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**THE CONSISTENCY OF EDUCATIONAL PROCESS  
PARTICIPANTS`S POSITIONS AS A CONDITION FOR  
SCHOOLCHILDREN PROFILE CHOICE**

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***Abstract***

The article is devoted to the problem analysis of organization of profession-oriented consultation for schoolchildren in the conditions of modern educational institutions. According to the results of practical work, typical problems of adolescents who are in the situation of choice among profession-oriented academic programs are revealed: inadequacy of their self-esteem, exposure to external influences, avoidance of independent decisions, uncertainty in their own educational prospects. It is established that the issues of coordinating the opinions of various participants in the educational process on the issue of choice among profession-oriented academic programs of the student remain unaccounted for in most cases. The analysis of a complex of external social influences on the pupil at the given stage of training is presented; the specifics of the position of parents, teachers, subject teachers, the class teacher, the administration, the school psychologist influencing the schoolchild are described. The evaluation of the degree and nature of the arising disagreements in the opinions of participants in educational relations on the issue of choice among profession-oriented academic programs is given. The data proving a significant negative effect of the discrepancy in the positions of these subjects on the student's condition are given: increase in his school, self-evaluation and general anxiety, deterioration of educational motivation, decrease in the level of readiness for the choice of profession. The thesis about the importance of organizing the interaction of the subjects of the educational process important for adolescents on the issue of making a decision on choice among profession-oriented academic programs was confirmed.

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**Keywords:** Profile choice, disagreement, anxiety, readiness for choosing a profession, motivation.



## **1. Introduction**

The problem of choice and its role in the formation of personality is one of the fundamental problems in human vital activity investigated by psychological science. The current logic of the education system functioning puts a graduate of high school to the need of making quite a serious choice. It is to identify his own position regarding the profile of education. Prjazhnikov (1999) stresses that due to age specifics, an adolescent suffers serious difficulties in solving this problem and needs a specially organized assistance.

**1.1.** Such a support is provided in the framework of the profile orientation of schoolchildren. Its basic principles are based on the tradition of a career-oriented work with adolescents (Dautova, 2006, Chernikova, 2006). In this case, the main attention is paid to creating conditions for increasing the degree of readiness of schoolchildren to take a decision about professional and educational choices through the elaboration of the system of intrapersonal factors. At that, often outside the analysis there remains specificity of external social impacts on the schoolchild from the nearest social environment, such as parents, subject-teachers, form-masters, administration and guidance counselors in this period.

**1.2.** The working practice of educational psychologists confirms that the multidirectional effects on an adolescent on the part of the significant subjects of choice prompt a series of conflict situations at the decision-making stage and complicate the processes of further adaptation to new learning conditions. On the whole, it reduces significantly schoolchildren's satisfaction of learning process and emerging relationships.

## **2. Problem Statement**

The choice of education profile by schoolchildren is made, mainly, under the conditions of varying degrees of discrepancy of the opinions of participants of education process in relation to a profile orientation and the schoolchild's professional perspectives. That situation has a negative impact on learners' psychological state and requires additional efforts to bridge negative tendencies.

## **3. Research Questions**

The main questions of our research were the following:

- identification of the problems of organizing a profile orientation of pupils at the present stage;
- definition of the specificity of realizing the selection of an education by pupils in the conditions of the discrepancy of the opinions of participants of the educational process concerning a profile orientation and professional prospects of the pupil;
- evaluation of the effect of mismatch in the opinions of the subjects of the educational process on the state of schoolchildren in the situation of profile choice and their adaptation to profile training.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to reveal the influence of the inconsistency of participants' positions in educational process on adolescents in the situation of choosing the profile of education. The object of the research is the process of choosing an educational direction. And, the subject of the research is psychological factors and conditions for choosing the profile by a senior student as well as his psychological states in the situation of choice.

#### **5. Research Methods**

To achieve the research objectives, a theoretical analysis of the following was carried out:

- the legal framework providing the main directions of the education system development and the implementation of the modernization programs of school education;
- the psychological-pedagogical literature on the study of the contemporary state of approaches to the support of vocational-educational self-determination processes in schoolchildren and their profile training;
- the problems of in-school interaction in the framework of solving specific issues of accompanying the educational process.

The base of this research consisted of the municipal educational institutions of Yaroslavl. Within the study of the problem and analysis of the actual situation in the educational practice, materials of work with 400 schools were used. 183 ninth-graders took part in the experiment. The 95 graduates of those ninth graders were selected, claiming to enter the tenth grade. There were 46 boys and 49 girls. The parents of these schoolchildren and their teachers (37 subject-teachers, 11 form-masters of grades 9-11) also participated in this work.

A survey among the parents, form-masters and subject-teachers teaching in primary and senior schools was carried out. The diagnosis of the schoolchildren was carried out by means of the following methods: «The degree of readiness for the choice of profession», «Anxiety scale» by A.M. Prikhozhan and «Comprehensive motivation inventory» by E.V. Karpova. The data obtained during the psychological diagnosis were subject to statistical analysis with the help of the methods of statistical processing of results: arithmetic mean calculation, comparison of frequency values through  $\chi^2$ -criterion and comparison of groups by Student's t-test. Data processing was performed with the help of the software "STATISTICA" version 6.0.

#### **6. Findings**

**6.1.** The results of the study make it possible to identify significant problems in the solution of tasks of schoolchildren profile orientation at the present stage.

On average, at the end of the primary school only 10% are diagnosed with a high level of willingness to choose a profession, characterized by a clear definition of professional and educational plans. In different years, from 19 to 35% keep a low level of readiness to make a professional choice due to the following: the inadequate evaluation of their own educational and, in general, personal potential, inability to analyze

existing capabilities and opportunities and avoidance of an independent decision-making and exposure to others' opinions.

The parents' survey confirms that they are concerned with their child's choice of for the future direction of education. At the same time, according to the questionnaire, up to 58% of the parents do not know which profile of education to recommend to their own child. For 35-37% the direction of the child's education in high school does not correlate with the future professional choice. About a quarter of the interviewed families have significant differences due to discrepancy between the views of the adolescent and parents regarding the preferable profile of education. Only a small part of the families seek an individual consultation with a psychologist or a professional counsellor. This means that there is no meaningful correction of the parental position.

A pedagogical influence on the choice of a graduate profile in high school is quite significant. However, in fact, one should accept that the nature of the educational success of the child for teachers remains the only criterion for selection for profile classes.

As a result, the majority of graduates of high school (up to 80%) face discrepancy in the opinions of individual subjects of the educational process regarding their profile perspectives. We designate this discrepancy or inconsistency of opinions as a disagreement of the positions of the participants in the educational process on the issue of profile choice by the schoolchild. Since disparity between two indicators reflecting the same phenomenon in different diagnostic conditions can be called as disagreement, we diagnose it by means of comparing the preferences expressed by the schoolchild himself with his parents' opinion, the teachers conclusions and the psychologist's recommendations.

**6.2.** The data obtained in the course of work with high school seniors lead to the conclusion that the presence of disagreements in the opinions of the significant people, who the schoolchild can turn for help to, complicates his situation considerably. The proof of this provision is the results of comparative analysis of the diagnostic data obtained in the groups that have disagreement but do not have them according to the parameters "level of preparedness for choosing a profession" and "level of school anxiety" (Table 01).

**Table 01.** Influence of the discrepancy between the positions of the subjects of the educational process on the level of readiness for choosing a profession and the level of anxiety in schoolchildren

Groups of school children	Level of willingness to choose a profession ( $\bar{x}$ )	Level of anxiety			
		School ( $\bar{x}$ )	Self-evaluation ( $\bar{x}$ )	Interpersonal ( $\bar{x}$ )	General ( $\bar{x}$ )
Don't have disagreement	18,29	4	3,29	2,43	3,14
Have disagreement	12,23	6,1	4,46	3,29	4,49

Assessing the level of readiness for making a professional choice at this stage is an extremely important aspect. Willingness as a psychological characteristic is an active-action state of personality, reflecting the understanding of task content and conditions of a forthcoming decision, and performing as a condition for a successful execution of any activity. Kuznecova (1987) proves that increase at the level of preparedness to determine their own vocational-educational prospects becomes an important condition for

the schoolchild to make a more informed and considered decision about the direction of education after higher school. The growth of the level of readiness is connected with a pupil's desire to comprehend his own individual-psychological characteristics and features that can become the basis for his further plans, openness of new information, more flexible response to changing conditions, greater independence and taking his responsibility for the choices.

According to the received data, we can note that the coordinated position of the schoolchild's closest environment about his profile perspectives becomes one of the conditions for his more mature position at the stage of choosing the direction of education.

**6.3.** The inconsistency of the positions of significant subjects affects the emotional state of high school seniors. In general, an increased level of anxiety in the group of the schoolchildren, in relation to which there are disagreements among the participants in the educational process, is a reflection of the deterioration in their emotional well-being in high school. Anxiety is considered to be a constant or situational manifested property of a person coming into a state of increased trouble and experiencing fear in particular social situations (Nemov, 2014, p.597). Among negative experiences, it occupies a special place, because it often leads to decrease in efficiency, actual activity, difficulties in communication and even somatic diseases. An increased anxiety arises and manifests as a result of the interactions of a number of cognitive, affective and behavioural reactions provoked by human exposure to various stressors, and affects the level of pretensions, self-esteem and self-confidence, and negatively affects motivation.

Diagnosing a higher level of general, school and self-evaluating anxiety in the group with identified mismatches, we can assume that the learning situation in the profile class is perceived by them as more stressful, and the level of their own abilities and success is as inadequate to the system of curriculum requirements of the profile school. Such a situation as a whole is a manifestation of emotional discomfort, disadvantage and disadaptation of schoolchildren, which also affects the nature of motivation for learning activity.

The comparative analysis of the high school seniors' groups who have had and have not had a disagreement in the opinions about profile choice, presents certain tendencies also with regard to the educational motivation (Table 02).

**Table 02.** Influence of the disagreement of the positions of the educational process subjects on the nature of the educational motivation of the schoolchildren

Groups	Learning motivation subsystems							
	Outer ( $\bar{x}$ )	Inner ( $\bar{x}$ )	Achievements ( $\bar{x}$ )	Security ( $\bar{x}$ )	Stereotypes ( $\bar{x}$ )	Self-realizing ( $\bar{x}$ )	Anti-motivation ( $\bar{x}$ )	Extra-curricular ( $\bar{x}$ )
Don't have disagreement	28,86	22,86	22	25,71	20,86	25,57	19,86	20,86
Have disagreement	27,88	20,16	20,31	27,93	22,85	25,92	23,49	25,26

The students, receiving agreed positions expressed by others, demonstrate a higher internal motivation and achievement motivation. They are the motives that are particularly important from the point of view of accepting the system of education and the increased requirements of the profile school. More

often, they reflect interest to the process and result of activity and to the desire to develop individual qualities and abilities.

The group of the schoolchildren, who have found the presence of disagreements in opinions, differs in the predominance of motivation for safety, motivational stereotypes, a higher extracurricular activities and anti-motivation. At that, the motives for safety among all the diagnosed motivational subsystems for this group are leading. This situation is associated, first of all, with the desire to avoid failure, criticism, lack of pleasure from learning activities and negative emotions in this regard. It often involves the lack of self-confidence, low self-esteem and lack of confidence in the possibility of success. This is confirmed by the data that the motive for achieving success gets one of the last places in the rating of motives of this group.

In general, based on the materials of psychological support of the schoolchildren group who have disagreements in the opinions of the subjects of the educational process about their educational prospects, we can point out a number of their significant features:

- high uncertainty in the design of their own educational trajectory and the lack of follow-up of professional plans;
- frequent desire to make a choice "for the company" with classmates without taking into account individual characteristics and inclinations;
- reluctance to seek help from adults during the decision-making period for the profiling line;
- high anxiety in the period of adaptation to the conditions of schooling at the senior level;
- less substantive motivation and fear of change;
- a lower estimate of their own potentials and opportunities, less satisfaction with their own position at school.

To conduct an analysis of the present situation, the group of the graduates is further divided, depending on the degree of disagreement between the position of the child, parent, teachers, and psychologist regarding the choice of the education profile, into several subgroups. There are schoolchildren having no disagreement in relation to them:

- the group that finds discrepancy in one position (in case of disagreement of one of the participants with the opinion of the majority);
- the group having mismatch in two positions (in the case when two different positions are represented by means of preliminary assessment);
- the group with mismatch in three positions (the presence of three different points of view regarding the educational prospects of the child).

In our experiment there has been no complete disagreement of opinions (all the participants differ in the definition of a recommended profile of education).

A psychological analysis of existing situations makes it possible to identify the causes underlying the emerging differences of the participants in the situation of profile choice. They are as follows:

- a low level of awareness of available opportunities for a specialized training in the district and city;
- a low importance of the professional plans of the schoolchildren as an argument in the design of profile choice;

- the unwillingness of the pupils and parents to change the institution for the period of study at the senior level;
- the desire to preserve the familiar learning environment, school collective and teaching staff;
- the desire of the teachers and school administration to preserve the contingent of school and, consequently, to advise on profile directions of their own school only;
- a critical attitude to the data of psychological diagnosis of personality orientation of a graduate, and a number of others.

According to the received data, we may also argue that not only the presence, but increase in the degree of disagreement in the positions of the child, his parents, teachers and psychologist at the moment of profile choice of education has its negative consequences.

It is statistically proved that the greater the degree of such disagreement, the lower the level of the schoolchildren readiness to make a professional choice. The students with a greater degree of disagreement in the positions tend to show a lack of readiness or a low level of readiness in this parameter. Accordingly, more often they are different by such features as distorted ideas about the actual reality, a poor awareness of their capabilities and possibilities, inadequate response to changing circumstances, susceptibility to someone else's influence and avoidance of independent decision-making, preference for adaptive behaviour and lack of personal professional and educational plans. The average and high level of willingness to choose a profession is typical of most of the schoolchildren, who have no disagreements in relation to them or their number is minimal. They are characterized by clearer ideas about current circumstances, a sufficient knowledge of their own features, adequate self-esteem and self-confidence, flexible orientation in changing situations, and well-founded professional and personal plans.

**6.4.** The increase in the number of discrepancies in the opinions regarding educational prospects leaves a mark on anxiety level in the schoolchildren (see Table 03).

**Table 02.** Anxiety level in schoolchildren with varying degrees of the mismatch of positions relative to profile choice

Degree of disagreement of participants' positions	Level of anxiety							
	School ( $\bar{x}$ )		Self-evaluation ( $\bar{x}$ )		Interpersonal ( $\bar{x}$ )		General ( $\bar{x}$ )	
	$\bar{x}$	$s_x$	$\bar{x}$	$s_x$	$\bar{x}$	$s_x$	$\bar{x}$	$s_x$
Absence of disagreements	4	5,46	2,43	6,49	2,43	2,24	3,14	3,55
Student's t-test	0		0,17		0,46		1,27	
Disagreement for one position	4**	3,69	3,77	3,14	2,77	4,07	3,54*	1,63
Student's t-test	3,38		0,77		0,82		2,19	
Disagreement for two position	7,28**	5,98	4,39**	5,58	3,44	3,25	4,83*	3,14
Student's t-test	0,27		6,24		0,63		1,67	
Disagreement for three position	7,5	3,25	7**	2,5	3,75	1,19	6	0,5

\* - data statistically significantly different with an error of not more than 5%

\*\* - data statistically significantly different with an error of not more than 0.01%

According to the data obtained during the period of adaptation to the profile school conditions and compared with the disagreements discovered before, there is a tendency of the growth of general, school and self-evaluative anxiety along with the increase of the number of contradictions in the opinions. At that, school anxiety rises significantly in case of any discrepancies in two or three positions, and that of self-evaluative drastically enhances in the presence of discrepancy of three opinions in the situation.

Thus, the circumstances in relation to the schoolchild's vocational-educational perspective definition affect considerably his psychological state, the degree of his confidence in the choices and his attitude towards learning activities. In our opinion, finding ways of arrangement of all the subjects interaction in the educational process acceptable for modern educational practice, who are interested in solving the tasks of profile choice by schoolchildren, should play a leading role in overcoming the present difficulties and disagreements in decision making about profile orientation.

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, the processes of profile choice by a high school senior is influenced not only by the peculiarities of his intrapersonal features, but also by the set of external social effects manifesting, first of all, in the disagreement of the participants' opinions in the educational process in relation to the schoolchild's educational prospects.

- 7.1. There are typical forms of discrepancies in the viewpoints of the family and school determined by the specific of a psychological position of each participant in the educational process and the degree of mismatch of their opinions.
- 7.2. The situation of mismatched impacts of significant participants in the educational process on a high school student does not allow him to develop a stable internal position regarding his own educational prospects. The consistency of the positions becomes an important condition for making an appropriate and informed profile choice by the schoolchild.

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