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Behavioral Segmentation of Personnel in the Human Resource Management System of Universities

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ABSTRACT

In the conditions of modernization of higher education, the importance of effective methods of managing the personnel potential of universities and higher education institutions is increasing. The use of segmentation allows you to form an effective strategy for personnel management of various categories, minimize personnel risks, save time and financial resources. The purpose of the study is to identify the technologies of behavioral segmentation of the organization's personnel and to consider the possibilities of their use in the management of the human resources potential of higher education institutions. The analysis of the data of sociological surveys indicates the presence of significant difficulties in conducting behavioral segmentation of university teachers, which is due to a wide range of objective and subjective factors that determine the specifics of professional strategies of teachers. Based on the research results, a variant of behavioral segmentation of teachers is proposed, taking into account two factors: on the one hand, the level of expectations from work, requests to the employer, the most significant for teachers, on the other hand, the level of practical implementation of requests and expectations from the professional activity of teachers. The general characteristics and boundaries of the segments allocated depending on behavioral characteristics can become the basis for the development and implementation of a differentiated personnel policy, the formation of an effective system of motivation of employees of different categories. The behavioural segmentation of teachers, proposed by the author of this study, is based on general marketing approaches to the analysis of motivational orientations and preferences of a specific category of employees; the article considers a wide range of factors that determine teachers' satisfaction with their work. The complexity of the implementation of these approaches is due to the fact that there is no universal toolkit for behavioral segmentation of personnel, and the choice of criteria and methods for separating and dividing personnel should be specified each time taking into account the objectives facing managers. Keywords: staff personnel segmentation; behavioral segmentation; human resources potential of higher education institutions; marketing of personnel; segmentation criteria; job satisfaction

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INTRODUCTION

In modern conditions the role of the human factor as a key condition for ensuring the competitiveness of organisations is increasing. Accordingly, there is an active search for new effective methods of human resources management. In the context of modern management concepts aimed at attracting, retaining and developing employees, who form the human resource core of the company, marketing approaches oriented to work with employees are becoming more popular. The main goal of such internal marketing is to optimise tangible and intangible incentives and working conditions in such a way as to ensure maximum loyalty of the members of the workforce and to encourage the most successful and competitive employees to continue working for the company in question.

A special place in the system of intra-organisational marketing is occupied by personnel segmentation, which is becoming a popular tool in various industries and spheres of activity, as it allows forming an effective strategy for managing employees of various categories, minimising personnel risks, saving time and financial resources.

The aim of the research is to reveal the peculiarities of behavioural segmentation of the personnel of a modern organisation and to consider the possibilities of using behavioural segmentation technologies in the management of human resources potential of universities.

In order to achieve this goal, it is intended to solve the following tasks:

- to consider modern theoretical approaches to the segmentation of personnel of the organisation;
- to reveal the essence and significance of behavioural segmentation in the system of higher school personnel potential management;
- to assess the possibility of using labour satisfaction parameters for behavioural segmentation of university teachers;
- to propose a variant of teachers' segmentation according to the levels of both the most significant expectations from work and their practical realisation;

• outline ways of using behavioural segmentation of teachers in the system of management of human resources potential of higher education institutions.

The possibilities of introducing segmentation techniques in personnel management are disclosed in many scientific works — experts consider these techniques as the division of employees into groups 'depending on their value for the organisation and the use in personnel planning and in general in personnel work of the features and importance of each group' [1]. The problems of personnel differentiation according to the amount of income based on the salary level are actively developed, the characteristics of professional and qualification segmentation are identified, and the competitiveness of different segments is assessed [2]. The peculiarities of working with certain age categories of employees are identified [3]; a matrix of their division depending on the value and significance of the selected groups for the company is proposed as a technology of profile segmentation [4].

Analysing modern developments in this area, it should be acknowledged that the studied problematics in the field of higher education has not yet become the subject of systematic scientific research. Some aspects are disclosed in [5], where the possibilities of using the segmentation of the teaching staff in the process of change management in the personnel of a non-state higher education institution are assessed. It is obvious that in modern conditions, when the teaching community is becoming increasingly heterogeneous in composition and diverse in qualitative characteristics, the probability of using these technologies increases [6, 7]. The dynamics of the scientific and pedagogical staff of higher education institutions reflects many general trends in the transformation of human resources potential. The problems of socio-demographic segmentation of higher education teachers are often revealed in the context of discriminatory manifestations associated with the restriction of professional

and qualification growth opportunities for certain categories of employees. This is related, for example, to gender aspects — many publications reflect the peculiarities of formation of trajectories of scientific-pedagogical and career development of female teachers [8]. The issues of age segmentation are often considered on the example of young teachers who are just starting their professional career and are relatively vulnerable in many formal parameters — for example, in terms of indicators of research and publication activity [9]. The problem of ageing of university teaching staff (increase in the share of representatives of the older age segment) is actively discussed [10, 11]. It does not always take into account the fact that due to the specifics of higher education, the accumulated experience, professional skills, and academic maturity have a special value.

It is worth noting that the problems of behavioural segmentation of university teaching staff have been reflected in a much smaller number of scientific works.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

The study of personnel segmentation mechanisms is possible only if a wide range of scientific methods is used. In particular, the study uses comparative, typological and economic-statistical types of analysis.

The empirical base is based on the results of sociological surveys and economic and statistical works on the problems of labour satisfaction and motivation of higher education employees. The author of this article uses the data obtained by the National Research University Higher School of Economics in the course of interviews with teachers of higher education institutions (the project 'Monitoring the Economics of Education') in the academic year 2020–2021,¹ which can be considered representative taking into account the main parameters of respondents — representatives

of university teaching staff. The results of other sociological surveys, economic and statistical studies on the problems of introducing marketing technologies in the practice of management of human resources potential of higher education, conducted in recent years in various universities, are also analysed.

RESULTS

Behavioural segmentation in the personnel marketing system

Classical marketing actively uses behavioural segmentation of consumers, within which consumers are structured and divided into separate groups depending on their motivation to purchase goods or services. In modern personnel marketing, a similar approach is used to identify different categories of potential or actual employees. Personnel segments are formed on the basis of similarity of basic expectations, peculiarities of labour motivation, as well as requirements to the employer.

A special place in the behavioural segmentation system is occupied by structuring the company's employees. Intra-organisational personnel marketing implies a personnel policy aimed at identifying and satisfying the needs of various categories of employees to the fullest extent possible. The effectiveness of strategies implemented in this area can be judged by a wide range of indicators from staff turnover to the overall efficiency of the organisation. Behavioural segmentation makes it possible to reveal the peculiarities of individual career trajectories; to determine motivational preferences; to assess the need to develop and implement HR programmes aimed at retaining and developing individual segments; to ensure a high level of loyalty and efficiency of professional activity of the work team.

Behavioural segmentation of university teaching staff is one of the promising areas of higher education personnel marketing. The use of marketing tools in a modern university allows solving a wide range of personnel tasks in the conditions

¹ Job satisfaction, career strategies and plans of Russian university teachers. Newsletter 2021. URL: https://www.hse.ru/data/2021/11/24/1448338190/ib 9 2021.pdf

of modernisation of higher education institutions, emergence of new forms of competition and toughening of confrontation with other subjects of the educational services market. The general marketing technologies of identifying and analysing professional preferences of individual categories of employees can be used as basic approaches to the segmentation of university teachers. In our opinion, the practical analysis of behavioural segmentation tools in this case should be based on the assessments of teachers' labour satisfaction.

In modern science and management practice there are various techniques for this purpose [12–15]. There are technologies that allow us to give a general assessment of the attitude to work based on the analysis of objective parameters of professional activity; there are tools, the use of which makes it possible to identify and reveal the features of emotional perception of individual labour functions, elements of socio-psychological climate in the team and interaction with colleagues. For the most complete and reliable analysis of various aspects of staff labour satisfaction, the methods of sociological research are actively used.

Assessment of labour satisfaction of university teachers as a basis for behavioural segmentation

The special importance of labour satisfaction (as a complex integrative indicator of personnel's attitude to their work) causes high interest in empirical studies on this issue [16, 17]. Experts pay much attention to the identification and assessment of individual factors that determine the satisfaction of teachers, including the content and nature of work, career development, financial remuneration, working conditions, etc. According to the results of such surveys, it was revealed that teachers are most often satisfied with their achievements in pedagogical activity (77.5% of respondents) [18]. Other studies reveal the motivational significance of labour satisfaction factors; at the same time, the dominant role of remuneration is questioned [19]. Some experts note that the most important

aspects determining a high level of overall labour satisfaction are its content and conditions, fairness of internal working relationships [20].

In general, the data of sociological surveys of university teachers allow not only to reveal the most important factors influencing the labour satisfaction of teachers, but also to differentiate the respondents according to the peculiarities of their professional strategies.

The level of earnings (and mainly its subjective assessment) occupies a special place in the system of behavioural segmentation indicators. In general, the results of interviews with university teachers (reflected in the 'Monitoring of the Economics of Education') allow us to characterise the level of teachers' satisfaction with remuneration as acceptable [21]. More than half of the respondents note that they are 'completely' or 'rather' satisfied with the amount of income from their professional activity. Only 15.4% of respondents are not satisfied with the amount of earnings at all. Teachers' satisfaction with their income largely determines their attitude to their work in general. Among those who are completely dissatisfied with the income from their professional activity, only a minimal share (2.4%) notes that they are completely satisfied with their work; and almost 34 of respondents admit that they are not satisfied at all. Accordingly, the share of surveyed teachers who are fully satisfied with their work is the highest among those who are fully satisfied with their labour remuneration level.

But this dependence is not so obvious when it comes to the category of individuals who consider their income to be average (satisfied with some things and not with others). More than half of the individuals who give this assessment note that they are most likely not satisfied with their work.

Thus, the comparison of assessments of satisfaction with both labour and income shows that there is no clear correlation between these parameters of activity. The amount of earnings occupies an important place in the system of motivational orientations of teachers, but even a

relatively high level of satisfaction with income does not compensate for dissatisfaction with other aspects of work. The high importance of non-monetary incentives in the system of parameters (determining labour satisfaction) is one of the peculiarities of professional activity of higher school teachers.

In part, these circumstances determine the complexity and ambiguous nature of assessments of labour satisfaction of different categories of employees. Obviously, when identifying the criteria for behavioural segmentation, it is necessary to take into account a greater number of factors that determine motivational preferences and peculiarities of teachers' professional behaviour. In order to obtain the most complete information it is advisable to use the survey data, which compares two important aspects: the first is the opportunities offered by work in higher education institution (which are important for every teacher), the second is the degree of their practical realisation in the current situation.

If we consider the first one, then first of all it is necessary to note the stability of earnings and employment. 34 of surveyed teachers expect these guarantees and note that it is very important for them personally; however, the share of those who managed to realise this opportunity is 3 times lower. It is obvious that stable receipt of a fixed (salary) part of earnings is guaranteed to all those officially employed in higher education institutions. At the same time, the complex structure of labour remuneration and the high proportion of non-fixed incentive rewards create certain preconditions for the amount received to be unstable — its value is constantly revised based on the results of reporting periods. Teachers' concerns about the stability of employment in higher education are relevant and quite understandable. Digitalisation and the significant spread of distance forms of work, the implementation of personnel policy on 'rejuvenation' of the

teaching staff, tougher requirements for teachers when competing for positions — these and many other circumstances cause an increase in professional competition and destabilisation of the situation in the intra- and inter-university labour markets. In this context, we can consider the results of the sociological survey reflecting the concern and wariness of teachers who have not been able to obtain guarantees of stable earnings and employment while working at higher education institutions.

The discrepancy between the opportunities provided by higher education institutions and the measure of their realisation in terms of salaries is even more significant. It should be emphasised that a significant proportion of respondents believe that the higher education system can provide a high level of remuneration for labour. At the same time, the majority considers it bad luck that they have not managed to achieve this. 2/3 of the respondents said that working in higher education in principle provides an opportunity to earn high wages, but only every tenth respondent believes that he/she has taken advantage of it in his/her current job.

The differences were also very significant between expectations and reality regarding:

- social security (the share of those who received it while working at the university is 2.7 times lower than those who failed to do so);
- professional growth and career (the share of those who are satisfied is 2.6 times lower than those who are disappointed);
- independent planning of one's work (2.8 times fewer respondents gave a positive answer than a negative one);
- creative and innovative nature of labour (the ratio of those who agreed and denied this statement is 1:2).

However, one should not conclude that teachers are massively disappointed in their professional activity. The noticeable prevalence of negative answers when assessing such important aspects of their work may indicate the presence of overestimated, vague, and not detailed expectations from pedagogical work in higher education institutions, as well as significant professional ambitions, which turned out to be much more difficult to realise than planned.

The differences between expectations and realities are less obvious when teachers assess the possibility of carrying out research activities, the characteristics of which are the most important parameters used in monitoring higher education institutions and determining their success. It is the scientific achievements of teachers, formalised in the indicators of an effective contract, that influence the overall position of the higher education institution, its image, and its place in the ratings. However, even in the implementation of such a significant for higher education institutions direction of activity, teachers still face problems. 46.6% of the respondents consider the opportunity to engage in research activities as one of the main advantages of working at the university and note the importance of this aspect for themselves; the share of those who manage to use this opportunity in practice is 1.5 times lower than the number of those who miss it. It can be assumed that for the majority of teachers the main obstacle to the fulfilment of scientific work is the extremely high teaching load, which does not leave time for full-fledged research. At the same time, the requirements related to ensuring the level of scientific activity of teachers are constantly tightened.

Less disappointment is associated with such aspect of teachers' professional activity as recognition, social status, the initial importance of which is noted by less than 30% of teachers; the share of those to whom the current job still gave an opportunity to feel the social and status value of their labour is 1.2 times lower. The only work parameter in which the reality has exceeded expectations is the prospect of

working with young people. More than 63% of respondents note that their current work allows them to fully realise this opportunity; the share of those for whom this aspect of university work was extremely important from the very beginning is 51.8% (*Table 1*).

In fact, with the help of the survey results it is possible to classify teachers into different segments: on the one hand, depending on how high the level of initial expectations from work is, and on the other hand, what is the degree of practical realisation of these opportunities. It should be noted that unrealised expectations can be considered not as a sign of professional 'unsuccessfulness', but as a significant motivational factor determining the directions of further professional development. At the same time, it is important to take into account that in some cases we are talking about overestimated expectations, disappointment in the profession, associated with individual characteristics of perception of teaching labour and other subiective factors.

It is obvious that an important factor of differentiation of teachers' behavioural strategies is their professional and qualification status, their place in the hierarchical structure of the university. The data of the sociological survey allow us to identify and reveal the nature of dependence between the parameters of their job satisfaction and job positions. More than 2/3 of respondents occupying managerial positions (heads of departments, heads of chairs, deans, vice-rectors, rectors) are satisfied with their work. This indicator is significantly lower among employees whose positions in the hierarchical structure of the university are not so high. For example, 58-60% of surveyed teachers, senior teachers, and assistants speak about their job satisfaction. It should be noted that even lower level of labour satisfaction is characteristic of associate professors. The reason for this distribution of evaluations is probably that it is the persons occupying the position of associate professor who are responsible for the

Table 1

The most important work parameters for teachers and the assessment of the realization of the opportunities that work at the university provides (in % of the number of respondents)

Operation parameter	Working at a university provides me with this opportunity, and it is very important for me personally	My current job fully allows me to realize this opportunity
Stability of earnings and employment	73,6	25,5
High level of wages	66,6	9,9
Social security	58,4	21,7
Opportunity to work with young people	51,8	63,1
Independent planning of one's work	47,3	17,0
Creative and innovative nature of labour	47,2	22,9
Opportunity to engage in scientific activities	46,6	31,7
Professional growth and career	43,5	16,7
Recognition, social status	29,1	23,0

Source: compiled by the author based on newsletter "Job satisfaction, career strategies and plans of teachers at Russian universities". 2021. URL: https://www.hse.ru/data/2021/11/24/1448338190/ib 9 2021.pdf

bulk of teaching and methodological workload in the university, and the level of income, despite the length of service, academic degrees and titles, does not correspond to the labour costs.

In general, the analysis shows that there are significant difficulties in conducting behavioural segmentation of university teachers due to a wide range of subjective factors that determine the specifics of professional strategies. It should also be taken into account that the choice of segmentation technologies is determined primarily by the tasks to be solved within the framework of the assessment of human resources potential of higher

education institutions. The general characteristics and boundaries of the segments identified depending on behavioural characteristics can become the basis for the development and implementation of differentiated personnel policy, formation of an effective system of motivation of employees of different categories.

Variant of segmentation of teachers by the level of the most significant expectations from work and the level of their practical realisation

Based on the results of the conducted research, we can propose a variant of behav-

Table 2

Segmentation of teachers by the level of the most significant expectations from work and the level of their practical implementation

The level of job expectations and requests that are most significant	The level of practical implementation of requests and expectations from the work of teachers		
for teachers	High	Low	
High	'Effective' teachers, whose high expectations coincide with reality; they use all opportunities provided by the university and successfully implement their professional strategies; high performance results in higher income and stable positions on intra- and interuniversity labour markets	Teachers, whose level of demands and expectations from work in higher education institution significantly exceeds their real personal capabilities; such employees have a low level of labour satisfaction, acutely feel their unfulfillment. Probably, it is connected with the overestimated level of expectations from work and insufficiently high personal professional potential	
Low	Teachers who got the opportunity to self-realise and achieve personal professional goals to a greater extent than they had planned. This may be due to the lowered level of expectations from work in higher education institution and high personal potential, which allowed to receive relatively high income	Teachers with lower level of competitiveness, who initially had no special expectations from their work in higher education institution or mistakenly chose the field of professional activity; low level of labour satisfaction is aggravated by low income level	

Source: compiled by the author.

ioural segmentation of teachers based on two parameters (*Table 2*):

- the level of job expectations, requests to the employer, the most significant for teachers;
- the level of practical realisation of teachers' requests and their job expectations.

One of the obvious disadvantages of behavioural segmentation is that employees with significantly different professional and qualification status, socio-demographic characteristics, income level, etc. may be assigned to the same group. It is possible that the sample formed on the basis of behavioural preferences and motivational characteristics turns out to be very dispersed and heterogeneous in composition. To obtain more accurate information, behavioural characteristics of personnel can be used not as

the main, but as an additional differentiation factor. It is advisable to conduct behavioural segmentation among separate socio-demographic categories of employees — for example, to assess the level of labour satisfaction and motivational characteristics of representatives of the same age segment (e.g., young teachers) or professional and qualification segment (persons performing the same professional functions).

At the same time, various advantages of using behavioural segmentation can be highlighted. It is the distribution based on personal preferences and individual professional strategies that gives not a formalised but a real cross-section of the personnel situation. The evaluative, emotionally coloured nature of information significantly deepens and adds important details to the sys-

tem of knowledge about the state and problems of development of human resources potential of the organisation.

It should be acknowledged that the mechanisms for using the results of behavioural segmentation of teachers in the practice of intra-university management have not yet been definitively formed — its implementation is possible depending on the specific managerial tasks faced by researchers.

In our opinion, behavioural segmentation of teachers (for example, depending on the level of job satisfaction) can be useful for solving a wide range of problems in the field of personnel management, including:

- as a format for generalising and presenting the results of the analysis of corporate culture, professional preferences, socio-psychological climate, etc..;
- as a factor determining the differentiated nature of management measures in the development of additional professional training programmes, improvement of motivation and incentive system;
- as a basis for the formation of a personnel reserve, management of professional qualification and career development of teachers.

The analysis of qualitative and structural characteristics of teacher segments is of great importance for the creation and implementation of human resources strategies for the development of higher education institutions, identification and minimisation of risks associated with the solution of large-scale tasks in the period of active modernisation of the entire system of higher education.

CONCLUSIONS

So far, there is no reason to speak about the existence of both tested methods of intra-organisational behavioural segmentation of personnel and the existence of sufficient practical experience in this area. In our opinion, only general principles can be emphasised:

- 1. Scientific basis. The selection of segmentation criteria, data collection; their systematisation and use should be based on the general methodological principles of management and personnel management.
- 2. A wide range of applied methods of collecting and analysing information. In order to ensure its completeness and objectivity, the actual results of sociological and marketing research, psychological testing, document analysis, observation, etc. should be used.
- 3. Reasonableness of the choice of segmentation methods and criteria. The selection of segmentation tools should be conditioned by the tasks faced by managers, as well as the current and future needs of the organisation.
- 4. Ethical behaviour, sensitivity and, in some cases, confidentiality. The choice of forms and methods of data collection, as well as their use, should be made taking into account the potential risks of information sharing. Violations in this area may lead to a deterioration of the sociopsychological climate in the team, toughening of internal competition, and the emergence of conflict situations.

Thus, the possibilities of applying segmentation technologies in the management of human resources potential of higher education institutions have not yet been fully realised in practice. This study allows us to evaluate them and expand the management tools aimed at improving the effectiveness of higher education institutions' human resources strategies. The process of forming general approaches to the selection of methodological principles and criteria of segmentation is difficult due to many objective and subjective factors, including the lack of development of relevant competences of managers. The complexity of the implementation of these approaches is also due to the fact that there is no universal toolkit for personnel segmentation, and the choice of conditions and methods of dividing employees should be specified each time taking into account the goals of managers. In general, the use of behavioural segmentation can play an important role institutions' human resources management in the context of higher education modernisation.

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