. Under the conditions given above, youth public associations act as the leading institutions for legitimizing the social activity of young people. However, the respondents assess the activities of domestic youth organizations as ineffective. The student understands the organizer of youth work, first of all, educational organizations. The arsenal of means and forms of youth work at school is diverse. The most advanced ones are student self-government, youth parliamentary and volunteer activities, and so on. One of the effective forms of youth work is the School Mediation Service built on the principles of peer-to-peer pedagogical technology. The author describes the main stages and content of the organization of the mentioned form of work with young students. The paper was carried out within the framework of the scientific project AR 14869235 "Youth work as a condition for the successful socialization of student youth" under the state grant-funding program of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2022).

Keywords: Youth, state youth policy, yunogogy, youth work, the educational potential of school, students, youth public associations/organizations, student self-government, school mediation services.

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During XX century, many illusory myths about youth were created, idealizing, on the one hand, and negatively evaluating the life and behavior of the younger generations as a whole, on the other hand. Nevertheless, in order to predict present and future processes, a strictly scientific approach to youth problems plays an important role. It is a great importance of study of the interests and life plans, value orientations and real behavior of young people, taking into account all the specific historical and social conditions of their socialization.

The country's tomorrow is largely determined by not only what kind of education young people will receive today, but also by how successfully they integrate into the system of social relations. The socialization and maturation of today's young people coincide in time with the process of modernization of all aspects of public life. Under these conditions, the state youth policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan is being formed¹.

Youth policy is a necessary condition for social progress, sustainable development of society, the goal of which is the creation and strengthening of legal, economic and organizational conditions for civic development and social self-realization of young people. However, any concept can remain on paper if the mechanism for its implementation is not thought out, and both the financial, economic organizational and personnel foundations for ensuring the tasks set are not created. In this case, we are talking about the *pedagogical support of youth work*.

Pedagogical support for young people should be based on the effective youth work as "a set of means and forms of socialization designed to integrate the younger generation into social life, guaranteeing the necessary changes for individuals and society"². Against the background of explained changes, there is a need to identify the socializing function of youth work which contributes to the conflict-free integration of the young generation of Kazakhstanis into society and the pedagogical technology of its actualization.

In order to develop the theoretical and methodological foundations for organizing youth work as a technology for pedagogical support of the Republic of Kazakhstan state youth policy, a group of scientists from Abai Myrzakhmetov Kokshetau University under my scientific supervision within the framework of grant funding for the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan program "Scientific Foundations of Mangilik El" (education of the XXI century, fundamental and applied research in the field of the humanities)" a scientific project "Yunogy: Theory and Practice of Youth Work in the Conditions of Modernization of Public Consciousness" was developed and successfully implemented.

Yunogy is defined as "a branch of pedagogy that studies the pedagogical influence on a person in adolescence in the process of personal self-determination and the formation of his socially oriented thinking, as well as serving the processes of socialization and education of boys and girls" (Rozhkov, 2018). The complex nature of the study of the problem required the research group to:

- To consider the trends in the development of the modern socio-cultural situation which indicate the urgent need for pedagogical support for work with youth in our country and abroad;
- Identify and describe the main paradigms of socio-pedagogical work with youth, their worldview foundations, positive and negative sides;
- Substantiate the need to build a new multicultural paradigm of youth work in the Kazakhstani socio-cultural space;

¹ <https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z1500000285>

² <http://kargoo.kz/content/view/51/321330860?lang=ru>

- Identify and describe the socio-pedagogical technologies of working with youth, their strengths and weaknesses;
- To characterize and clarify the features of youth work within the framework of a differentiated approach (work with students and working youth, military personnel, informal associations, etc.);
- Generalize, analyze foreign experience of working with youth and the conditions for its use in the practice of the Kazakhstani system of education and social services for the population;
- To develop new educational and methodological materials on the positive socialization of young people and socio-pedagogical support for young people.

At the first stage of the research work, we conducted a sociological survey to analyze the representation of Kazakhstani youth about the role and place of youth work in the progressive development of the country and the modernization of the public consciousness of Kazakhstani citizens (N=1500). The study was conducted in 12 of secondary, secondary specialized and higher education institutions. Three focus groups were held in the cities of Astana, Kokshetau and Stepnogorsk.

In the course of the study, we paid particular attention to the role of *personally significant agents of youth socialization*. Psychologists note that in the process of socialization, a group of peers largely replaces parents. However, our study convincingly proves that in early adolescence, the influence of the family on a young person is still significant, especially in the context of the traditional way of family life.

The structure of social communication within the youth subculture is mainly based on communication with their classmates or on a territorial basis. About 30% of the surveyed high school students consider themselves leaders within their youth companies, and 16% recognize the role of the performer, but not one respondent recognizes himself as an outsider or an outcast. At the same time, the majority of respondents (57%) find it difficult to answer about their social status in a small group. On the face of the problem of group identification and difficulties in social communication, affecting the holistic process of socialization of the individual. Informal communication with friends takes up most of the free time of today's youth. Priority is given to the active forms of leisure.

Our study proved that personal identification within formal groups (class, student group) weakens, while identification with leisure groups, on the contrary, it increases. It is not worth seeing potential deviants behind all, even the most extravagant, youth groups. However, it should be noted that the group isolation, corporatism, isolation of youth informal groups that are not included in the system of broader social relations create the prerequisites for the unfavorable dynamics of group social orientation, "transformation", the development of pro-social, leisure micro-groups into asocial, anti-social groups. It is in the development of a pro-social type of behavior that the *mission of youth work lies* (Teslenko, 2009).

The modern model of youth work should be built on the basis of the World Program of Action for Youth which is presented in the form of ten priority areas: "Education"; "Employment"; "Hunger and Poverty"; "Environment"; "Drug Abuse"; "Issues of Protection and Health"; "Juvenile Delinquency"; "Organization of Leisure"; "The Status of Girls and Young Women"; "Full Participation of Young People in Society and in Decision-making"³.

In Kazakhstani socio-pedagogical practice, the function of implementing these basic areas of work with the younger generation is assumed by *youth public associations*, which are one of the

³ <https://www.un.org/ru/sections/is>

most important subjects and at the same time objects of youth policy, since they are based essentially on public and state in nature. Being an institution of socialization, youth public associations not only contribute to the formation and growth of the human capital of their members and participants through various forms of non-formal and non-formal education, but also contribute to the development of social ties, both within the younger generation and intergenerational and inter-institutional. In other words, youth public associations are the leading institutions for legitimizing the social activity of young people.

According to our sociological survey, nowadays only 21.7% of young men and women are potentially ready to participate in the activities of youth organizations. The process of activation of youth associations outlined in recent years allows us to predict in the near future an increase in the number of young people who have expressed a desire to cooperate with youth organizations. Ultimately, this trend may lead to an increase in the number of youth organizations, which will eventually become the basis for strengthening the role of non-governmental youth associations in society. At the same time, the prospects of today's youth organizations do not cause optimism among 23.6% of young people, the other part of the survey participants (21.7%) consider the activities of youth associations only as an arena for realizing the ambitions of youth leaders.

In the youth environment, there has not yet apparently been noticed a turn of the state towards young people and their vital interests, therefore, the activities of domestic youth organizations are assessed by the respondents as ineffective. If we take into account the fact that the majority of the young people surveyed in their value judgments proceed from ignorance of the results of their work, the problem arises of the effectiveness of existing youth organizations and their popularity among young people themselves.

The quality of youth work is hindered by the lack of modern infrastructure. It's important, that during the focus groups young people expressed a unanimous opinion on the preservation, strengthening of the resource base and the development of a network of institutions of additional education and others fulfilling a social order for the implementation of additional educational programs of various levels, intended for various categories and groups of young people.

In the Soviet period, a rich experience was accumulated in working with young people through the system of social education in the person of the "Komsomol" and its children's wing (a pioneer organization). Considering that more than 90% of Soviet youth were its members, it was a structure of total influence on youth. It had a number of significant "conveniences" in terms of social control. First, it was characterized by a centralized management, a rigid vertical of management with the existence of primary organizations in almost all institutions, enterprises and educational institutions. Without touching on the content side of the matter and its ideological content, it should be noted that *the organizational foundations allowed the Komsomol to solve most issues of youth policy*, which did not exclude the growth of anti-institutional sentiments in the younger generation, a critical attitude towards bureaucracy and formalism demonstrated by the Komsomol.

Young students see the organizer of youth work, first of all, educational organizations (70.5%). Indeed, the school at all times had a huge educational potential. The category "*educational potential of the school*" can be defined as the relationship, association, integration of all internal and external educational resources, the possibilities of the educational system of the school and the participants in the pedagogical process, aimed at developing and shaping a socially active and harmoniously developed moral personality (Teslenko, 2023).

Since the beginning of 2021, a project of the Ministry of Education and Science "Concepts for the development of self-government bodies of students "School/Student Parliament" in the Republic of Kazakhstan educational organizations" is being implemented in all schools of the Republic (Rozhkov, 2018).

School parliaments are called upon:

- To form legal and political cultures among the youth;
- To promote the development of social activity of young people and the education of citizenship and patriotism.

With all the variety of functions of youth parliamentarism, there is a main uniting one — *identifying and representing the interests of young people, increasing the effectiveness of their participation in the life of the country, and forming a consolidated social order of youth to the state.* Various forms of work achieve this, for example, *public receptions* for youth are designed to form a list of youth problems, *monitoring* the youth environment allows you to evaluate the effectiveness of the youth parliament, *youth forums* act as a tool in creating conditions for improving the situation of young people, expanding their participation in public life.

However, in practice, we have a large number of problems that require a quick and effective solution. Unfortunately, we have to admit that in most metropolitan schools, student self-government is perceived as a game (for example: “Day of the Understudy”). On the face of the substitution of real student self-government by the system of KTD (collective creative affairs).

At the present stage, student self-government in almost all schools is built through the all-state children’s organization “Zhas Ulan” which works according to a standardized program (Zerde, Rukhaniyat, Otan, Ecoalem, Zheti zhargy, Salauat, Enbek). Nevertheless, in modern conditions, it is possible to call obligatory to modernize student self-government with the branch of the children's organization into a separate faction of the School Parliament. It is a painful process for many organizers of the children's movement including counselors who are accustomed to working according to a well-established scheme.

The main problem of student self-government is its isolation from the activities of the teachers' council and parent committees. Student self-government in most of the Kazakhstan’s schools has remained as a means for “organizing events.” Because of the transition to distance learning in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, schoolchildren have become less active which negatively affects their socialization. Under these conditions, it is necessary to organize the study of young leaders, to include them in the system of social design.

As an example of social design, I can cite my own project “School of Reconciliation: Peer to Peer” implemented by the Center for Support of Gifted Children and Talented Youth “Astana Daryny” (Teslenko, 2023). When starting the project, we proceeded from the understanding that the training of school mediators from among students is one of the priority tasks for the development of the mediation service of an educational institution. Mediation of conflicts between students, carried out by adults (teachers, psychologists), is often complicated by the difference in life experience and status of the conflicting parties and the mediator which is fixed in the traditional system of relations between participants in the educational process and makes it difficult to fully implement the basic principles of mediation.

Despite the specified background, peer-to-peer mediation has a number of natural advantages: (1) schoolchildren have the opportunity to better understand the essence of the problems and experiences of their peers due to belonging to the same subculture; (2) there are no status-conditioned relations of power and subordination between peers; peer-to-peer interaction makes it possible to make the mediation process commensurate with the age of the conflicting parties; (3) “peer-to-peer” mediation contributes to the “normalization” of constructive ways of resolving emerging contradictions.

Another trigger for the development and implementation of this program is the fundamental thesis of developmental psychology, which proclaims that the main neoplasm of adolescence is a

sense of adulthood. It is precisely on the development of a sense of adulthood, on its acceptance and understanding, that the program “School of Reconciliation: Peer to Peer” is directed largely. When developing the program, we proceeded from the fact that adolescents are distinguished by increased cognitive and creative activity, they always strive to learn something new, learn something and do everything in a real, professional way, like adults. The situation explained before encourages teenagers to go beyond the usual school curriculum in developing their knowledge and skills.

In adolescence, you can create an environment where you can form such abilities as organizational skills, efficiency, enterprise and establish business contacts. Such personal qualities can develop in almost all areas of activity in which a teenager is involved and which is possible to be organized on a group basis: study, work, play, etc. There is a formation of the system of personal values that determine the content of a teenager's activities, his communication, selective attitude towards people, assessment of these people and their self-esteem.

In the “Peer to Peer” program, a teenager is able to realize in himself the above-mentioned best personal qualities. In addition, participation in the program helps to develop such personal qualities as the ability to give feedback and reflect as a very important quality for a person in the modern education system. A teenager has the opportunity to engage in self-education, conduct independent search work, consider himself as a leader of group.

In the process of learning at school, every teenager at least once was involved in a conflict (with other students, with teachers or parents), became an offender, a victim and an unwitting witness in their side. Since in a conflict situation, most often, the true causes of conflicts are not eliminated and the feelings of the conflicting remain unresolved, the creation of a school reconciliation service is extremely relevant.

According to the Republic of Kazakhstan’s Law “On Mediation”, “*mediation* is a procedure for resolving a dispute (conflict) between the parties with the assistance of a mediator (mediators) in order to achieve a mutually acceptable solution by them, implemented by voluntary agreement of the parties”. Under this condition, “*mediator* is accepted as an independent individual engaged by the parties to conduct mediation on a professional and non-professional basis in accordance with the requirements of this Law”⁴. In other words, to resolve the most complex issues, which are impossible to be dealt by two humans on their own, a third party is invited, a neutral person — a mediator (from Latin *mediatio* — mediation).

However, mediation does not play a role as an arbitration. The main difference is that the mediator in no way considers himself superior to the disputants, does not impose his opinion on them, and does not push them to any decision. It is a process as if he moderates the conversation, that is, he simply keeps the conflicting parties within certain boundaries, not allowing them to insult each other, get personal, move away from the discussion of the controversial issue or infringe on the interests of any of the participants. The offender fulfills a duty in which he necessarily compensates for the damage caused to him.

The essence of the mediation process is that the disputants themselves have to come to a rational solution that will equally satisfy both parties, which will be clear to all participants, and the agreements will be seriously observed by them. Moreover, there will be no internal conflicts the disputants have worked out the solution themselves, they understand it from and to, agree with its essence. Therefore, the mediation service at school is often called *the conciliation service*.

⁴ https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=30927376

How to organize mediation at school? You need to find supporters of the idea to implement the activity. Therefore, it follows:

- Inform teachers, children and parents about the creation of a mediation service at school, about its essence and basic principles;
- To establish contact with the bodies in charge of mentioned area of social and pedagogical work with youth;
- Draw up an intra-school document to regulate the work of the mediation service.

For work, you will need a separate office where the school reconciliation service will be located (at first it may be a psychologist's office). An adult should definitely lead it. Today in Kazakhstan is introduced a *crime prevention manager* into the staff of educational organizations which has undergone the special training. It involves senior or average-level students in mediation. With an aim of implementing planned activity, it will be necessary to conduct a training course, for volunteer mediators with an initiative group of students, developed within the framework of the author's project "School of Reconciliation: Peer to Peer".

The program is based on the technology of "Peer to Peer", when schoolchildren come together to learn mediation practices with the aim of subsequently applying this knowledge and skills in resolving disputes, preventing and resolving conflicts among peers, as well as to disseminate the acquired knowledge, skills, and experience among peers, junior and senior students.

The "Peer to Peer" includes students-volunteers in grades 7-10 with the necessary personal qualities and a certain level of development of communication skills who have expressed a desire to take part in school mediation.

Our practice demonstrates that the main criteria for selecting student volunteers are:

- Interest in the mediation activities of the school mediation service;
- Personal characteristics of students necessary for the implementation of volunteer activities.

We propose to carry out the procedure for selecting future student volunteers at several stages:

Stage 1. *Stakeholder identification* through key questions:

1. Which student in your class do you turn to if you have a fight, are in a bad mood, or have something happened to you?

2. We are creating a group of students who will help their peers resolve conflicts (who is interested in getting to know this at a higher level and learning more about it?).

Stage 2. *Selection of volunteers in the training "Peer to Peer"* which resulted in a list of interested teenagers.

Stage 3. *Informing parents*. Parents present their written consent for their child to participate in the School Mediation Service.

Afterwards, you can transgress to the training of volunteers. The training program is designed for 20 hours, at the end of which all participants receive a certificate of a volunteer-mediator, confirming their competence. The content of the training program is aimed at solving the following tasks:

- To inform the group members about the concepts: "conflict", "styles of behavior in a conflict situation", "mediation", "mediator";
- To promote awareness of the personal resource for the implementation of intermediary activities;
- Inform participants about the stages of conflict resolution;
- To develop practical skills of conflict resolution.

At first, by all means, children will be able to work under the supervision of an adult specialist. Subsequently, those who most successfully cope with their duties can be entrusted with the

independent conduct of the mediation procedure. Certainly, if we are talking about quarreling schoolchildren. If an adult (teacher or parent) is involved in the conflict, in that case an adult specialist should deal with such a situation.

The School Mediation Service is a team of adults (facilitators) and adolescents (mediators) trained in mediation that seeks to:

- Resolve the conflict situation in a constructive way;
- To enable the communities existing in the school to understand each other and see in each person, based on personal rather than role-based relationships;
- Reduce the level of aggressiveness in the school community.

The “School of Reconciliation: Peer to Peer” program has been implemented since 2019, 588 volunteer mediators have been trained in twelve metropolitan educational organizations. According to the rule, students are recruited on a voluntary basis from among the most active and responsible students, for example, members of school governments. During the training, students learn the skills of conflict-free behavior among adolescents; learn how to manage conflicts, conduct restorative mediation in and out of school. At the end of the classes, students take an exam and receive a certificate of a volunteer mediator.

On September 23, 2022, on the basis of Astana’ school-gymnasium No. 26, the city’s flagship school for the development of mediation in educational organizations, Festival of School Mediation Services was held. In order to intensify work on the organization of School Mediation Services in the capital’s educational organizations, the participants expressed their desire to organize the quest show “My School – Territory of Mediation”.

My experience of working with young volunteers-mediators confirms that the volunteer activity of students in this direction is an important factor in the socialization of the child’s personality, since it contributes to the formation of such qualities as independence, activity, initiative, responsibility, and skill and, most importantly, the desire to find their place in life to be active and useful to society.

There is no doubt that the “Ashyq Niet” city children’s forum could become an effective platform for communication and interaction between the leaders of children’s and youth public associations in Kazakhstan. Such platforms are an excellent place for the professional and personal development of young citizens of the country aged 12-18 where they can fulfill themselves and be heard by the adult and pedagogical community. School mediation can also become an important topic in the discussions of the forum. Courage in thinking, self-confidence, enthusiasm of the younger generation is an important guarantee of successful youth work for the sake of the country’s well-being.

The achievement of a professional level of organizing youth work in Kazakhstan is a significant phenomenon. In addition, the prospects for the development of the profession and the solution of urgent problems of the state social policy, including in the field of youth policy, largely depend on the quality of personnel. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that in modern conditions young people are not so much *an object* of social relations, but *a real subject* of the historical moment of modernization of all aspects of public life.

An analysis of the problem of youth socialization during the period of modernization of the social system clearly demonstrates that the socio-economic situation that has developed in the country has most acutely influenced the behavior of young people and has had a strong impact on their lives. Proper state youth policy is the key factor for the sustainable development and stability of society.

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