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The Influence of Psychological Assistance on the Efficiency of Professional Development of the Beginning Teachers of the Higher School

The article deals with the results of the research focused on revealing groups of teachers of the institute of higher education depending on the specificity of their professional development at the stage of occupational adjustment. They have surveyed 176 teachers of institutes of higher education of Stavropol, carrying out their pedagogical activity at the stage of occupational adjustment (length of service was from 0 to 5 years). The author has established that during professional development at the initial stage of entry into profession teachers of the higher school may belong to one of four clusters: well-adjusted, adjusted, relatively adjusted, and adjusted in a complicated manner. The author argues the necessity of organization of psychological assistance to teachers of the higher school at the stage of occupational adjustment as a necessary condition of overcoming risk factors which is confirmed by the experimental data.

Key words: adaptation, disadaptation, teacher, professional development, psychological assistance.

One can get the expression of the content of personality and activity of the teacher of the higher school out of the analysis of a complex of personal qualities of professional importance, individual and psychological characteristics and processes which provide their formation and functioning. A high level of social responsibility and moral obligation, extrapolativeness, multifunctionality, multiplaning, object and subject relations which are formed during the development of each stage of professional development are distinctive characteristics of the teacher of the higher school. Thus, it is important to consider that the specificity of pedagogical profession consist not only in its polyfunctionality, complex structure, but also in continuous increase of requirements to the personality and activity of the teacher of the higher school.

Regarding a high level of requirements makes it necessary for teachers to develop such socially and professionally important characteristics as flexibility, social mobility, adaptability, broad outlook, responsibility which distinguish the teacher from representatives of other types of professional activity [1].

Development of these and other personal professionally important qualities, characteristics takes place during all stages of professional development, but the stage of occupational adjustment, where there is development, acceptance (or rejection) of a new role, is important [1, 5].

Existing researches and practice show that the success of mastering of the first stage of professional development which is considered as a stage of occupa-



tional adjustment has a great importance in development of the personality of the professional, his/her professional competence.

Occupational adjustment, as well as any adaptation of the person to new conditions, is an adaptation of the person (his/her organism) to environmental conditions. Practice shows that for a person with normal mental functioning the period of adaptation lasts from 1–3 months to half a year; if the period of adaptation is more continuous, than the person has problems or, in other words, there is a disadaptation.

Professional development at the stage of adaptation is, according to E. F. Zeyer, E. A. Klimov, etc., a stage of mastering of professional functions, new professional role, development of an individual style of activity and so forth that demands much more time, than adaptation to a new social situation [2, 3, 4]. This period, as a rule, lasts for 3 years, sometimes (at a low adaptational potential) till 5 years; during this time the person mastering a profession is considered a young specialist.

In the pedagogical profession this period may increase owing to that each teacher at the stage of occupational adjustment has the first experience connected with understanding and acceptance of demands of society and professional community to personality and activity which has powerful influence on attitudes, orientation, positions of the teacher and his/her personality as a whole at the subsequent stages of professionalizing [1].

Recognizing that the process of entry into a profession, mastering of its main functions, solution of professional aims at the first stage of professional self-implementation is accompanied by certain problems and obstacles, beginning teachers need the qualified help and support. Specialists of concrete services: methodical, pedagogical, psychological, acmeological, - can render the address real help in overcoming of the risk factors accompanying the process of development of a new professional role. In particular, specialists of service of practical psychology have real possibilities in organization of a purposeful help to teachers during their active mastering of a new professional role.

At the scientific research organization we considered that professional development of teachers at the stage of occupational adjustment is a complex process which has external, observed indicators and inner picture. The inner picture of adaptation in our work was identified with the inner picture of professional development. But thus we consider that the inner picture of professional development not always coincides with external indicators of success (or unsuccess) of the process of professional development at the adaptation stage.

We should note that when studying the declared problem we considered specific features of examinees which influence the development of adequate and inadequate inner picture of adaptation.

The adequate inner picture of adaptation is characterized by harmonious correspondence between all specified levels, the stage and level of adaptation. The teacher can control the state of anxiety and, despite its natural emergence,



speak about those his/her new feelings. Besides, the teacher can notice changes in own state and speak about them. They meet such type of the inner picture of adaptation seldom enough; more than all the others it is connected with the level of development of consciousness and self-control.

The inadequate inner picture of adaptation is characterized by denial of professional and personal difficulties during adaptation of the teacher of the higher school. As a rule such teachers have the sensitive level identical with the sensitive level at an adequate inner picture of adaptation, but the intellectual one is much poorer. Feeling difficulties, the teacher, estimates them as casual. All these things reduce the efficiency of mastering of a new professional role, its functions [6].

Young specialists need the specialized psychological assistance for overcoming these contradictions and difficulties. For this purpose we have carried out the experimental study directed on identification of groups of teachers of the institute of higher education depending on the specificity of their professional development at the stage of occupational adjustment.

176 teachers of institutes of higher education of Stavropol, carrying out pedagogical activity at the stage of occupational adjustment (length of service was from 0 to 5 years) took part in a research study.

Methodical instruments were: expert judgement and self-appraisal of the teacher's professional activity; the HAM technique (health, activity, mood; it was developed by V. A. Doskin, N. A. Lavrentyeva, V. B. Sharay and M. P. Miroshnikov); E. B. Fantalova's technique directed on studying of intrapersonal conflicts; the test of anxiety self-evaluation (Ch. Spielberger); K. Zamfir's technique in A. A. Rean's modification "Motivation of professional activity"; V. Stolin's test-questionnaire of self-appraisal and self-relation; the technique of study of person's communicative attitudes, developed by A. N. Ivashov and E. V. Zaika; T. Elers' technique of diagnostics of the person's success motivation.

Following the results of research we have established that teachers of the higher school during their professional development at the initial stage of entry into a profession may be attributed to one of four clusters. Let's consider the obtained data in more detail.

22 teachers (12,5% of respondents) have formed the first cluster which we have named "well-adjusted". This group of teachers is characterized by a high level of expressiveness of personal-sense and motivational-activity factors. These teachers have the main patterns of professional behavior of the teacher of the higher school, skills of teaching activity; conscious relation to the activity and personal interaction with colleagues and students is peculiar to them. In activity they generally have sthenic emotions, their activity is polymotivated, many of them have inner motives and estimates above the average by scales of psychological stability, aspiration to success, self-regulation, self-actualization, communicative competence and empathy. It should be noted that all teachers of the higher school of this group have an adequate inner picture of adaptation.



43 teachers (24,43% of respondents) have formed the second cluster which we have named "adjusted". Teachers of this group know and understand demands, functions, purposes, aims shown to personality during the pedagogical activity; they have an adequate self-assessment, are ready to accept demands. These teachers have average values with a tendency to high values by scales: self-actualization, adaptability, situational anxiety, communicative competence and empathy. However at polymotivation of the professional activity teachers of this group have had more expressed external motivation, not always they are ready to correlate and differentiate life and professional values. Their indices of aggression and orientation towards success are lower than average. By other indices there is a great variability; a steady tendency was not revealed.

33 teachers (18,75% of examinees) have formed the third cluster named "relatively adjusted". On the whole a considerable part of these teachers know and understand demands, functions, purposes, problems of the pedagogical activity; their activity is polymotivated; internal and external professional motives exist equally. Teachers are ready to correlate and differentiate life and professional values; they are mainly focused on success. However at average values of communicative competence, psychological stability and empathy, teachers of the third cluster have a higher level of personal anxiety, aggression; values of self-actualization and adaptability are slightly lower than the average. Because of a great variability of values there was no steady tendency on other indicators.

It should be noted that teachers of the higher school of the second and third group have had the adequate inner picture of adaptation.

The last, fourth cluster (44,32% of respondents), named by us as "adjusted in a complicated manner", included 78 teachers of the higher school. In this group there were the teachers having generally average values and values with a tendency to a low level by all indices. It should be noted that teachers of the higher school of the last group have had generally the inadequate inner picture of adaptation.

After the carried out work we have distributed all the teachers taking into account their belonging to one or another cluster by the following levels: sensitive, intellectual, emotional, motivational and behavioural levels.

Such distribution enabled us to define those who needed psychological assistance and support. The psychological assistance to teachers of institutes of higher education at the first stage of professional development was carried out in two areas:

- 1) creation of certain conditions for the relatively adjusted, directed on development of the adequate inner picture of adaptation;
- 2) system work with the adjusted in a complicated manner in the personal-sense and motivational-activity spheres, directed on formation of adequate self-assessment, motivation development, increase of adaptive potential etc.



The comparative analysis have showed that values of experimental group in reexamination by four levels of expressiveness of the motivational-activity factor statistically reliably with probability of permissible error 0,01 differ from values of primary diagnostics and approximate the values the reference group.

As we have already noted earlier, we have implemented the program of psychological assistance with the teachers having difficulties of professional development in the period of adaptation, i.e. with the teachers of the fourth cluster. After implementation of the program of psychological assistance to young teachers we have revealed that at the sensitive level there were significant changes at the level of reliability 0,01 in total expressiveness of the motivational-activity factor, and also by the index of activity (critical value of Student's test 2,75 at the level of reliability 0,01).

The data enable us to draw a conclusion that in result of implementation of the program while entering into professional activity the teachers of the experimental group began to feel inspiration and comfort more often, than devastation and discomfort, that increased their activity as a whole. Besides, in result of approbation of the program by the motivational-activity factor teachers have had lower indices of the scale of self-accusation and the quantity of inner vacua (by such spheres as the beauty of nature and art, knowledge, freedom as independence in acts and actions, creativity). In experimental group there also has increased the teachers' assessment of the degree of satisfaction with own real positions, and also the integrated indicator on motivational-activity factor.

Similar results were obtained by the personal-sense factor.

Analyzing changes in experimental group at the emotional level, it is possible to note the following: 1) by the motivational-activity factor indices of depression, psychotism, hostility and reactive anxiety have decreased, values on scales of interpersonal sensitiveness, neuropsychic tolerance and a total value by a factor have increased; 2) by personal and sense factor general manifestations of somatization and anxiety have decreased. Unfortunately, personal anxiety as a steady characteristic feature hasn't decreased considerably though positive tendencies were outlined and the general indicator by the factor has significantly improved.

Under the influence of the program of psychological assistance there were essential changes at the motivation level among the teachers of experimental group: 1) the external negative motivation has decreased, indices of external positive motivation, self-esteem, relation of others, self-interest and the integrated indicator by motivational activity factor have increased; 2) values by inner motivation, by the integrated feeling pro or contra concerning own "I", on self-acceptance, own real positions of the person in communication, real depth of relationship with partners, moral normativeness and integrated index by personal-sense factor have increased.

Analyzing the results of the forming experiment on the behavioural level in the experimental group by two essential factors it is possible to note that there



was an increase of indices on such scales as: 1) the self-management (self-consistency), competence of setting targets and problems of pedagogical activity, competence of students' motivation on implementation of educational activity, competence of development of the program of activity and pedagogical decision-making, competence of the organization of pedagogical activity and an integrated indicator by the motivational-activity factor; 2) communicative features, competence in the area of personal qualities and the integrated indicator by the personal-sense factor.

The obtained data make it possible to say that in result of implementation of the developed program of psychological assistance the teachers of the higher school of the experimental group have had positive dynamics. In particular, the level of development of the professional skills and abilities necessary in pedagogical activity has increased; there were also qualitative changes at all five levels by both factors of professional development:

- at the *sensitive level* while entering into professional activity the teachers of the experimental group began to feel inspiration and comfort more often, than devastation and discomfort, that increased their activity as a whole;
- at the *intellectual level* there was a decrease in a number inner vacua and intrapersonal conflicts that indicates the balance of teachers' value sphere, coherence of value and accessibility of the studied life spheres that promotes increase in their adaptation potential;
- at the *emotional level* indices of depression, psychotism, hostility and reactive anxiety have decreased, general manifestations of somatization have decreased, values on scales of interpersonal sensitiveness, neuropsychic tolerance have increased.
- at the *motivation level* the external negative motivation has decreased; indices of external positive motivation and internal motivation, self-esteem, relation of others, self-interest, the integrated feeling pro or contra concerning own "I", on self-acceptance, own real positions of the person in communication, real depth of relationship with partners, moral normativeness have increased.
- at the *behavioural level* there was a considerable improvement of self-management (self-sequence), competence of setting targets and problems of pedagogical activity, competence of students' motivation on implementation of educational activity, competence of development of the program of activity and pedagogical decision-making, competence of the organization of pedagogical activity, competence in personal qualities and interpersonal relations.

Implementation of the program of psychological assistance to teachers during professional development was also conducive to formation of adequacy of self-assessments and perceptions of own pedagogical achievements and failures at the stage of occupational adjustment.



Coherence of external and internal indices of adaptation in the experimental group after the forming experiment testifies indicate the adequacy of the inner picture of professional development.

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