

Promotion of Employment Services with a Focus on Career Orientation and Active Job Search among Youth in the Region of Peja

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Abstract: This study aimed to evaluate the promotion of employment services with a focus on career orientation and active job search among youth in the region of Peja. 150 high school students and 50 university students participated in this study. For the methodology of this study was used the integration of quantitative methods. The collected data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Professional orientation is a series of processes designed to enable individuals to make informed choices and plans regarding education and employment. Professional orientation includes concrete preparations for the profession, practical work experiences, general professional education measures, offers of concrete assistance in decision-making and assistance which leads to a successful transition to the profession, respectively in the definition of professional education. In the case of our research it turns out that youth have stated that they have deficient knowledge and very little necessary information about career orientation. Finally, it can be argued that the findings of this study can help high school students and university students to have as easy as possible their professional orientation, and the study can help them compare the results in the studies that will be conducted in the future.

Keywords: report; professional orientation; high school student; university student; job search

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1. Introduction

Professional orientation is a series of processes designed to enable individuals to make informed choices and plans about education and employment. Professional

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orientation includes concrete preparations for the profession, practical work experiences, general vocational education measures, offers of concrete assistance in decision-making and assistance which leads to a successful transition to the profession, respectively in the definition of professional education. Profession is the activity of human in a very narrow field, it is the master or work of a certain person. Also the activity of learning the learning contents which are very important, starts to be directed and controlled by the internal motivators of the student to learn and master a certain content. If students' skills show what and how much they can be able to do, their motivation to learn shows what motivates them from the inside to commit to mastering subjects or making a decision such as professional orientation. The motive for achievement consists of: desire, will, need, interest, aspiration, clarity of the goal that the student aims to achieve in the learning process according to (Nushi, 1997). Learning the subjects and mastering them. Self-assessment is also a part of career management skills.

Institute for Development and Integration (IZHI) implements the project "Promotion of employment services with a focus on career orientation and active job search among youth the region of Peja", in the framework of the call for proposals: Public call: Increasing Employment through Development Entrepreneurship supported by Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport (MCYS), in support of youth and their entrepreneurial potential for development, which aims to empower them to promote employment and improve their livelihoods through the awareness, information and creation of cooperative bridges for employment and solutions to problems of this nature, at the same time exploring their preferences about career orientation and easier access to the labour market.

The general objective of the project is to promote employment services through targeted and organized actions with local institutions, schools, and other institutions where youth is involved in order to inform and promote the aforementioned services.

The specific objective of this project is to obtain information from youth about their career orientation through research conducted as a need and necessity of focusing on the promotion of fields for which they have preferences and goals to achieve, during their professional development. This has been done in the schools of the region of Pejaby introducing them to this field through the promotion of services and at the same time, empowering the school communities to take the lead in the process. Involved were the school community children, parents, teachers, local education authorities, local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and other relevant stakeholders. The specific objective will be achieved through awareness-raising activities and by creating mechanisms for support and appropriate career orientation according to their preferences and goals.

So, the specific objectives that are intended to be achieved with this project are:

1. Increasing employment among youth in the region of Peja;
2. Awareness of youth about the importance of career orientation;
3. Informing and raising awareness of youth about the importance of active job search;
4. Professional training of youth for the labour market by increasing the capacity of active job search;
5. Strengthening economic development by empowering as a potential of workforce.

The overall purpose of the project is also to raise awareness and increase inter-institutional cooperation, strengthen institutions in this field that work in the promotion of employment, career orientation and local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), through the exchange of knowledge and information about employment and development of youth potential in this region.

The Institute for Development and Integration (IZHI), has had the good fortune to be the beneficiary of this project where the main goal in this project is “Promotion of employment services with a focus on career orientation and active job search among youth in the region of Peja.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Concept of Professional Orientation

Kosovo has gone through a period of transition where education for partnership has not been and still is not properly addressed. Generations have been shaped more or less in attitudes, personal and common aspirations, in their developmental goals by what they have endowed formal education systems within the respective concepts and mental models. Education, professional training and activities related to raising the awareness of teachers and parents, are essential in achieving sustainable development and forming a climate full of work habits for a bright future for them. This at the same time affects the improvement of educational capacities and gives great will to the education system. Of particular importance is building the capacity of the wider community to understand and accept their responsibilities. Based on the current and perspective conditions of developments in Kosovo schools, we believe that steps should be taken from a young age in order to meet the needs of the future (Jemini & Gashi, 2012).

The region of Peja is characterized by a high rate of registered jobseekers. The number of active jobseekers registered in the Regional Employment Office in Peja is 11,880, and this number has increased in 2016, if we compare it with a previous year, i.e. in 2015 it was 10,738 (Jemini&Gashi, 2012).

Table 1. Jobseekers Registered at the Employment Offices by Regions

Year	2015		2016	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ferizaj	13,723	12.2%	9,628	9.5%
Gjakova	12,394	11.0%	13,146	12.9%
Gjilan	14,050	12.5%	10,445	10.3%
Mitrovica	16,441	14.7%	15,535	15.3%
Peja	10,738	9.6%	11,880	11.7%
Prishtina	24,966	22.3%	24,727	24.3%
Prizren	19,867	17.7%	16,412	16.1%
Total	112,179	100.0%	101,773	100.0%

Source: The data is obtained from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) Sectorial Strategy 2018-2022

2.2. How Did We Manage to Identify the Problem?

The system of formal education as well as vocational education in Kosovo is not oriented towards the needs of the labour market and consequently does not prepare the youth of Kosovo for the labour market. Most formal and non-formal education programs are programs that are not synchronized with the needs of the labour market. Youth start to face the issue of employment after graduation, i.e. after finishing high school or university education. The project aims to fill this gap by raising awareness and awareness of youth with the labour market, informing and advising them on: what the labour market requires - what are the vacancies announced by employers; what are the institutions that provide employment mediation services - public and non-public services - and where are these institutions located; be aware of what economic profile requires the economy of the respective region; what are the skills, abilities, knowledge and competencies with which youth should be equipped for integration in the labour market; how to prepare for a job interview with the employer, etc. So, the project aims to fill the gap of the formal and non-formal education system, the gap that has to do with the lack of career orientation service provision.

The labour market in Kosovo is also characterized by a large discrepancy between the activation of males and females. The following table shows that the number of boys and men registered as jobseekers in the Employment Offices is constantly higher than the number of women registered as jobseekers in the Employment Offices. Therefore, the project addresses this labour market discrepancy by setting quotas for the involvement of girls and women in the project with 50% of beneficiaries (Bosworth & Choitz, 2002).

Table 2. Registered Jobseekers by Gender

Year	2015		2016*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Female	48,960	43.6%	45,061	44.3%
Male	63,219	56.4%	56,712	55.7%
Total	112,179	100.0%	101,773	100.0%

*The data are not comparable to 2015 due to the new way of categorizing the unemployed registered in the information system.

Source: The data is obtained from the MLSW Sectorial Strategy 2018-2022

2.3. Why the Region of Peja?

The region of Peja, like all other regions in Kosovo, faces a high rate of youth unemployment. Although the project is necessary for all regions of Kosovo, this time we have decided to implement this project in the region of Peja.

Also, the region of Peja, like all other regions in Kosovo, is characterized by a high rate of unqualified jobseekers for the labour market. Of all the categories of registered jobseekers as qualified, most are unqualified for the labour market (Jemini & Gashi, 2012).

Table 3. Registered Jobseekers by the Level of Education

Year	2015		2016*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Unqualified	68,395	61.0%	37,950	37.3%
Elementary School	17,500	15.6%	24,062	23.6%
High School	21,006	18.7%	31,534	31.0%
Bachelor	5,052	4.5%	7,826	7.7%
Master	226	0.2%	401	0.4%
Total	112,179	100.0%	101,773	100.0%

Source: The data is obtained from the MLSW Sectorial Strategy 2018-2022

Due to some special characteristics of the labour market in Kosovo (very young population), most of those who are unemployed are aged 16-24. This group of unemployed persons constitutes about 40% of the total number of unemployed. The reason may be that most of these people are entering the job market for the first time. All projections show that the labour force in Kosovo will increase in the coming years due to the young population and high fertility rate. From another point of view, this has a positive side - the dependency rate is small compared to other transition countries by not charging the budget fund for social security in Kosovo. In other transition countries, unemployment is concentrated in the elderly due to the process of transformation and reconstruction of social/state-owned enterprises and because in most of these countries the population is older. Youth

unemployment is a concern in almost all countries in transition. The unemployment rate for people under the age of 24 in the Balkan countries is approximately two to three times higher than the general unemployment rate and this rate is between 18% and 20.8% in Slovenia and Romania, respectively up to 68.6% in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In recent years, unemployment for youth up to the age of 29 accounts for about 50% of the unemployed in some countries. In Albania about 58% of the unemployed are up to the age of 31 while in Croatia about 53.9% of the unemployed are up to this age (Keller, 2015).

2.4. What are the Main Factors that Have Influenced the High Unemployment Rate among Youth?

The main factors for the low employment rate of youth are: orientation of young people in education programs that are not required by the labour market; lack of correlation of study programs with labour market demands; lack of practical work in school and professional practice in enterprises (which is especially important in the case of professional education); lack of counselling and career orientation; as well as lack of work experience and contacts (networking) with potential employers. Lack of skills, work experience and funds are the main barriers for starting new businesses by youth (Chao, 2007).

According to the population estimate, by the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS), in 2016, the number of youth in Kosovo was 344,961, which is almost one fifth of the population, and about 30% of the working age population. This high participation of youth is considered as one of the main priorities for economic growth and development of the country, but it still remains an untapped potential. During the period 2012-2016, the youth unemployment rate was significantly higher than that of the working age population. Despite the downward trend of unemployment during the period 2012-2016, in 2016, the youth unemployment rate was 52.4%, a rate twice as high as the overall unemployment rate in the country (27.5%) and much higher than that of youth in the European Union, by 20.4% in 2015. It is important to note that among youth, the unemployment rate for females is significantly higher than for males, 65.4% and 47.2% respectively. According to the data of the Labour Force Survey in 2016, the youth employment rate was only 10.1%, significantly lower than the overall employment rate in the country, of 28.0%. There are significant gender differences in this labour market indicator as well: in 2016, only 4.4% of females aged 15-24 were employed compared to 15.2% of males in this age group. Another worrying statistic is the fact that in 2016, 103,800 people - close to a third of young people (26.5% of males and 34.2% of females) were neither employed, nor educated, nor trained, compared to 10.2% as it was in the European Union. This means that youth in Kosovo, in addition to not

working, they are not developing their skills, which would help their employment in the future (Jemini & Gashi, 2012).

It is important to note that on average, during the period 2012-2016, unemployed youth accounted for close to a third of the total number of unemployed in Kosovo. This means that the increase in youth employment will be reflected in the significant improvement of labour market indicators in Kosovo (Jemini & Gashi, 2012).

In addition to low employment rates, youth in Kosovo are also more likely to work without employment contracts. During the years 2012-2016, on average, close to half of the employed youth, did not have employment contracts while in 2016 this figure reached 54.8%. This means that youth have not been able to enjoy the guaranteed rights of workers and have not contributed to their pension fund as a source of income for the future. Youth in Kosovo are at a disadvantage even in terms of the minimum wage. Currently, the minimum wage for young people is 130€, compared to the standard minimum wage of 170€, which is lower by 24%. These data indicate that in addition to improving the employment rate for youth, measures should be taken to improve the quality of their employment (Jemini & Gashi, 2012).

Whereas, in terms of Employment Offices, registered unemployment by age group mostly refers to the age of 25-39 years with 48.3%, then the age group 40-54 participates with 27.9% in registered unemployment. The age group of youth 15-24 and elderly 55-64, participate with 16.2% of registrations respectively 7.7%. Unemployment registration for youth reflects an increase of 55.2% compared to the previous year, while for other age groups we have a decrease in registrations. However, the increase in youth registration comes as a result of the organization of campaigns by the Public Employment Services. The challenge, however, was to present the materials prepared and drafted by the Institute seeking the right informational and promotional approach as advice for young people for proper career orientation and promotion of employment opportunities in line with their objectives and the professions they want and expect to perform them in their careers (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984).

To this end, IZHI tried to raise its voice as much as possible and give its contribution so that the youth who are visited use them for their own benefit, for positive approaches such as: researching the professions they want, adapting to market conditions, compiling topics, discussing with parents and professors, acquiring 21st century skills and reflecting them on others, rather than setting their own goals in the process of spontaneous career development without defined the goal of where they want to go, presenting themselves as a subsequent risk to employment and the realization of life goals. During the research in schools, their habits and approach for career orientation and the knowledge they have about the

professions, opportunities and institutions that support this field were studied. The findings show that the information they have is insufficient for the opportunities offered to them by various institutions, NGOs and career development centres, it is also seen that they have ambiguity in choosing a profession being undefined or indefinite for further studies or professional orientation in certain fields. According to the findings of this study most of the habits are separated and presented graphically in the following elaborations of this material explaining each point separately (Benshof, 1991).

3. Methodology

This section is a general description of the methodological approach applied during this research. To analyse the problem, the IZHI team used primary data collected through a survey of students, respectively high school students and university students from the municipality of Peja.

Primary data were collected through a survey, including students from four high schools in Peja. The sample was constructed based on data from the four partner schools in the municipalities involved. To ensure that this research produces representative data, the overall sample consisted of 200 respondents (youth), who were randomly selected during the implementation of the Project by including them as implementing partners. Calculations have shown that a sample of 200 respondents is sufficient to obtain representative results with a confidence level of 98 percent and an error margin of 2 percent. After determining the sample, the next step was to design and compile the booklets and questionnaire according to the sections that were assigned.

The questionnaire contained general questions related to career orientation by youth. While the main parts of the questionnaire are composed of questions aimed at providing information about knowledge for career orientation, where did they hear that information, how much do the elective courses help them, is the career orientation included in the course, as well as information on the usefulness of this career orientation etc.

The survey was conducted with the engagement of experienced surveyors, who were instructed on the specifics of the survey. All interviewers were instructed, informed and notified about the content and relevance of the survey; were trained in the survey methodology (contact with the respondent, ways of collecting information, ways of filling out the questionnaire); and were tested on their ability to conduct the survey through the simulation of a survey sample.

Once the data was collected, it was coded by an experienced research team. Also, using special programme or software for this purpose. The team leader also performed periodic checks, mainly by comparing the average of variables and

distributions across all files, in order to ensure that the data were not changed intentionally or unintentionally.

Data collection - The process took place in three steps:

1) Demographic data collection

Statistical data was collected at the beginning of the project in each school. For the collection and processing of this data, the director of the Directorate of Education in Peja and of each school has been continuously consulted, taking into account the need of each school for the research in question.

2) Distribution and collection of questionnaires

At the appointed time, during or after the lesson, all the students selected to participate in the research were given the questionnaires, leaving enough time to complete them. The collection of questionnaires was done in such a way as to ensure anonymity.

3) Results processing and reporting

The processing of the results was organized as follows:

1. At the end of the monitoring round, the data is entered separately in tables developed with special Excel software.
2. After the data for the schools were processed, they were analysed and discussed. On this occasion, each director had the opportunity to comment by providing additional explanations regarding the data. The data and comments are confidential and are discussed only within the school and the Institute for Development and Integration. In the future, these results will be submitted to the MCYS within the project.

4. Results

Other research but also the publication of this data shows that informing young people about career orientation and their profiling according to the needs of the labour market is a necessity.

In the case of our research it turns out that young people have stated that they have deficient knowledge and very little necessary information about career orientation information where 61% of them have the necessary knowledge. While only 39% of them stated the opposite.

From this statement we see and understand that this problem is already presented in all cities of the country as a challenge of society which hinders the employment of youth, the lack of professions and professionals which meet the needs and demands

of the labour market, increasing attention from this problematic and changing the approach to it is standard and need of the time.

That there are risks and consequences from leaving aside this problem is best told by the current situation of lack of professional people in specific areas, where we are increasingly witnessing an increase in complaints from employees themselves for employees of professions or profiles of different where proper professionalism is required more than an academic degree. This is more than evident and has been confirmed by hundreds of different cases, analyses, researches and reports in Kosovo. Therefore, in addition to the care of schools, the development of trainings, debates and the increase of inter-institutional communication require parent-child care and communication for proper orientation in their professional career.

How informed the youth is about career orientation and whether they have ever visited a professional orientation centre is really worrying.

The research shows that about 88% of them have no information at all and have not visited any career information centre. Also, the proper information of youth and the need for a specific subject in this field is seen as quite necessary, expressing 95% in favour of the inclusion of a specific subject.

5. Conclusions

Based on this research, we can conclude that the approach to career orientation, utilization of the necessary existing information about this field and the interaction of youth networks as well as the benefit of high school students and university students, remains very deficient and superficial, due to inadequate access and non-cooperation by parents, as well as lack of information from schools and universities in this region. On this occasion, we recommend that career guidance be introduced in school curricula, as a separate subject, which anticipates and links specific topics for this issue by recognizing their potentials and professional desires and in correlation with them to be adapted to the needs of labour market.

- Debates should be organized in schools and youth centres, with topics about this issue.
- Encouraging youth by professors to use internet links for research, finding various information related to information from this field, various researches in portals and employment agencies for certain professional topics and employment, following the innovations that occur in the world, in terms of events related to their needs.
- Organizing information sessions with parent councils.

- There should also be training, and information visits to career guidance centres, employment centres, cooperation with NGOs profiled in this field.
- Schools, faculties and local authorities should encourage young people in professional training, use of opportunities for internships, initiatives for start-up businesses to realize their ideas.
- Parents should be informed of the initiative taken by the IZHI to distribute specific information brochures to promote employment, through which they can obtain relevant information on employment opportunities.
- It is suggested that Kosovo institutions take into account the announcement and promotion of even greater career orientation as a necessity of time and employment needs and meeting the requirements of employers, similar to what neighbouring countries have done (Macedonia and Montenegro).

In the end we can say that from this research we have better understood with information about the placement, approach to the problem, not discussing in school the use of training, information fields, however also differences in the opinions of students. Therefore, given the factual situation, we ask for greater commitment on the part of parents and teachers by encouraging cooperation and debates and more open discussion about this issue in order to help professional development and proper career orientation, first of all to educate students to love and respect themselves and others, to express their opinion freely with their family members, by being more active and participating in school activities, trainings, visits and practical work to later become active citizens in the construction of their objectives and being devoted to the state where they live.

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