

PRACTICES OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN CENTRAL ASIA TO SUPPORT STUDENT VOLUNTEERISM DURING THE COVID-19

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Annotation. For the first time in modern history, the coronavirus pandemic has become a global challenge that most economic and social institutions in all countries are involved in one way or another in the fight against it. The volunteer activities of citizens, students, corporate volunteers, and volunteers from nonprofit organizations have become one of society's responses to this challenge. This chapter outlines the basic outline of university student participation in volunteer activities during the pandemic in our country and abroad. In order to study the practices of Central Asian universities, a series of interviews was conducted with the heads of volunteer centers at leading universities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and an analysis of media resources was conducted on the basis of Medialogy.

Keywords: Central Asian universities, volunteering, social processes, domestic policy, social projects, COVID-19, Cross-Sector Partnership.

Development of volunteer centers of universities. In recent years in Kazakhstan there is a positive dynamics of involvement of youth in volunteer activities, differentiating forms, channels and directions of assistance, expanding the scope of the implemented projects. Statistics and data of sociological researches show that young generation is the most active in volunteer movement. Thus, according to WCIOM, 22% of young people aged 18-24 years old volunteered (i.e. provided free help to someone), while among Kazakhs in general the similar indicator was at the level of 8% [1]. The fact that the youngest respondents aged 18 to 25 years (6% vs. 1 in other age groups) predominantly work as volunteers is also confirmed by the results of the Levada-Center survey. According to the youth survey, 4,101,170 young people between the ages of 14 and 30 participated in volunteer work in 2019, accounting for 15 percent of this age group. The most popular and demanded areas of volunteering among young people include occasional volunteering, social volunteering and volunteering in the preservation of historical and cultural heritage.

The practices of CA universities and student volunteers in the help to against the spread of coronavirus are both medical and nonmedical in the area of informing the population and providing support to at-risk groups. The main activities are conducted by medical volunteers - medical and university students throughout the country, in particular at the National Medical University named after Asfendiyarov, in the city of Almaty, Tashkent State Medical University and others. Due to the heavy workload, doctors need support in providing medical care in polyclinics,

hospitals and at home. The scope of employment of medical volunteers is determined depending on the profile and course of study. In order to be allowed to carry out medical activities, medical volunteers are required to undergo instruction and receive a special certificate. Close attention is paid to safety - in physical contact with patients, medical volunteers are required to wear masks and gloves and are regularly tested for coronavirus [2].

"The volunteer community cannot stand idly by in the face of the challenges that are happening in our country. It is very flexible and quick to respond, and in just one week we were able to deploy 85 regional volunteer headquarters across the country to help people in the situation of the spread of the coronavirus infection. There's a lot of work for volunteers, but you have to understand the specifics of doing volunteer work during pandemics. This is the strict observance of sanitary and hygienic norms and rules, this is what we constantly tell volunteers, it is the subject of our constant control to keep volunteers and those they help", - Bakyt Baurzhanuly, Chairman of Kazakhstan public movement "Volunteers-Medics"[3].

Some of the medical volunteers are engaged in remote work and handle calls to the ambulance service and the "we are together" hotline, remotely advising on medical issues. Students call people at risk, including elderly patients with chronic illnesses, to clarify their well-being and inform them about the coronavirus and precautionary measures. Veterinary students also work as medical volunteers. For example, veterinary medicine and expertise students help care for animals for people who are self-isolated.

A large part of the volunteer centers of universities joined the action "we are together" and do not conduct their own separate events involving offline activity. This decision is primarily due to the safety of students wishing to volunteer. As part of the campaign, each volunteer who comes into contact with other people when buying and delivering food to pensioners at home is provided with personal protective equipment - masks, gloves, and antiseptic agents. Non-medical universities apparently have less competence to properly instruct students and monitor compliance with safety measures. Universities also attribute the choice of approach to the need for overall coordination at the regional level. Indeed, the "we are together" campaign keeps a centralized record of all applications received from people in need of help and their further distribution to volunteers. As of April 24, in 2020, more than 95,000 volunteers took part in the "We're Together" campaign, at least 25% of whom were young people aged 1-25 [3].

The universities that have joined include all state and national universities in Central Asia, including some private universities and many others. At most universities, any student can volunteer to help the elderly in their city who are in self-imposed isolation. In some cases, such as at Tashkent State University, priority in the selection of volunteers is given to students majoring in social work, pedagogy, and psychology.

Volunteer help in conditions of the pandemic in Kazakhstan is also provided by international student volunteers. For example, students from Spain, Morocco, Egypt, and other countries studying at KazNU give foreign language lessons to

children from foster families and volunteer at the regional headquarters of the "We are together" campaign. Foreign students at Dushanbe State University participate in targeted assistance for the elderly (delivering food and medicines) and work at the "we are together" call center hotline. At Tashkent State Agrarian University, international students also participate in the "we are together" campaign and help administer thermometers to those who have remained in the dormitories during the quarantine period.

A number of universities have deployed their own support headquarters for the elderly or launched their own charitable activities. The Higher School of Economics opened the Elderly Support Center, which continued to work remotely with retirees who attend classes in the Healthy Lifestyle program. Volunteers make phone calls to pensioners, inform them about safety precautions and the importance of self-isolation as well as offer their support in buying and contactless home delivery of groceries and medicines. In addition, Vyshka's volunteer students teach foreign languages and yoga classes to seniors remotely, conduct film clubs, and simultaneously help them master modern online distance-learning programs. Another example is the campaign "Grandmothers and Grandfathers of Our Entrance," which was launched by the Almaty Technical University. As part of the campaign, university employees and students help their elderly neighbors with household issues and grocery shopping [4].

A separate case study of the University's contribution to combating the economic consequences of the coronavirus is the activities of the DAMU Center for Social Entrepreneurship Development, which launched the Time to Act platform to help small and medium-sized businesses and social entrepreneurs during the epidemic. The platform provides free access to a number of online courses on the topic of running social business projects and the opportunity to receive online advice from mentors - university staff. The platform also includes a variety of methodological and legal guidelines for entrepreneurs to obtain social enterprise status.

Experience of foreign universities in organizing volunteering. Students in many countries around the world are involved in coronavirus activities. In contrast to our country, the main models of student participation abroad are student initiative projects and initiatives of inter-university student organizations. Initiatives by universities themselves in the development of student volunteer activities are much less common and are most often in response to requests from students, local authorities, medical institutions or non-profit organizations. The most common forms of student volunteerism are intellectual volunteering and participation in crowdsourcing projects, creation of educational and informational resources about coronavirus infection, non-medical assistance and delivery of food and medicine to the most vulnerable groups of citizens, non-medical assistance to medical workers and their families[5].

Student initiatives and initiatives of inter-university organizations. The initiative of aid projects often comes from students or student organizations and is aimed at intellectual participation in solving the problem of coronavirus spread and

research, as well as organizational, physical, and other non-medical assistance to the most vulnerable groups.

As part of intellectual volunteering, students participate in crowdsourcing projects and hackathons to solve research problems together. For example, a student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology launched a series of hackathons to solve the problem of the spread of the coronavirus (MIT COVID-19 Challenge), and staff and students at the University of Amsterdam created the Data scientists Against Corona platform to jointly solve relevant research problems[8].

Crowdsourcing platforms recruit volunteers who can perform assigned research tasks related to the problem of coronavirus proliferation. Such performers can be students as well as scientists and researchers. In such projects, students perform various phases of work, including preparing reviews, doing translations, processing data, etc.

For example: The “crowdfightcovid-19.org” platform, created by virologists from 26 research universities around the world, including Humboldt University in Berlin, Sheffield University in the UK, Boston University in the US, the University of Cape Town in South Africa and others. Volunteers perform fairly simple research tasks for virologists, such as processing visual data, deciphering data, etc. The authorship of the research tasks performed remains with the volunteers. There are 43,000 registered volunteers on the platform, with 140 requests, while 25 have already been solved as of the first week of April.

The COVID-19 National Scientist Volunteer Database was created by a postdoc student at Harvard to coordinate efforts in coronavirus research. The database has 8,500 registered volunteers from 50 U.S. states - undergraduate, graduate, and research scientists. Participants must prove their qualifications and only then can perform various research and scientific tasks in bioinformatics, data analysis, and testing. Also registered in the database are those who are willing to provide their lab space or consumables for research.

To provide physical and organizational assistance by student volunteers, online platforms are created to aggregate offers and requests for help. Such platforms were widespread even before the pandemic and operated on the basis of non-profit organizations or student inter-university organizations. Today, they serve as the basis for the creation of separate volunteer assistance streams on the topic of coronavirus. For example, one of the oldest and largest student organizations in the United Kingdom, the Students' Union of University College London (UCL), publishes topical advertisements for volunteer opportunities.

Student platforms and movements created in response to the spread of the coronavirus use the same principle - the matching of demand and offers of help from volunteers. For example, the Students Against Corona movement, created by an Oxford student, quickly gained popularity. The aim is to provide simple assistance to the elderly and those at risk. Only volunteers who are not included in at-risk health groups and who are familiar with hygiene and safety rules when performing volunteer tasks are eligible to participate in this initiative. As of early

April 2020, more than 1,600 students in 12 European cities have assisted, delivered food, medicine, walked dogs, and helped at food banks and hospitals.

Student-initiated cross-sector partnership. Overseas universities generally do not organize student volunteer work on the topic of coronavirus. More often than not, universities' work is focused on research and academic partnerships to find solutions to the spread of coronavirus, as well as academic issues during a pandemic. This can include distance learning and support for administrative functions, providing administrative, material, and psychological assistance to students, including international students. Universities initiate student volunteer activities when there is an external request from municipalities, regional ministries or medical institutions. Due to the growing incidence of disease, such requests are coming to medical universities more and more frequently.

Students create cross-sector initiatives, involving the university, medical institutions, and municipal governments in joint assistance projects. We are talking about non-medical assistance as well as educational and intellectual assistance. Medical students are involved in helping staff at medical institutions and municipal or regional services - working hotlines, alerting and counseling residents who may have come into contact with carriers of the virus, answering emails, sending letters with test results, delivering food, babysitting children in the families of medical professionals, and doing research reviews. For example, Columbia University College of Medicine has established Student Service Corps (COVID-19 Student Service Corps), whose members are involved in the listed helping practices. Against the background of a ban on direct (contact) care for coronavirus patients, students at many American universities have initiated the collection of medical masks from various institutions. This initiative, informally called the "mask race," includes collecting masks from veterinary clinics, tattoo parlors, nail salons, barber shops, and a number of other businesses that have used medical masks or respirators in their operations.

The most successful and major student initiatives are supported by universities and regional or federal governments and businesses. For example, an initiative created by the Medical Students in Germany e.V. (bvmd), for example, the Medical Students vs. COVID19 initiative is supported by the German government and a number of large non-profit and for-profit organizations. Currently, 20,000 medical students in Germany are registered in this initiative, and the platform map Match4Healthcare has been created, with nearly 10,000 participants in Germany and Austria. Student volunteers are ready to provide professional and non-medical assistance to the work of medical institutions [8].

Student initiatives at Harvard Medical School are also one example of cross-sector partnership. Students have created a student organization to interact with local hospitals and assist medical personnel (HMS COVID-19 Student Response Team). Students provide non-medical assistance to medical professionals and residents, translate and distribute materials about the virus. More than 30 other student organizations across the country are replicating this experience. Also initiated by this student group and with input from university staff, educational

courses in virology, epidemiology, and medical care have been developed and peer-reviewed. Harvard Medical School courses are now being used by medical schools in other countries.

Similar initiatives to those described above and many other types of volunteer involvement are undertaken by for-profit and nonprofit organizations. Student volunteering is just one possible practice of civic engagement in the fight against coronavirus infection. At the same time, student volunteer movements begin as grassroots practices of self-organization and are largely autonomous of universities. Universities support such initiatives in case of requests from students or in the course of further cross-sector partnerships.

Conclusion

The spread of the coronavirus revealed the strength and rapidity of the response of civic initiatives and the volunteer movement in Kazakhstan and abroad. In our country, the general challenge of the spread of coronavirus mobilized more than 95,000 citizens who joined a support group. Students and universities actively joined the volunteer movement to provide medical, intellectual and organizational assistance in working with at-risk groups, primarily the elderly.

An important feature of the work of student volunteers during the epidemic is the consideration of their educational profiles in the distribution of work. In fact, students not only contribute to the common cause of fighting the spread of coronavirus, but also develop their professional skills; medical volunteers - in providing medical care, psychologists and lawyers - in counseling, technical students expand their professional experience by working as «digital volunteers»[8].

The pandemic situation revealed a certain degree of solidarity within the field of education. One of the most common practices of student volunteers is to support their older teachers in dealing with everyday issues and to help them master modern online distance-learning tools. Students provide similar support to schoolteachers and conduct classes with students in basic and supplementary disciplines. Abroad, students and researchers are teaming up to solve scientific problems together on the topic of coronavirus infection, and universities are forming research partnerships.

The pandemic has created unprecedented conditions for the development of volunteer activities. For the first time, volunteers were faced with the question of their own safety and the safety of those they help, and the need to transfer the maximum possible work to a remote format became evident. Undoubtedly, the experience gained in an extreme situation will affect the trajectory of development of volunteer practices in the future.

The main recommendation for universities starting and continuing the practice of supporting student volunteers in activities to combat the spread of coronavirus is the need to follow the line adopted by the Ministry of Education and Science of CA countries. Methodological recommendations for universities on organizing the work of the volunteer corps in the situation of the spread of

coronavirus infection were promptly prepared and published by the Ministry of Education and Science of CA countries, taking into account the recommendations of epidemiologists and specialized NGOs.

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ПРАКТИКА ВУЗОВ ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ ПО ПОДДЕРЖКЕ СТУДЕНЧЕСКОГО ВОЛОНТЕРСТВА ВО ВРЕМЯ COVID-19

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Аннотация. Впервые в современной истории коронавирусная пандемия стала глобальным вызовом, в борьбе с которым так или иначе участвует большинство экономических и социальных институтов во всех странах. Добровольческая деятельность граждан, студентов, корпоративных добровольцев и добровольцев из некоммерческих организаций стала одним из ответных действий общества на этот вызов. В этой статье изложены основные принципы участия студентов университетов в добровольческой деятельности во время пандемии в нашей стране и за рубежом. С целью изучения практики вузов Центральной Азии была проведена серия интервью с руководителями волонтерских центров ведущих вузов Казахстана, Кыргызстана, Таджикистана и Узбекистана, а также анализ медиа-ресурсов на основе "Медиалогии".

Ключевые слова: Университеты Центральной Азии, волонтерство, социальные процессы, внутренняя политика, социальные проекты, COVID-19, межотраслевое партнерство.

COVID-19 КЕЗІНДЕ СТУДЕНТТІК ВОЛОНТЕРЛІКТІ ҚОЛДАУ БОЙЫНША ОРТАЛЫҚ АЗИЯ ЖОҒАРЫ ОҚУ ОРЫНДАРЫНЫҢ ТӘЖІРИБЕСІ

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Андатпа. Қазіргі тарихта алғаш рет коронавирустық пандемия барлық елдердегі экономикалық және әлеуметтік институттардың көпшілігі қандай-да бір жолмен күресетін жаһандық сын-қатерге айналды. Азаматтардың, студенттердің, корпоративтік еріктілердің және коммерциялық емес ұйымдардың еріктілерінің ерікті қызметі қоғамның бұл сынаққа жауап беруінің бірі болды. Бұл тарауда біздің елімізде және шетелде пандемия кезінде университет студенттерінің ерікті қызметке қатысуының негізгі принциптері көрсетілген. Орталық Азия жоғары оқу орындарының тәжірибесін зерделеу мақсатында Қазақстан, Қырғызстан, Тәжікстан және Өзбекстанның жетекші жоғары оқу орындарының волонтерлік орталықтарының басшыларымен сұхбат сериясы, сондай-ақ "Диалогия" негізіндегі медиа-ресурстарға талдау жүргізілді.

Тірек сөздер: Орталық Азия университеттері, еріктілік, әлеуметтік процестер, ішкі саясат, әлеуметтік жобалар, COVID-19, салааралық серіктестік.

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