

Personal Psychology

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The structure of professional self-conception types

In accordance with the positions of analytical and synthetic tasks of the system approach the article considers professional self-conception as a system of representations dealing with evaluating a human being himself as a subject of professional performance and as a personality intended for realizing these or other goal-means value-sense human attitudes to the profession and through that for ensuring his own functioning and/or for development and self-realization in the profession. A system-forming factor is analyzed (goal-means sense human attitudes to his profession), types of professional self-conception characterized by specific structures are identified.

Keywords: *professional self-conception; goal-means value-sense attitudes to the profession; system-forming factor; professional self-conception types; structure of these types.*

Developmental logic of scientific-psychological researches naturally led to the realization necessity of the system approach to studying professional self-conception. Concepts: structure, system, subsystem, level, additiveness, hierarchy, integral formation, component and so on, are used in describing self-consciousness [36], personality self-attitude [29, 36], integral self-conception and its separate components [17, 24, 28, 42, 44]. Despite availability of professional self-conception of system concepts [15, 23, 25] in the definitions, descriptions of a system-forming factor, purposeful assignment, integral structure, integral characteristics of professional self-conception being designated as a system are lacking. In a number of theoretical and empirical works the determining significance of human psychological attitudes to his professional performance for the content, structure, dynamics, functions of professional self-conception is directly and indirectly proven. The overwhelming majority of investigations containing the data of influence of human attitudes to the professional performance on his self-conception bear a theoretical-ascertaining character, do not study directly the indicated influence, the concept "attitude" is accepted as the given one, the content of human attitudes to the profession is treated from the polar aspects, characteristics of professional self-esteem are analyzed before and most of all. All this makes understanding professional self-conception as a system formal.

The indicated statements comprehended on the basis of analytical and synthetic tasks of the system approach permit to look differently at the essence

of human professional self-conception as a system formation. Analytical tasks of the system investigation are reduced to identifying a system-forming factor, purposeful assignment, composition, structure, functions and integral system characteristics. The construction of a system model, increase of abstruseness level of its description, determination of composition completeness, structure, description basis, dynamics regulations and system behavior are referred to the synthetic tasks of the system approach [11, 43]. In psychology there arose notions about development of professional self-consciousness in the general process of personality development, its self-awareness, real human relations to the world, including human relations to the social-professional environment. Professional self-conception occurs already on the optation stage [21] or on the stage of professional training [14, 23]. Resting upon the indicated tasks and obtained representations about professional self-conception, let us describe the latter as a system.

By a system-forming factor one understands [38, 40] an integral factor that is its active center, coincides with its essence, ensures integrity, stability, formation by the system of its own internal conditions of existence and prerequisites of the novelty, being a categorical imperative for arranging, creating a favorable interaction form between system components, selecting necessary degrees of performance freedom, realization rates of separate mechanisms, reorganizing and establishing further system mobilization. In the concrete case for identifying a system-forming factor, it is required a special analysis of not a separate isolated phenomenon but application for the other level or for the other examination scale of human life-activity, i. e., a macro system analysis [20, p. 125].

The results of made-by-us theoretical analysis of various aspects of studying professional self-awareness and value-sense attitudes to the profession (its separate sides) permitted to find out that it is the content of these attitudes which influences the level, adequacy, stability, individualism of self-esteems and professional self-esteems, the content of conceived-by-man properties in professional self-conception. In the structural aspect of studying self-conception, the content influence of value-sense attitudes to performance on the distance size between different measurements of self-conception has been identified as well as on dominating or drawing nearer personal or subject-activity properties in it . A leading role of sense-forming motives is seen in establishing correlations of reflected-in-self-conception human properties and in the hierarchy of emotionally estimated system components. Within the limits of the dynamic aspect of studying self-conception, its rise is connected with cognizing motives and goals of the professional performance by man, with forming a professional position and with finding out deep senses

of his activity. The content of sense-forming motives changing in the course of professional formation is directly connected with revealing opportunities by man, disclosing new facets of his "I". At different stages of professional formation one- or another-in-content value-sense attitude to professional performance is combined with this or that content cognized by man in himself. Within the bounds of the functional aspect of studying professional self-conception, its functions (regulation, perception, interpretation, information anticipation) are tied by the researchers to significance of concrete professional performance for man. In other words, the content of human value-sense attitudes to his professional performance (or to its separate sides) acts as a system-forming factor that determines composition, structure, dynamics of the cognized aspects in professional self-conception.

Proceeding from the conception statements of attitudes [27] and senses [18], we define value-sense attitude to professional performance as a stable psychological subject's attitude to the profession in which it (or its separate sides) are presented in the subject's consciousness as a desirable, obligatory, perfect value or as occupying a place of the goal or means in the subject's life-activity, in the realization of his these or those needs and values.

On the summary basis of the results of theoretical and empirical investigations directly or indirectly devoted to studying human attitudes to his professional performance and also on the basis of philosophical comprehension of sense relations as goal-means ones [37], some types of value-sense attitudes have been identified, designated as means, needed-technological, value, ambivalent ones. In means relations performance (content, goals, and results) is considered by the subject as a means of achieving his own objectives, satisfying needs and standing-behind-them external sense-forming motives untied directly to the content, purpose and activity results. In the needed-technological respect performance (content, goals, results) is perceived by the subject as his urgent objective towards satisfying one's own habitually actualized need (and standing-behind-it internal procedure-oriented motives) in this activity. The subject fulfills an official function of means in achieving a performance objective. In the needed-technological respect the subject gets interested in stabilizing content, conditions, goals, activity results, for in the opposite case it is impossible to satisfy his habitual need in activity by accustomed ways. In the value respect performance (content, goals, results) embodies personal value of the subject himself, not only being realized in this activity but rather leading him out beyond the latter bounds. Here a human being serves profession goals as far as they embody his own values, whereas he himself and his professional business are regarded as the single totality, as values-objectives of the man himself. In

any of three indicated attitudes, potentially conflicting relations have been identified, in case of their availability general content of the attitude to the profession is characteristic for the subject as a whole, and his separate (subject-activity or personal) manifestations have a bent for realizing a different-in-content attitude to the profession. In the fourth ambivalent respect, urgent conflictness occurs as a result of which human general stable attitude to the profession is not established.

A system-forming factor of professional self-conception is goal-means-in-content value-sense attitude to the profession being presented in the image of object-professional performance as taking a place of a goal (or means, or value) with respect to the subject's needs. Depending on the content of a system-forming factor a professional comprehends himself as a whole and his separate properties (subject-activity or personal) as goals and means with regard to object-professional performance that determines specific content, structure and characteristics of professional self-conception.

The criterion of identifying a system out of the environment is its purposeful assignment or system goal distinguished for its stability [7, 10, 13, 43]. The functional-purposeful assignment of professional self-conception lies in cognizing (comprehending) by man – a subject of concrete professional performance and personality – himself, his place, assignment in professional performance in compliance with definite goal-means value-sense attitude to it which ensures his functioning, development, self-realization in the profession.

The content analysis supposes disclosure of composition, constituent elements, system components [20, 43]. A system component is a unifying designation for the element, subsystem and substructure [10, 43], but reference possibility to the system of this or other of its components possessing a certain functional quality is based on measure of its participation in achieving an objective [20, 43]. The unit is identified as a system element, properties and functions of which depend on its place within the system bounds and are mutually determined together with properties and functions of the sum total, i. e., “ a minimum unity capable of relatively independent realization of a definite function “ [10, p. 185].

On the foundation of the suggested-by-Rubenstein S. L. [31] theoretical model of the unity of human general psychic image, we have examined the content of professional self-conception reflecting qualitatively and functionally differing intentional, instrumental, expressive trait properties. The indicated traits referred in self-description by man himself to ensuring concrete professional performance (to a process and results, object, conditions and means) or to a broader nonprofessional context of life-activity (to regulating by man activity volume and measures of social contacts, forming

one's own development environment and projecting his own behavior), are presented in the content of his professional self-conception as, accordingly, subject-activity and personal properties. Being interconnected, but different in origin, content, functions, their realization opportunities in the differentiated-in-width-and-specificity real human relations, they are used individually by him in the course of his professional formation. This finds its reflection in different variants of their correlation in content of professional self-conception. The statement of the system analysis that within the bounds of one system there may exist certain ones out of subsystems, some of which emerging earlier and independently of the general system, are included into it as subordinate to realizing a definite function, while other subsystems are formed concurrently and in relation to a self-developing general system as its specific element [38], leads to the conclusion that subsystems of professional self-conception are personal and subject-activity human properties reflected in its content. They are concretized to a different degree in self-descriptions of awareness, meaningfulness, temporal representation of intentional, instrumental and expressive traits. Integrity, unity of identified components (subsystems) are based on general functional-purposeful unity of all presented-in-professional-self-conception traits – to ensure realization of that or another value-sense attitude to professional performance, and through this – human adaptation and development in his profession. The analysis unit of professional self-conception is the sense (goals and means) of this or that trait involved in the corresponding component, the trait that it is endowed within the bounds of single goal-means attitude, in the unity of subject and object sides of the latter.

The structural system analysis supposes disclosure of interrelationships of system separate components, its structure [11, 43]. Connection between elements giving the system stability and definiteness is considered as one of the determining system characteristics and as a means of its investigation. Relations, fixed in the concrete psychological investigations, between different variables are designated as correlative, causal, condition, factor, prerequisite, mediation [20]; super-ordinate and subordinate relations [13], hierarchic, structural coordinative (within and between subsystems) and causal subordination relations (between subsystems) [30], subordination [32], hierarchic relations [18]; those of paired mutually reverse correspondence [31, 39]; individually mobile relations of mutual passages [8].

Having summarized the research results within the bounds of a structural aspect of studying self-conception let us identify relations: 1) of coordination, matching, correspondence between self-conception as a whole and real personality manifestations; 2) of balancing, availability of a certain

distance between different dimensions of self-conception; 3) in the phenomenal plane cause-and-effect relations between cognitive and emotionally estimated constituents of self-conception or relations of determining, reorganizing influence of one constituent on the other; 4) changing-places cause-and-effect relations between self-esteems; 5) of mobile mutual co-ordination, domination of those and other properties differing in content and functionally in self-conception.

One can designate different correlation variants of real personal and subject-activity human properties in his profession; 1) their matching, approaching; 2) domineering influence of subject-activity properties on personal ones; 3) domineering influence of personal properties on subject-activity ones; 4) non-crossing existence of personal and subject-activity properties in a human profession. In compliance with the statement on content non-detachment of human self-conception from real appropriate-for-him properties [28] we assume availability of the indicated variants of correlations of involved-in-self-conception components. Explaining possibility of establishing this or that relation we proceed from the principle of sense integration [16, 29] revealing not only a performance role but in general a decisive content role of sense-forming motives in preferential awareness of that or another trait in professional self-conception. In concrete psychological investigations relations between self-conception constituents are traditionally fixed for its separate dimensions (for instance, between self-real and self-ideal and so on); character determination of the relation is realized either theoretically, by means of deductions, or empirically, by means of identifying correlation ties. Accentuation of researchers' attention [2] on individual expressiveness of these ties refers to self-conception content. The issue concerning coordinating and subordinating relations being established in the structure of professional self-conception needs special study.

In psychological investigations different typologies are presented, those, one way or another, connected with self-awareness phenomena: specific professional [19] and neurotic personalities [41]; identification of man with a profession [2]; biographic crises [9]; professionals' behavior [26]; self-types [17], self-awareness activity and internal actions in one's own address [36], self-attitude [4], self-regulation as a behavioral constituent of self-awareness [42], professional self-esteems [33]. By elaborating a typology of professional self-conceptions we rested upon signs of common psychological typologies of any phenomena [1, 27] that suppose to take into account: 1) systems of essential signs appropriate for a certain group of people; 2) many foundations (but not a single one); 3) the analysis principle of personality through one's life-activity, through one's way of living and

possible contradictions; 4) employing a typology not just for a diagnosis but rather for a prognosis.

The criteria of constructing a typology of professional self-conceptions were: unified goal-means value-sense human attitude to professional performance (a leading one); sense (non-)coincidence of the object side of the indicated attitude in separation for subject-activity and personal human properties; sense (non-)coincidence of the subject side of the indicated attitude separately for subject-activity and personal human properties. As a result, [12] 9 types of professional self-conceptions have been identified. For the first type – “value professional self-conception” – a system-forming factor is taken as unified value attitude to the profession. Senses of object and subject sides of the indicated attitude for a human being as a whole and for each of his subject-activity and personal properties coincide in content like “objective-objective”.

In the second type – “value potentially conflict professional self-conception” – a system-forming factor is also value attitude, however, the sense of the object side of this attitude does not coincide with the senses of object sides of attitudes being fixed in separation for subject-activity or personal human properties. A profession from the viewpoint of subject-activity or personal human properties may fulfill an official function with regard to his objectives.

In the third type – “technological professional self-conception” – a system-forming factor is unified needed-technological attitude. Senses of object and subject sides of the indicated attitude for a human being as a whole and for each of his subject-activity and personal properties coincide in content like “objective – means”.

In the fourth type – “technological potentially conflict professional self-conception” – a system-forming factor is needed-technological attitude. Senses of each of its object or subject sides may not coincide with senses of corresponding sides of attitudes being fixed for subject-activity or personal human properties. A profession may play a role of a means for subject-activity and for personal properties, but these properties themselves - as an objective, a means of its achieving is a profession, and as a value-objective being realized in the profession valued for a human being.

The fifth type – “oriented-to-competition professional self-conception” – has unified meaningful attitude as a system-forming factor. Senses of object and subject sides of this attitude for a human being, his subject-activity and personal properties coincide in content and are referred to as a means-objective.

In the sixth type – “competitively-pragmatic potentially professional self-conception” – a system-forming factor is also means attitude. The sense of the object side of this attitude does not coincide with the senses of object sides of attitudes being fixed in separation for subject-activity or personal human properties, but the sense of the subject side of attitude does not coincide with the sense of the object side of attitude being fixed for subject-activity properties.

The seventh type – “pragmatic potentially conflict professional self-conception” – has means attitude as its system-forming factor. The sense of the subject side of this attitude does not coincide with that of the subject side of attitude being fixed for personal properties.

The eighth type – “socially oriented potentially conflict self-conception” – has means attitude as its system-forming factor. The sense of the object side of this attitude does not coincide with the sense of the object side of attitude being fixed for subject-activity properties.

In the ninth type – “ambivalent professional self-conception” – unified attitude to the profession has not been identified, a profession acquires this or that sense depending on the content of attitudes being realized towards it in separation by each of subject-activity or personal human properties.

On the foundation of the basis method suggested by Ganzen V. A. for the description of a great number of characteristics of the system object [11], integral characteristics of professional self-conception have been identified, that is, spatial, temporal, intensity and information characteristics. Intensity characteristics deserve particular attention showing under what conditions effective functioning of the system is possible, i. e., achieving an objective by minimum effort expenditure, substance, energy [22]. Intensity characteristic of professional self-conception is a subjectively meaningful-in-its-content trait from the grade of subject-activity or personal properties. For structural investigation of self-conception a subjectively meaningful trait is of certain interest, for it is not only selectively evaluated, better comprehended and changes with more difficulty, but it is more important, stable and essential for common co-ordination of self-conception [16].

Resting upon B. G. Ananjev’s statement [6, p. 255] that at each given moment of human life synthesis of different structures of his various properties is the most common structure of his personality, professional self-conception was regarded by us as the established system for the given career moment, integrity and stability of which are ensured by this or that goal-means value-sense attitude of a human being to the profession. Its composition and structure at a definite stage of professional formation may be considered in compliance with signs of the system formation and development

identified in the philosophic literature. One of these signs is subordination of its any element to the sum total [3, 22, 35], integration degree of the parts into the sum total and their subordination to the sum total on the basis of intra- and intersystem ties and interactions that ensures integrity, system stability. In what way may one ascertain subordination of separate components (and involved-in-them traits) of professional self-conception as a whole? The answer to this question should be searched for in function subordination of each in separation or concurrently subject-activity or personal components to functionally purposeful assignment of self-conception. Depending on this or that attitude being a system-forming factor of self-conception and also on attitude content being realized by each in separation from subject-activity or personal human manifestations, specific relations between the traits of the working person reflected in self-conception will be established. In other words, each of the types of professional self-conceptions will be characterized by its structure peculiarity.

For corroborating the given hypothesis we have studied structures of different types of professional self-conceptions of the subjects realizing careers in professions of different types. In the types of professional self-conceptions identified on self-descriptions by means of factorial and regression analyses, direction, content, relation kinds between subcategories of self-descriptions reflecting intentional, expressive or instrumental traits comprising subject-activity or personal properties have been determined on the basis of multitude linear regressive analysis.

By relation direction its vector expansion was conceived from some trait of this or that component towards that or another trait of the same or other component; but by content – relations, different in size and mark, between separate traits. In compliance with signs of coordination and subordination relations the largest-in-size ties with positive marks were regarded by us as coordination ones, but with negative marks – as subordination ones. Note that coordination ties are characterized by mutual supplement, harmony, mutual coordination in functioning and changing between elements in case of fulfilling a common goal by them [3, 10, 35], being realized by interaction between properties on an equal footing [5]. In contrast, subordination relations are determined by arising one elements from others, by appearing new relations [10]; handling [30] and subordinating more elementary and particular properties to more complicated ones [5]. They fix and enhance differentiation, contradictions between system elements [3]; create opportunities for developing one part of elements at the expense of the rest of elements [35]; characterize a domineering role of any properties [27].

The relation kind was designated as an inter-component one in cases of ascertaining its largest size between separate traits belonging to different components, and as an intra-component kind (intra-personal or intra-subject-activity one) – between separate traits entering a corresponding component. Inter-component relations with this or that content are close by their signs to co-ordination or subordination relations in the plan that in the first case they integrate, coordinate interaction between components (subject-activity and personal properties), but in the other one – they fix and enhance differentiation of separate components in the integral self-conception. The same is analogous for intra-component relations with the only difference that by means of them interaction is coordinated or differentiation is fixed for separate traits comprising this or that component of self-conception.

Availability of leading inter-component (or intra-component) coordination relations may serve as a sign of high (or partial) integration, coordination of integral professional self-conception (its separate component). Availability of leading inter-component (or intra-component) subordination relations may serve as a sign of high (or partial) differentiation within integral professional self-conception (or within its separate component). Absence of inter-component or intra-component relations is a disintegration sign of integral professional self-conception.

The results of the carried-on investigation revealed availability of characteristic directions for each of the types of professional self-conceptions, and also that of content and relation kinds between subcategories reflecting intentional, expressive or instrumental traits comprising subject-activity or personal properties.

Subjectively meaningful properties identified beforehand by us for each of the types of professional self-conceptions are actually leading in establishing relations different in direction, content and kinds. The largest in size and with a different relation mark come out of exactly these properties that confirms their significance for general co-ordination of self-conception.

With regard to direction, content and relation kinds let us describe characteristic ones for the types of self-conception structure. Highly integrated ones are professional self-conceptions of the first, fifth and third types: in their structures there have been identified leading coordination inter-component relations arising from subjectively meaningful traits – personal intentional or expressive or from subject-activity intentional traits. Altogether, integrativeness of self-conception of both the fifth and third types does not achieve a degree characteristic for self-conceptions of the first type: for self-conceptions of the fifth and third types availability of a less number of

relations has been fixed between traits being involved in them than for self-conception of the first type.

Professional self-conceptions of the second, sixth types and some self-conceptions of the ninth type are integrated partially: for them leading coordination intra-personal relations have been identified, those coming out of personal intentional or expressive properties.

Highly differentiated are professional self-conceptions of the fourth type pertaining to the subjects of stable careers, self-conceptions of the seventh type and also some self-conceptions of the ninth type: in their structures leading subordination inter-component relations coming out of subject-activity traits have been identified.

Partially differentiated are professional self-conceptions of the fourth type of the subjects of instable career: in their structures there have been identified leading subordination intra-subject-activity relations proceeding from subject-activity instrumental traits.

Professional self-conceptions of the eighth type and some self-conceptions of the ninth type are disintegrated: relations between traits reflected in self-conception have not been identified in them.

The most integrated proved to be those types (the first, third and fifth) of professional self-conceptions where composition, content and structure of each of them are determined by integral value or needed-technological, or means human attitudes to his professional performance. The rest of the types of self-conception being potentially or urgently conflicting are partially integrated, differentiated or disintegrated. In the literary sources the tendency to connect only value attitudes to the profession with integral vision of a human being himself in the profession is being traced, from which availability of well-structured self-conception indirectly follows. The obtained by us data testify to the fact that by needed-technological and means attitudes to the profession, self-conception may represent a well-integrated structure, though not reaching the structuring of human self-conception by his value attitude to the profession.

Thus, in the structures of different types of self-conception, relations various in direction, content and kinds are established, those permitting to identify highly or partially integrated or differentiated, and also disintegrated self-conceptions. One or another type of professional self-conceptions identified on the basis of definite goal-means value-sense attitude of a human being to his profession is characterized by the structure of integrativeness to a different degree.

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