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## PERSONALITY ASPECT OF PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF A HIGHER SCHOOL TEACHER

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*The article clarifies the fact that the issue of studying the personality development of higher school teachers in the context of their professional activity is relevant. Readiness for professional activity is considered as a system characterized by appropriate coefficients, the complex consideration of which allows obtaining reliable information about the real level of teachers' professional work. It is expedient to present the features of the professional teaching staff of higher educational institutions in three categories: a practising teacher, a teacher-researcher and a scientist in the field of specialization of an educational institution. The higher school teachers' scientific and pedagogical activities in the context of modern morality are an important component of their professional competence, substantially affecting the results of their teaching and research activities. It is considered as the realization of the idea of humanization of science and education.*

**Key words:** higher school, teacher, professional activity, personality aspect, personality, readiness for professional activity, teacher-practitioner, teacher-researcher, scientist in the field, scientific and pedagogical activity

### Introduction

The integrity of personality development is a leading principle of teachers' formation and harmonization of all aspects of their activities. The principle of integrity allows identifying the general components of development, which are inherent in each individual; but it does not take into account their individual nature. However, professional orientation and individual traits have a significant impact on the personality development. The conducted analysis shows that the issues of improving the quality of professional training of future higher school teachers in the context of their personal development are not sufficiently highlighted in the scientific literature.

As noted by Subbarayudu, Babu Praveen Kumar (2013), teaching is "a spiritual process involving the contact of the soul with the mind. A good teacher is a powerful tool and has a significant impact on the

formation of a student's character. Teachers are of paramount importance in any educational system. No other aspect of education is of such vital importance to the progress of society as a teacher who is the core of the education system. The whole system of education revolves around them" (Subbarayudu, Babu Praveen Kumar, 2013, p. 107). In his scholarly works, the Polish teacher Król (2008) emphasizes the relationship between spirituality and self-improvement of the higher school teacher. He notes, "If you want to achieve the goal, you have to go forward, namely, to strive for self-improvement, becoming an example to others. First of all, a person must understand oneself and have a systems approach to everybody (try to understand other people regardless whether they are students, colleagues or just common people)" (Król, 2008, p. 201).

Today the quality of the teacher's work is the most important issue, therefore "it is necessary to prepare

objective research into the evaluation of the legitimacy of the teacher's work as well as thorough student responses" (Zatoń, 2014, p. 21). In present-day pedagogical studies, much attention is being devoted to the preparation of a "newly qualified teacher (NQT)", which emphasizes not only the acquisition of professional knowledge and skills, but also professional development (Aspfors, & Fransson, 2015, p. 75). Therefore, in modern conditions, the problem of forming a creative spiritual personality with the established system of professional values becomes very important.

### **The aim of the study**

We believe it is necessary to substantiate the expediency of a multidisciplinary study of the development of the personality of a higher school teacher in the context of his professional activity.

Given the stated aim, the following tasks need to be addressed: 1) to characterize modern problems of professional training of teachers, which require improvement in the context of the teachers' personality development; 2) to identify peculiarities and to justify the classification of the teaching staff of higher educational institutions in the following categories: a practicing teacher, a teacher-researcher and a scientist in the field of specialization of an educational institution; 3) to determine the contribution of spiritual culture and moral into the professional competence of a higher school teacher; 4) to analyze concrete examples of personal qualities of the teacher's professional development.

### **Theoretical framework and research methods**

The issues related to training higher school teachers are dealt with in research works of a number of scientists (Honcharenko, 2000; Król, 2015). Researchers study the following particular aspects: the competence of teachers of higher educational institutions (Żukowska, 2012); quality of higher education (Zatoń, 2014); modern teaching systems (Król, 2015); spiritual and cultural relations between teachers and students (Kozlovskiy, 2009; Marchuk, 2003; Svidzynskiy, 2009; Żmijewska, 2014; Żukowska, 2012), self-education of the teacher (Zimny, 2015); collaboration of a student and a teacher in the educational process (Zhuravska, & Zhuravskiy, 2000); knowledge and skills of a teacher-mentor (Aspfors, & Fransson, 2015) and others.

To solve the problems identified and to attain the aim set the authors used the following research methods: methods of generalization of scientific-theoretical and research data, synthesis, comparison, modeling, logical methods of analysis and expert assessments, as well as methods of mathematical statistics for the processing of empirical data and the establishment of quantitative

relationships between phenomena and the investigated processes.

### **Results**

By now, a special technogenic type of civilization has been formed, in which, under the influence of intensive innovations, there are taking place active social changes. Reserves of growth "are not drawn up at the expense of the expansion of cultural zones but through restructuring the foundations of previous ways of life and formation of fundamentally new opportunities. Technocratic thinking is a worldview, the essential features of which are the primacy of the means over the purpose, of the partial goal over sense, common human interests and values. For technocratic thinking, there are no categories of morality, conscience, human experiences and dignity" (Honcharenko, 2000, p. 96). Identifying humanistic aspects of professional pedagogics, means of integrating knowledge, skills and values for the formation of a creative personality of a specialist with full professional knowledge and skills, a holistic worldview and a system of universal and professional values is one of the top priorities of modern pedagogics.

To adhere to the principle of the integrity of development, the spiritual and material dimensions are to be mutually supplemented. To date, the material is substantially more valued than the spiritual. In addition, here the question arises about the role of science in the formation of the spiritual culture of both an individual personality and the society as a whole. The concept of teacher's professional competence is extremely important and valuable in the educational process. The teacher "should strive to be successful in educational activities. It is the teacher who should be properly trained because he is the real organizer of the training activities" (Zimny, 2015, p. 16). For a student, a good teacher as a tutor, of course, is an authority. However, over time, especially at senior courses, the professional image of a teacher becomes more and more important for students. In addition, if during the first years of study, students evaluate only the teacher's academic qualities, with the course of time the moral-ethical, religious, and scientific-ideological qualities of the teacher gain more importance. After all, young people, in the first place, inherently target goals, search for the ideal, authorities, and models for imitation.

Żmijewska (2014) emphasizes that one of the key tasks of training a student – a future professional teacher is to help him develop his identity and ability to communicate. She identifies the triad of "knowledge – skills – social competence" (p. 51), where knowledge is the ability to think critically, to be aware of different

concepts, to be competent in legislation related to educational situations, to know the specifics of developing educational materials etc.; skills include the ability to assess students' behavior in various learning situations, to create own teaching materials, to conduct and organize the teaching process, in particular, team teaching; social competence is represented by such values as tolerance and identity.

Practice shows that there are different views on this problem. In particular, the following approaches to the role of the teacher are distinguished: 1) a teacher as a manager of student's self-study work; 2) a teacher as a consultant; 3) a teacher as a moderator; 4) a teacher as a lecturer (Zhuravska, & Zhuravskiy, 2000, p. 38). For example, a consulting teacher gives advice, helps to perform certain actions, makes conclusions, expresses his opinion on the problems being considered. His role is limited to helping solve the problems that arise during an independent cognitive activity of the student, finding alternatives, searching for literary sources, and providing additional information on specific issues etc. The moderating role of a teacher implies no interference with the students' independent cognitive actions, but only their assessment. If necessary, the teacher raises questions for students' reflection, that is, the teacher directs students' activity without expressing his own opinion and gives the student an opportunity to come to certain conclusions on his own. Thus, the teacher is to be able to manage the student's activities under different conditions, being a lecturer, a manager, a consultant, and a moderator, enabling the student to act independently.

In these circumstances, researchers emphasize a new approach to teacher training: "training at official courses with the participation of representatives and researchers from the University; professional development through regular trainings and seminars, as well as joint research projects of teachers and researchers" (Aspfors, & Fransson, 2015, p. 76).

Żukowska (2012) in her research into the training of a higher school teacher distinguishes the following competencies the teacher should possess (p. 49): *praxeological* (the teacher's ability to effectively plan and organize, implement, monitor educational processes in higher education, in particular, seminars, consultations, conferences etc.); *communicative* (the emphasis is placed on the effectiveness of the linguistic behavior of a teacher in a higher school); *cooperative* (the effectiveness of the pro-social behavior of both parties, namely, the cooperation between a teacher and a student); *creative* (emphasizes modern and innovative approach to the presentation of the material); *information* (effective use of modern sources of information), and *moral* (applies to the norms of

morality not only in society as a whole, but also in scientific circles). The author focuses on the assessment of not only students' behaviour, but also of the teachers' ethics in higher school. She also emphasizes the key principles of moral competence of a teacher in a higher school: ethical attitude in cooperative work with colleagues and students, positive attitude and thinking, adequate assessment of the situation from the ethical point of view, correct moral choice in various complex teaching and life situations, moral responsibility for development of the student. In general, as Zatoń (2014) emphasizes in his studies, "the teacher is constantly faced with difficult situations that require from him the ability to apply countless competencies" (Zatoń, 2014, p. 18).

In our opinion, the peculiarities of the higher school teacher's professional activity cause considerable difficulties in the context of assigning it to a particular classification group. First, these difficulties are associated with the disciplinary differences of the sciences: pedagogical (a human being – a human being), natural (a human being – nature), technical (a human being – technology) etc. Therefore, a teacher may belong to a particular classification group *according to the feature of the branch of science*, in which he works. At the same time, in higher educational institutions, the vast majority of people engaged in scientific research are simultaneously teaching students. Therefore, but for the classification according to the branch of science or sciences, in which the training of specialists in this university is done, the teacher additionally belongs to the group "a human being – a human being" *according to the feature of pedagogical activity*.

Under such conditions, it would be logical to create the following comprehensive classifying description: a teacher as a practising teacher, a teacher as a teacher-researcher and a teacher as a scientist in the field of science, in which the higher educational institution is training specialists. It is obvious that, as a rule, even a very capable and hard-working person is unable to perform *all these three professional* functions at a high level. It does not mean that every teacher must necessarily be both a theoretician and a practitioner, who possesses the same level of the rational and sensual way of cognition and at the same time a highly skilled specialist in branch science and pedagogy. So it is expedient to ensure high-quality implementation of all aspects of the teachers' activity, taking into account the teacher's natural abilities, the needs of students, and the specifics of the educational institution etc.

One of the decisive preconditions for success in developing quantitative methods is the choice and development of specific indicators and characteristics. In modern science quite often there is used such an

indicator as the number of published scientific works. This indicator has a strong correlation with the new scientific research data obtained, although, of course, in no way they are identical. More perspective for exact science studies are various combinations of indices to be computed. Quantitative and qualitative approaches have both advantages and disadvantages. A quantitative approach tends to be precise, but if applied to social systems, its precise results can subjugate or simplify the real state of things. At the same time, the conclusions made in the result of qualitative approach are ambiguous and therefore require interpretation.

For a teacher-scientist, the subject of labour is the process of transformation and, first of all, the acquisition of new knowledge with the prospect of its further application. Relatively invariant are the means of scientific and pedagogical work, which have a number of common characteristics for all higher education institutions. However, it is possible to determine means of scientific and industrial work for single-profile educational institutions. Professional duties are often reflected in the job description and indicate the main forms of employee's activity as obligatory components of the content of his professional activities.

For a teacher who combines teaching and research, these responsibilities in real conditions are rather uncertain. Sometimes teachers who have significant achievements in a non-pedagogical sphere, in the field of science, in which an educational institution is specializing, consider their pedagogical activity as something supplementary, therefore they are not able to pass on their own achievements to students, competently transform the received scientific knowledge into educational. There is also observed an opposite phenomenon: when the teacher brilliantly performs pedagogical functions, being unable to do scientific research in the field of industry or even scientific and pedagogical research at the proper level.

In our study, we highlighted three blocks of teacher's readiness for professional activity: personal qualities of a scientist; education and experience of professional work; availability of scientific and educational products, on the basis of which two main components are distinguished: professional-personal (professional values, character traits) and professional-activity (professional knowledge, professional skills). Based on the criteria of the professional-personal component, there is made the assessment of the inherent and acquired features of the teacher's character, his value orientations and motives, which prompted him to choose the scientific and pedagogical activity. The professional-activity component comprises knowledge, skills and abilities of an employee in the chosen field of science.

The classification proposed allows us to evaluate both components of readiness for professional activity and individual criteria of each component as well as compare them with the indicators of higher educational institutions.

An integrated combination of these blocks creates the ability of the teacher to work effectively in a particular industry. The numerical characteristics of the personal block are coefficients that play an important role in comparing the results of the professional activities of individual departments of a higher educational institution or its structural units. Therefore, appropriate education contributes to the development of the teacher's potential opportunities.

Another important characteristic is the work experience, which significantly affects the professional competence and the level of teacher's professional formation.

By combining these two important characteristics, the teacher's coefficient of effectiveness is obtained, which is given in a matrix form. Each element of these matrices is an integral characteristic of a certain type of professional activity.

There is also proposed a productivity coefficient, which allows to objectively determining the indicator of professional products, taking into account weight coefficients.

Let us consider, for example, a personal block. Personality qualities are a prerequisite for fruitful professional activity. Modern society has achieved significant scientific development and requires highly skilled specialists capable of finding non-standard solutions to professional tasks, modelling their own activities and forecasting their results. To achieve such goals, the scientist must possess a number of personal qualities, among which, there is first of all: curiosity ( $x_1$ ), initiative ( $x_2$ ), purposefulness ( $x_3$ ), intellectuality ( $x_4$ ), responsibility ( $x_5$ ), honesty ( $x_6$ ), work experience ( $x_7$ ), systems thinking ( $x_8$ ).

The availability of these qualities provides the necessary personal prerequisites for successful professional activity. It is clear that practically no teacher can be called a total quality teacher, while the absence of one or more of these qualities can crucially affect the teacher's further professional life.

At the same time, the most important thing is left behind: the moral significance of the teacher's work, the influence of his views and achievements on the teaching aspect of his activity. The aspects that determine the moral, educational effect of the teacher on the students, since both professional and pedagogical images of the teacher are always closely interconnected.

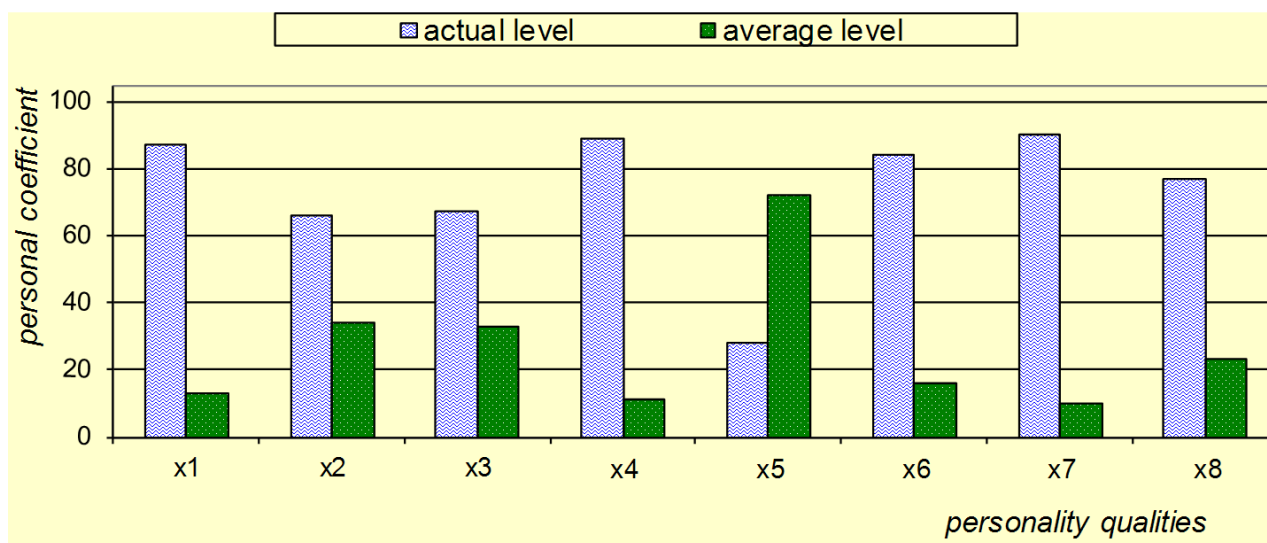


Fig. 1. Assessment of the personal block of the higher school teacher

Spirituality, as a qualitative characteristic of consciousness, which determines the person’s actions, behaviour and life is an attribute of a human being as a subject, as opposed to the lack of spirituality that signals the loss of subjective qualities by a human being and his transformation into a simple object. Hence, there comes the interpretation of spirituality as the personality’s gradual actualization of his subjective qualities. In axiological terms, the traditional components of spirituality are truth, goodness, and beauty. Only a deep understanding of the moral and ethical foundations of a humane society allows a person to choose the right path aimed at the development of society. In any case, the formation of readiness for professional work should be combined with the desire to form a harmonious and creative person, to realize the person’s capabilities to the utmost, to reveal his individual identity in different spheres of life. After all, in the categories of humanity, one of the first commandments of a teacher is his responsibility for the results of his activities.

As a result, the moral aspect of the teacher's activity can not relate only to his social position, but should, if necessary, extend to his purely professional qualities, and should always be considered from the perspective of the relations formed within the framework of a certain profession, its place and role in society's life.

The teacher, who combines pedagogical and scientific functions, has to solve for himself, besides purely pedagogical and branch problems, important problems of moral and religious nature. Christian religion teaches that a person is created in the image and likeness of God, is given freedom, has a special inclination – to creativity and cognition, while at the same time he bears responsibility before God for his

activities on Earth (Svidzynskyi, 2009, p. 41). However, mankind is also involved in self-cognition, in the process of realizing its duties before God and before nature, before each community and before each individual person. It creates a system of humanitarian knowledge and values, which also includes religious beliefs.

Only humanitarian knowledge, art and religion contain elements of self-esteem of mankind, which provide the basis for understanding the necessity of self-restraint in all his activities, including scientific and technical. To the extent that science is involved in the formation of the worldview, it relates to religion. Religion guarantees a holistic perception of reality, filling the world with faith in the possibility of actualizing the higher potentials of being. It encourages self-perfection through love and the worship to the Absolute. Thanks to religion, the world appears harmonious and perfect (Marchuk, 2003, p. 21). Intuitive confidence in the expediency and harmony of the world gives the teacher’s activities a valuable meaning.

**Conclusions**

Thus, readiness for professional activity is considered as a system characterized by relevant coefficients, the complex consideration of which allows obtaining reliable information about the real level of professional work. It is expedient to present the features of the professional teaching staff of higher educational institutions in three directions: a practising teacher, a teacher-researcher and a scientist in the field of specialization of an educational institution. Scientific and pedagogical activity in the context of modern morality is an important component of the teacher's professional competence and it substantially affects the results of his

research as well as teaching activities. It is viewed as the realization of the idea of humanization of science and education.

An important direction for further research is the study of the relationship between the specifics of the profile of a higher educational institution and the peculiarities of its influence on the professional and ethical qualities of the teacher.

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