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Conference on Land Economy and Rural Studies Essentials**PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF
TEACHERS AS VITAL RESOURCE IN CHANGING WORLD**

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Abstract

The paper examines the content of self-development in the light of professional and personal development of teachers. In the modern, dynamically changing world, professional and personal development of teachers is updated with a vengeance. Not being able to change and change one's activities following the development of technologies, information and digital means, economic and political transformations, teachers become not just ineffective, but feel fatigue and go through a professional crisis. The way transformations impact human life and health has been studied earlier in sociological sciences, proving the destructiveness of many ongoing changes. However, it is in the field of education that all social changes are most painful, and the teacher, becoming the epicenter of these changes, experiences their influence most acutely. Considering professional and personal development not only as a state task of improving competences of teaching staff, but also as a personal task of promoting one's life resources and one's self-efficacy, it is necessary to establish those mechanisms that trigger, initiate and ensure this process. The first step in solving this task is to figure out whether a determinant process is development or self-development. The paper aims to understand the content of both concepts and find out, through psychological and pedagogical sources, the mechanisms of self-development.

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1. Introduction

A modern man is constantly being affected by various transformations. Constant changes, their speed and scale require a person to react to and adapt to those changes as quickly and constantly as possible. Today in psychological literature, one of the most popular concepts is uncertainty as a consequence of ongoing societal changes. The changes that permeate all spheres of human professional and daily life immediately entail a number of problems related to social and professional adaptation, identification, and coping. These processes, in turn, require energy as an expenditure of emotional and psychological human resources. In her papers, Klyueva (2016) emphasizes that psychologists and psychotherapists are increasingly being approached by people with problems of adaptation to changing social life, with experiences of uncertainty about the future. Sorokin (1992), Toffler (2002), Schütz (2004) and others wrote about a destructive impact of changes on human life, health and psycho-emotional state.

As noted in specialist literature, people whose professions are concerned with intensive human and social interactions are most affected by transformations. These professions include teachers, medical and social workers, psychologists, and staff in the field of social services. The educator who is called upon to pass on social and cultural expertise to future generations is perhaps more vulnerable to current changes. Against this background, he/she becomes not only ineffective, but also professionally burns out, experiences a crisis.

2. Problem Statement

Today, in order to remain active and feel more or less safe in a modern, dynamically changing life, a person should be able to quickly respond to ongoing changes, handle them, and adapt to them. It is obvious that human life resources are not limitless. Consequently, the paper aims to analyze the way teachers respond to changes in professional and everyday life, to update the issue of professional and personal development (self-development) as the most important condition for coping with changes and promoting their life resources. Only through self-improvement, realizing and stepping up progress, a teacher is able to cope with negative impacts of changes, using their energy for personal and professional growth.

3. Research Questions

The task set by the government of the Russian Federation to build the potential of teaching staff initiated projects and research programs in the regions to search for models of professional and personal development of teachers (National Teacher Development System). Many Russian regions are investigating professional deficits and professional challenges faced by teaching staff as possible mechanisms for finding points of professional growth. In some regions, professional certification is being developed and piloted, in others – professional diagnostic programs, and others. These facts confirm a special concern of the state and the public about the competence of teaching staff that directly impact the quality of future human capital.

Moreover, today professional and personal development of teachers is still a relevant topic.

Firstly, despite significant practical developments, in scientific publications and in the professional community, there is a contradiction between growing requirements for the level of professional and personal competence of teachers and insufficiently studied, developed and generalized ideas about psychological mechanisms, conditions and factors that initiate and provide professional and personal development of teachers.

Secondly, it is still open how to define the concept as such, whether it is about self-development (then it is necessary to study psychological mechanisms enhancing the effectiveness of professional and personal self-development), or whether it is about relatively compulsory professional and personal development under external impacts and conditions.

Kulikova (2001) emphasizes that this issue is relevant today for all humanitarian knowledge: “modern humanism, applying a humanistic attitude towards the human as the pivotal value and simultaneously a unique bearer and creator of values, as a goal and leading driving force of the development of society, today puts the idea of self-development in the center of its attention” (p. 32).

In any case, when it comes to development, it is assumed to be ontologically linked to the object – what is actually being developed. In other words, it is possible to develop what is already available and has a certain resource, potential for further transformation and improvement. Having considered teacher’s professional and personal development, this definition can be thought to solve a state or social task, whereas the tasks of coming up with mechanisms, vectors, driving forces, conditions that determine and trigger this process lie in the area of self-development.

Correlating and arranging self-development and development ontologically acquires a new sounding. If this position is considered from an essential perspective, it is important to define the identity of one or another process, define criteria for separating both processes – development and self-development. If this issue is addressed from a genetic standpoint, an important task is to distribute the roles of two processes – development and self-development, their interchangeability, substitutability, mutual exclusion throughout the entire lifespan of a person. Thus, in age pedagogy and psychology, this issue is addressed unambiguously – development is replaced by self-development as an indicator of involvement of a conscious individual. When it comes to an adult, the issue becomes more acute as to whether both processes constantly and complementarily coexist or succeed one another. The theory of individuality by Ananyev (2001) helps to develop the idea of an ontogenetic transition of a personality from the position of an object to the position of a subject of its own development. Then the process of self-development becomes self-directed development, resulting from the inner world of an individual. However, Abulkhanova (1991) argues that person’s life is dominated by one of life strategies – adaptation or self-improvement, with the latter to be considered as a demonstration of self-development.

The paper focuses on the essence and mechanisms of self-development. Since the concept emphasizes the self-determined nature of the process, the role of the subject (personal factor) is obvious. Being so widespread in modern scientific literature, the concept was used in Russian psychology for a long time only as an explanatory one, expressing the degree of personality activity in the process of purposeful development. Only in the middle of the last century did it become a recognized psychological category, expressing a leading factor in the internal drive for development with inherent internal

mechanisms and laws. Literature and scientific research provides some mechanisms of personal self-development, namely: arbitrariness, awareness, reflection, controllability, self-variability.

Psychological research also deals with the structural components of self-development. Thus, Abulkhanova (1991) distinguishes three processes as components: exposure to culture; exposure to knowledge (constant improvement of one's knowledge); active self-realization at work, in creativity, in life. Assev (1978) highlights the conditions necessary for self-development as a stepped up progress of the subject as such, including:

- process energy indicating the presence of an obvious, perceived contradiction between the present (undesirable) and the future (possible, desired);
- process motivation indicating willingness and desire for self-variability, self-improvement in achieving a desired future level;
- strong focus of the subject for self-variability (self-improvement);
- resources – functional, cognitive, emotional and other reserves that are not used in ordinary, everyday life, but mainstreamed to resolve the contradiction.

Consequently, self-development ends up with personal qualitative transformations, while being completely independent of the process vector. Thus, the literature provides data on positive self-changes. Rubinstein (2002) associates self-development with “ascent to the best self”; Abulkhanova (1991) identifies self-development with self-improvement; Kulikova (2001) – with self-enrichment and self-development; Bodalev (1987) uses ‘development progress’ as a synonym; Ivannikov (2003) calls self-development an activity aimed at positive self-change of an individual in the direction of his/her ideal “Me”.

There is also a directly opposite opinion that self-development does not have to be positive, socially approved. If we are talking about resolving an internal personal contradiction, then strengthening an egoistic position for an individual can be a positive qualitative transformation in the process of self-development, ensuring a harmonious existence, but for society – an unapproved acquired quality. Or, for example, a pursuit for career prospects. In the Soviet period, the word ‘careerist’ had a negative connotation, today young people massively attend courses and trainings on career building, in their CVs emphasize their focus and orientation on career achievements, which is highly welcomed by employers. It was about such ‘negative’ self-development outcomes that Kulikova (2001) wrote. In addition, the outcomes can be neutral, both for the individual and for society as a whole.

4. Purpose of the Study

Thus, self-development is understood as a process of self-development that I am implementing myself. At the same time, the psychological literature does not specify exactly how, by what means, through what mechanisms this can be achieved, which set the goal of the paper – to find and provide a rationale for the mechanisms of teacher's professional and personal development and empirically test their effectiveness.

5. Research Methods

The issue was addressed through the methods of comparative and critical content analysis of scientific publications on pedagogy and psychology, normative materials; theoretical analysis and synthesis of available scientific materials; testing, interviews of teachers, storytelling, mathematical processing of results.

6. Findings

Content analysis of media, public reports on the education system and regulatory documents in the field of education suggest that the most common mechanism that determines professional and personal development of teachers is considered to be the mechanism of monitoring and subsequent elimination of professional deficits (challenges) of teachers. Today, in many regions of the Russian Federation, the matrix of professional deficits in teaching staff is being studied and built. Scientific and pedagogical community intuitively groped for the right direction. From the standpoint of social psychology, it is struggle, competition with each other that makes people develop. In dialectical terms, there are two contradictory aspirations: towards motion and towards immobility (static) or, in other terms, towards change and towards immutability. It is the struggle of these two aspirations that initiates development.

However, from a personological perspective, self-development is triggered by a subject's own awareness of the need for self-improvement.

Consequently, a theoretical analysis answered a question of what the mechanisms of self-development are. Various mechanisms are described in the literature, which resulted in systematization and rationale for the following: awareness and fixation of professional crisis, cognitive mechanism and contradiction, reflection, barriers and difficulties in professional activity, ways to settle them, conscious needs (Batarshv & Makaryev, 2014; Ivannikov, 2003; Kharchenko, 2009; Leontyev, 1957).

To empirically test the identified mechanisms of professional and personal self-development of teachers, a group of respondents aged between 38-64 was formed involving 1,342 school teachers. The authors did not attract younger teachers to participate in the experiment due to their insufficient professional identification at the stage of professional development. To assess the availability of self-development mechanisms among teachers, various standardized diagnostic procedures were used, as well as storytelling, observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Monitoring of teachers showed the following results.

37% of the respondents being aware of professional crisis, professional stagnation have a high need for self-development; 40% – average; 33% – low.

87% of the respondents have a contradiction as a fact of their dissatisfaction with a current professional level, 13% find it difficult to answer, which does not give an exhaustive answer. Doubts are likely to be tilted towards dissatisfaction.

Reflection, being a leading tool of self-development, is high in 78% of the teachers, while only 22% have a medium level.

Barriers and challenges in professional activity were mentioned by 68% of the teachers, while the remaining 32% confirmed their situational occurrence. Thus, all teachers experience some kind of

professional difficulties at different times and regardless of the length of service and the level of professional competence.

Conscious needs for self-development were confirmed by 100% of the respondents. Thus, the empirical results not only confirm that theoretically identified mechanisms of self-development are relevant, but that teachers also need to update and self-determine professional and personal self-development.

7. Conclusion

The theoretical consideration of self-development involved applying the theory of individual psychology that emphasizes that personal development generally occurs in two environments – culture and civilization. The modern situation is dominated by civilizational environment presented by the consumer society, in which humans are subject to the law of competition: “to be in consumption no worse than others”, “to be in consumption better than others”. In response to a current social need, the service market is prepared to offer all kinds of trainings for personal growth, for the development of individual personality traits, for various psychological skills and many others, which is initiated by mass media culture (Ibragimova & Skobeleva, 2018). However, the mass demand and the potential of civilization environment enable the development of technological approach to self-development, promote a person’s need for self-development. This applies to the teacher as well. For example, building a professional career within the national system for teacher professional growth can be viewed as a certain technique linking teacher’s achievements with the possibilities of consumption growth.

The second cultural environment as a conglomerate of ideas about man and humanity is represented in the system of humanistic values. Within this approach, self-development is understood as personal growth, self-improvement and is proclaimed as an essential strategy of life journey.

To conclude, it is worth mentioning the limitation of a deficit approach in studying professional and personal development (self-development) of teachers. If we try to meditate on the role and place of reflection as a mechanism of self-development, it should be emphasized what exactly a teacher should discover in himself/herself in order to start self-development; what perceived content of “Me” is necessary and sufficient to ensure teacher’s self-development. Consequently, the detected and even perceived deficits and contradictions of professional activity, on the one hand, act as unique mechanisms for teacher’s self-development, but on the other hand, have a localized character, failing to mirror the strategic nature and prospects of self-development. The deficit approach in this case resembles the error correction, where the general content of teacher’s training is still limited by educational programs.

According to Leontyev (1957), self-determination (self-development) is recalled in two cases. First, during personal and social crises and fractures, when there are no ready-made recipes, stereotypes, strategies for behavior and development. Secondly, in the opposite situation, when a person is doing great, but still needs something else to passionately strive for with no apparent need.

Thus, identifying and justifying ontogenetic mechanisms of self-development will enable to approach the solution of how to organize the environment, to create necessary and sufficient conditions that facilitate self-development of a teacher as an individual and as a professional. Self-development is seen as a way to obtain the Self in its universal form (as an orientation towards universal moral ideals)

and in its singular form (as a movement towards one's identity). In the environment of culture, self-development is achieved as a competition with oneself, as a struggle with the Me-present for the Me-future, which reflects the ideal of humanity.

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