

CASE STUDY METHOD IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES: A COMPARATIVE ASPECT

Anfisa Ibragimova^{1*}, Ilmira Rakhimbirdieva², Tatyana Zaglyadkina³

¹PhD, Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, RUSSIA, busybeetime@gmail.com

²PhD, Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, RUSSIA, ilmira-rim@mail.ru

³PhD, Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, RUSSIA, ztat45@yandex.ru

*Corresponding author

Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of the modern case-study approach in developing professional competencies of future specialists. The approach not only has established itself in some areas, such as, for example, law and economics but is also rapidly spreading in new fields. The approach is developing actively not only in diverse areas in one country but also in different countries. There is no single approach to defining the concept of a case study and there is a need to systematize it, taking into consideration a huge amount of existing and ever-appearing experiences.

The insufficient theoretic grounding prompted the authors to perform a comparative analysis of various approaches to the case study method while developing students' professional competencies in different countries.

The methods of this research are the analysis and synthesis of recent achievements in vocational education in some European countries. The authors try to systematize the existing experience and knowledge in this field to make the best use of the case study method while teaching. The article can be useful for those who are interested in applying the case study approach while designing an educational path or vocational workshops for Humanities students.

Keywords: education, students, case study, competence, soft skills, hard skills, vocational training.

1. INTRODUCTION

Modern vocational education, both in Russia and in other countries faces the task of training highly qualified personnel with a certain set of general and professional competencies. Such challenges of the modern world have become the impetus for the transition from the existing knowledge paradigm to the paradigm of skills. In this regard, it is necessary to look for new approaches and technologies to achieve the goals.

One of these approaches is undoubtedly the case study, where students must analyze a practical problem situation, understand the essence of the problem, propose possible solutions and choose the best of them. A case study is a teaching method based on the analysis, solution, and discussion of situations, both simulated and real (Kurganova, 2014, p. 117). So, N.P. Adonina defines this method as an analysis of a specific situation or teaching a practical case containing a problem which refers to the methods of active situational analysis, and in education is used as a tool for solving practical problems that contribute to the development

of students' independent thinking, communicative competence, and meta-discipline skills (Adonina, 2012, p. 42).

The modern case study method originates from Harvard Law School, and the founder is Christopher Columbus Langdel. In 1870 he became the dean of the law school and, inspired by the philosophy of Socrates on the search for truth together with his students, he began to develop the case method. Langdel suggested that his students work with primary sources (court cases, appeal court decisions, etc.) and then make their interpretations and analysis (Adonina, 2012, p. 43). Langdel's approach is different from traditional teaching and thus received initial misunderstanding and resistance. But Langdel persisted in his work. And by the end of the 19th century, this method was introduced in 6 more law schools. And at the beginning of the 20th century, the case study approach was also introduced into the teaching of management at the Harvard Business School. In 1921, Wallace B. Donham, the dean of the Harvard Business School, published the first book on creating situation exercises. And in 1925, the first collections of cases were published in the reports of Harvard University (Gruzkova, 2013, p. 3).

The second important centre for the development of the case study approach was the University of Manchester, where in 1947 Max Gluckman first applied this method. And with the opening of the business school in 1965, the case study approach became widely introduced at the university.

Over a long period of introducing the approach, many thoroughly-developed cases have been collected. N.Paveleva acknowledges that the leader in collecting and distributing cases is the European Case Center (ECC), which includes about 340 educational institutions in Europe and the USA. Each of these institutions has its own collection of cases, the right to distribute which belongs to the European Case Clearing House (ESSN) (Paveleva, 2008, p. 33-42). ESSN, which received its current name in 1991, was founded in 1973 by the initiative of 22 institutions of higher education and was called The Case Clearing House of Great Britain and Ireland. ESSN includes such organizations as The Harvard Business School Publishing, Institute for Management Development (IMB) in Lausanne, Switzerland, INSEAD in Fontainebleau (France), IESE in Barcelona (Spain), London Business School (England), Cranfield School of Management and others. (Gruzkova, 2013, p. 4).

In Russia, this method was widely used in the 90s of the 20th century. According to Gruzkova, it appeared at the moment "when the need to reform the economy created a significant demand for specialists who can act in situations of uncertainty, a high degree of risk, as well as for specialists who can analyze and make decisions". (Gruzkova, 2013, pp. 5-6).

However, for the first time, the case method was applied in the USSR in the 1920s, and was considered by teachers of economic disciplines as a "casus method". Nevertheless, the development of the method in the USSR was very contradictory. On the one hand, the use of the situation analysis method was accompanied by the widespread use of game and discussion methods of teaching; on the other hand, there was pressure of the USSR ideology and the closed system of education of that time. As a result, the method of situation analysis was gradually forced out of the classrooms of the USSR (Gruzkova, 2013, p. 5).

Another stage in the development of this technique in the history of Russia was the 70-80s of the 20th century when this method began to be used first at the Faculty of Economics of Moscow State University and academic institutions, and then at branch institutes.

Now, with the understanding that soft skills come to the fore in training specialists, the case study approach is becoming even more relevant.

2. METHODOLOGY

The theory and method of this study rest on the work of domestic and foreign scientists who are involved in the development and implementation of the case study approach into the educational process. A significant contribution to the development of the case study technique in the USSR and Russia was made by such scientists as G. A. Bryansky, Yu. Yu. Ekaterinoslavsky, O. V. Kozlova, Yu. D. Krasovsky, V. Ya. Platov, D. A. Pospelov, O. A. Ovsyannikov, V. S. Rappoport, Dolgorukov M. A., Gasanov S. S., Mychka S. Yu., Shatalov M. A. et al.

The authors of this studied a theory of this problem, compared the existing approaches to using case studies in different countries, and made an attempt to systematize the data obtained.

3. RESULTS

To compare the ways of applying the case study approach in different countries, it seems reasonable to give

a brief description of the requirements for the compilation and implementation of this approach. Undoubtedly, in many countries, when using the case method in its basic sense, scholars adhere to the requirements and regulations formulated 100 years ago at the Harvard School. Now there are three schools at Harvard, the learning process of which is based on the case study method: the School of law, the medical school, and the school of Business. And as A. S. Bakhtina described it: "The University is considered a propagandist of the method." (Bakhtina, 2016, p. 26). Basically, practical exercises include solving cases. On average, a student of these schools analyzes about 700 such cases during their studies. Every year, about 350 new cases are developed at Harvard. At the same time, the case of Harvard University is quite voluminous and very detailed; it usually consists of 10-25 pages of text and 5-10 pages of additional information. The cases describe real companies and their real tasks. However, the case does not include full information. The student becomes the main doer in the situation. The main goal of the case is to find the only right solution.

Unlike the Harvard school, the Manchester school assumes a multivariate solution to the problem. Their description of the problem situation is shorter, about 1-10 pages. The solution to cases is developed during the discussion. So, it has developed the Manchester or project-based method of business education, which is used at present in schools of the relevant profile almost all over the world. This way of training allows students to be involved in solving real business cases of existing companies (Adonina, 2012, p. 46).

As for the case study approach in Russia, on the one hand, this method has gained popularity. So, for example, there are some championships held at the all-Russian level to solve business cases, and some case clubs are organized. On the other hand, this method is not used in the educational process systematically, but at the request of the teacher. As N.P. Adonina noted the development of the case methodology in Russia occurs in three ways: 1) business cases that came to Russia from the West along with the first managers who were educated abroad; 2) the second way is connected with the course towards the modernization of Russian higher education in the search for new effective teaching methods; 3) the third way is performed within the system of school modernization together with other innovative technologies. A case study is used in the form of situation tasks that have similar methodology and goals but are not as complex and demand less time to solve. The purpose is not only to develop logical and analytical thinking, independent search and decision-making but also to prepare students for various life situations, for working in a group and processing additional information (Adonina, 2012, p. 46-47).

The second and third ways of developing the case study in Russia are of particular application. As we can see, the classical case study methodologies, both Harvard and Manchester, have a clear structure and certain rules and requirements for the implementation of a particular case, which, in turn, put bounds on the use of this method within certain professional areas, such as economics, business, and jurisprudence. However, in Russia the concept of the case study method has a broader meaning than its classical version. In a broad sense, the case study method relies on the idea of a problem situation, a problem case, but does not tie this situation to a specific organization or time of action but suggests a hypothetical situation that can occur anytime and anywhere. Thus, bearing in mind that the situation of a case study can be both real and fictional, a fictional hypothetical situation becomes preferable. Such a hypothetical case situation allows not only to be implemented into any vocational training but also to build soft skills of future specialists such as communication skills, self-confidence, ability to work in a team, attentive attitude to other people's opinions, ability to find a reasonable compromise, initiative, etc.

In this case, the case-study approach has wide educational opportunities: it can be used at lectures, seminars, laboratory classes and for independent work. Moreover, there is a distinction between a case test and an examination case (Saytkhanova, 2020, p. 6-7).

4. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it should be noted that the case study method should be understood in a narrow and broad sense. In a narrow sense, the case study method is a classic method developed 100 years ago at Harvard University and later. A variation of the approach appeared at the Manchester Business School. In that regard, the case method is of solely applicable nature and is used to train specialists in certain areas mostly in economic and legal schools around the world.

In a broad sense, a case study is an innovative and effective method to build the soft skills and personality of a specialist in any field and it can have a different form and different content.

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper has been supported by the Kazan Federal University Strategic Academic Leadership Program.

REFERENCE LIST

- Kurganova, E. B., (2014). Case study kak metod obucheniya studentov napravleniya "Reklama I Co". *Vestnik VGU. Seria: Filologiya. Zhurnalistika*, Vol 3.
- Adonina, N. P., (2012). Case study: history and modern times. *Vysshee obrazovaniye segodnya*. Vol. 11.
- Gruzkova, S.Ju., Kamaleeva, A. R., (2013). Case method: istoriya razrabotki i ispolzovaniya metoda v obrazovanii. *Modern Research of Social Problems*. Vol. 6 (26).
- Pavelyeva, N., (2008). Case method v professionalnom obrazovanii. *Kampaniya*. Vol. 43.
- Bakhtina, A. S., (2016). Case study problem in education. *Vestnik nauki Sibiri*. Vol. 2(21).
- Saytkhanova, S.A., Povzun, V.D., (2020). The role of the case study method in the formation of professional competencies of undergraduate students in Economics. *World of Science. Pedagogy and psychology*, [online]. 2(8).