

PEHPP 2019**Pedagogical Education: History, Present Time, Perspectives****CURRENT PERSONAL IDENTITY OF RUSSIAN PRESERVICE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

A. K. Lukina (a), M. A. Volkova (b)*, O. N. Finogenova (c)

*Corresponding author

(a) Siberian Federal University, Krasnoyarsk, Russia, antonida_lukina@mail.ru

(b) Siberian Federal University, Krasnoyarsk, Russia, maryvol75@mail.ru

(c) Siberian Federal University, Krasnoyarsk, Russia, finogenova1971@mail.ru

Abstract

This article discusses two questions: what are the features of the Russian pre-service primary teachers' identity and how to activate it in teacher training. The conditions for activating future teachers' identity is based on: 1) informal introduction to the specialty; 2) early and distributed teaching practice; 3) modular project training; 4) the requirement of constant reflexive pedagogical reporting;. We asked 50 pre-service primary teachers about their perceptions of teacher activity (semi-structured questionnaire) and studied their values at the beginning/end of training. The results show the relevance of pre-service teachers' perceptions and values. In order to clarify the results, "Aspirations Index" applied to three groups of young people: - pre-service primary teachers, - in-service teachers, and - young people not working in the educational field. The results show similar aspirations among pre- and in-service teachers and different aspirations among "pedagogical" and "non-pedagogical" young people. The intrinsic aspirations prevail among pre- and in-service teachers. Low attractiveness of fame was found for all respondents, as an artifact, which challenges the question of the current norm of fame in the Internet networks era. In total, the results of studying the pre-service teachers' identity show the relevance of the chosen teacher training model.

2357-1330 © 2020 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Aspirations, pre-service teacher training, primary teachers' identity, values.

1. Introduction

Many authors expressed different points of view regarding the existence of personal identity, suggesting a different degree of a person's freedom from external or internal conditions: from complete determinism to absolute individual freedom.

The research review by Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004), stated four essential features of teachers' professional identity could be derived from the studies

The means of obtaining individual experience of the student is to including them in real pedagogical practice under the guidance of an experienced mentor. Solving real pedagogical problems, awareness of their own achievements and difficulties provides a closer connection between the practice and academic training of students, forms their perception of themselves as a teacher, motivates further professional development (Lukina & Volkova, 2016).

Van der Klink, Kools, and Avissar (2017) compared the problems and resources of educators from different countries and found that there is much more similar than different. Teacher educators from different countries seem to have similar concerns, and their current professional development activities and plans for future development are also quite comparable.

Sapchenko (2016) showed that joint activity of the teacher and students is regarded as an organized system of actions aimed at creating of special conditions for personal development of all the participants of the community.

Van Tol (2017) showed the high dependence of the student's self-efficacy on his participation in group work and the time he spends studying.

Arnett (2000) provided the idea that emerging adulthood is a distinct period demographically, subjectively, and in terms of identity explorations.

Bergmark, Lundström, Manderstedt, and Palo (2018) show the importance of organizing teacher training based on several motives, which ensures the completion of teacher training by students and guarantees their work in the teaching profession. The authors agree with Roness and Smith (2010), who argue that teaching training should reflect a realistic rather than idealized picture of the teaching profession, thereby creating the conditions for useful competencies needed in everyday teaching practice. This can ultimately help future teachers build realistic learning waiting and improve preparation for the teaching profession.

2. Problem Statement

The solution to the problem of establishing the professional identity of a preservice primary teacher is complicated by the current situation in Russia with recruiting for pedagogical directions and training profiles. The teaching profession: a) is not prestigious in the mass consciousness and representations of applicants; b) connected with a lot of negative stereotypes and cliches in the mass consciousness; c) does not provide stable finance. At the same time, the profession of an elementary school teacher presents high professional, personal, and especially moral and ethical requirements for its carrier, which especially actualizes the problem of establishing professional identity, accepting the specific requirements and values of the teaching profession. This raises the task of ensuring pedagogical identity of incoming students. A

solution to this problem can be training in applied baccalaureate programs, the meaning of which is training through activity, through the enrichment of the individual student experience and the reflection of this experience.

3. Research Questions

3.1. What are the features of pre-service primary teachers` identity?

3.2. What conditions should be created in the educational process to activate of professional identity of future elementary school teachers?

3.3. How do the life aspirations of pre-and in-service primary teachers relate?

3.4. How do life aspirations of future elementary school teachers relate to the aspirations of their peers with interests outside the pedagogical sphere?

4. Purpose of the Study

The objectives of this research:

- studying the motives for choosing a teacher`s profession among applicants;
- development and experimental testing of conditions conducive to enhancing the identity of future teachers,
- identification of features of pre-service primary teachers identity,
- and comparison with similar results of in-service teachers and youth without pedagogical professional interests.

5. Research Methods

The empirical study was conducted during 2014-2019. 50 pre-service primary teachers formally accepted in 2014 the Siberian Federal University took part in empirical study and activation of identity. In-service primary teachers aged 27 to 41 years (32 respondents) and youth without pedagogical professional interests aged 17 to 27 years old (38 respondents) acted as a control group.

5.1. The pre-service primary teachers (matriculate applicants of psychological and pedagogical direction, SFU) answered to the semi-structured questionnaire about future teaching profession in 2014.

5.2. We organized pre-service primary teachers` training in order to activate identity: 1) informal introduction to the specialty (using gaming technologies); 2) early and distributed teaching practice in close connection with auditory and independent tasks; 3) modular project training; 4) the requirement of constant reflexive pedagogical reporting.

Informal introduction to the specialty using gaming technology gives a change in the student's position from the student to the future professional. The structure of the intensive seminar included the immersion of participants in the system of relations between children and adults using the example of the famous fairy tale "The Little Prince". This helped students build the image of modern childhood and school, reflect on their own experience of schooling, identify their own resources and deficiency in solving the problems identified.

There are three main characteristics of the teaching internship, which determined the personal identity of a student. The first is continuity of the internship throughout the course of study. The second characteristic is communication and interaction of student with senior students. The third need is inclusion of practical tasks from the internship in the content of academic disciplines

The content of the internship is discussed in special event called Practice Conference. Students present their methods, their professional successes and failures.

Important about the conferences is that the conference like the teaching practice is of inter-age and network nature: there is a lot to learn from each other creating a prototype of their own professional community.

Modular project training we apply from the third year. Most of the disciplines of the whole semester are combined into modules by content. Initially, students are given the necessary information on the organization, requirements and content of training, discusses complex cases. Students (in small groups) prepare projects during the semester and protect them. Such an organization of discipline development enables the student to gain professional knowledge, develop professionally important competences and understand better themselves - their goals and values.

Much attention was paid to the development of students' reflexive abilities at each stage of teaching training. Students kept reflective diaries in which they described ongoing events and answered questions about their own difficulties and methods for solving them; about interactions within the student group; about relationships with tutors, pupils' parents, and school administrators. The analysis of data from the reflective diaries gave teachers and tutors the opportunity to quickly make the necessary changes to the training session.

5.3. The final study of the identity of future elementary school teachers was conducted in 2018 using the methods:

- a semi-structured questionnaire of ideas about the future profession;
- "Value Orientations" (Rokeach, 1973);
- "Aspirations Index" (Kasser & Ryan (1996), adapted by Chirkov & Deci (1999), the text of the questionnaire in Russian and the norm by Kotelnikova and Selin (2013).

6. Findings

6.1. The results of surveys of first-year students show that for them the most important are the personal rather than professional qualities of the teacher: tolerance, tactfulness, softness, justice, humanity, organizational abilities, etc. First-year students do not have an idea of the true content of pedagogical activities, which may interfere with their planning of their own professional development.

6.2. An analysis of the pre-service primary teachers answers in 2018 showed that future specialists clearly understand what they want to do in four years. 72.7% are going to stay in the field of pedagogy and psychology, planning to develop in it.

On the open-ended question "What exactly attracts in the chosen profession?" 39 specific contextual statements were identified by the quantitative content analysis method. We combined them into 6 semantic units of analysis (Table 01).

Table 01. The frequency of use semantic units in answers of pre-service teachers

Semantic unit of analysis	Absolute frequency, %	How many students mentioned this unit, %	Specific contextual expressions (the author's style is preserved)
Professional interest	25.6	45.6	Work with children ('... of this age'), interest, the opportunity to organize events for people/children, the opportunity to introduce and track their technology for educational work.
The possibility of self-development	20.6	36.7	Personal responsibility, creativity, the possibility of personal/professional self-development, self-determination, self-improvement, the development of many competences
Benefit, convenience	17.9	31.8	Free schedule, clear schedule, high wages, prestige, great vacations, stability
Communication	15.4	27.3	Communication with people, with children, competitions and events

Students see themselves in the future profession, they understand their resources and goals. Then such a result can talk about a good level of self-determination of respondents, which respondents are realistic about the future profession, and the description does not abuse common phrases and clichés

6.3. We compiled a list of 15 attractive features of the future profession (based on the terminal values (Rokeach, 1973) at the end of 4 course. According to the answers, we have identified the first five of the value preferences in the future profession of respondents. Important in choosing a profession, future specialists consider inner harmony, freedom from internal contradictions (81.8%), personal development and self-improvement (81.8%), completeness and emotional saturation, source of vital energy (63.6%), convenience of schedule and place of work (63.6%) , The possibility of expanding their education and horizons (59.1%). Such a choice is expected: age (about 22 years old), gender (female) and occupation (student of the humanities specialty) gives a similar value basis for the relationship of the individual to the world around him, to other people, to himself.

We worked with students of the future helping profession. We expected that such a semantic reading of the profession as an "opportunity to help" would be important to them. In the second five there were variants which we interpret as a value-semantic self-determination in the future profession: interesting projects (54.5%), the opportunity to help people (54.5%), a team of like-minded people, communication with colleagues (50%), good earnings (40%), and the fullest use of their capabilities, strengths and abilities (36.3%).

We consider this positive dynamics of development of professional self-comprehension of the would-be teachers. This is indicative of their serious attitude to the choice of the future profession, to the content of pedagogical work, development of reflexive skills which are very important in the teacher's activities.

6.4. We compared the results according to the methodology "Index of aspirations" of future teachers (50 students of the last year of study, 21-23 years old) and current teachers (32 elementary school teachers, 27-41 years old) to understand the proximity of the profile of life aspirations. We also compared

these results (Table 02) with the results of young people without pedagogical interests (38 people, 17-27 years old).

Table 02. The results of three groups of respondents in comparison with the norm, according to the Russian version of the "Index of aspirations"

Category and modus	Norma	Results		
		Preservice primary teachers	Inservice primary teachers	Young people not working in the educational field
Welth				
importance	26.5±6	28	19.2	29.2
likelihood	24.5±5.6	26.8	21	26.2
attainment	17.9±8.3	11.1	18.1	16.9
Fame				
importance	21±7.1	11.7	5.8	5.8
likelihood	20.3±6.3	14.6	15.2	11.1
attainment	16.4±6.7	5.8	5.8	5.8
Image				
importance	23.7±7	22.7	16.8	16.9
likelihood	23.6±5.9	24.5	24.5	18.1
attainment	21.2±6.3	17.5	16.8	16.9
Personal growth				
importance	29.8±4.5	26.8	28.6	19.8
likelihood	27.9±4.7	23.3	23.3	19.7
attainment	22.8±5.1	11.1	19.2	16.8
Relationships				
importance	31.8±4.5	31.5	32.1	23.3
likelihood	29.3±5	29.7	29.7	23.9
attainment	24.9±7.3	25.1	26.8	21
Community				
importance	26±5.7	22.7	21	13.4
likelihood	24.47±5.3	24.5	23.9	13.4
attainment	19.8±6.8	14.6	15.2	13.9
Health				
importance	30.8±4.6	31.5	31.5	18.1
likelihood	27.7±5.1	28	28	18.7
attainment	23.5±6.7	20.4	18.1	19.8

6.4.1. It should be noted that the data on the standard values of aspirations for the Russian sample, contained in the works of Kotelnikova (2013), vary in a wide range, their variance is very large. Therefore,

almost all (with the exception of assessments based on the “fame” criterion) results fall into the normative range. Differences between groups are presented based on a comparison of median values.

6.4.2. The first thing that attracts attention is that the modes of “importance” and “likelihood” unify pre-service teachers with in-service teachers than pre-service teachers with non-pedagogical interests youth. That is, the rapprochement is based on the professional sphere, not age.

By the “Attainment” modus, such a consistency of results was not found - here the age gap, in our opinion, is more significant. And, on the other hand, students still simply do not have the opportunity to achieve due to age.

6.4.3. In comparison with the norm, pre-service teachers are distinguished by:

- low ratings on the criterion of "Wealth / Attainment";
- low ratings of both the importance and ability to achieve of Fame - fame is not important for them, there is little likelihood of its receipt and it is not achieved by the respondents;
- low ratings of the attainment of Personal growth;
- high ratings for Health, Community and Personal growth.

For two aspirations, a high potential for actualization can be noted. By this term we mean a combination of high importance and likelihood with low assessments of the attainment. If aspiration is important for a person and he evaluates his opportunities for achievement positively, but is not satisfied with the actual degree of his achievement, then it is highly likely that the individual will make efforts to this particular area of activity.

So, the potential for actualization is high for the aspirations of "Wealth" and "Personal growth." The assessment profiles for these aspirations are almost the same, their significance is very great, as is the belief in their attainability; but the current level is rated low. Interestingly, these aspirations are opposite in content. The first relates to extrinsic values, the second to intrinsic values. One can propose a criterion for assessing the structure of aspirations - realism (not pragmatism).

6.4.4. Discussing the extrinsic aspiration factor, including wealth, fame, and image of future teachers, the most noticeable differences in the desire for material well-being, wealth, namely:

- future teachers significantly overtake in-service teachers in assessing the importance of wealth. The relevance of material well-being is lower than normal for in-service teachers. It is the lowest range in comparison with all other groups;
- financial optimism of pre-service teachers, higher than for other respondents;
- and lowest possible ratings of achieving wealth are among school teachers.

6.4.5. If the profiles of life aspirations of pre- and in-service teachers are very close, then the life aspirations of a group of youth of non-pedagogical professions are significantly different. So, for them much less important, probable and realized desire to be useful to other people, to help them and the desire for health. Lower than in other groups, the desire for personal growth, relationships with loved ones, beauty and fame.

6.4.6. For all respondents, the “fame” parameter is below the norms of the “Fame/importance”, “Fame/attainment” scale, although “Fame/likelihood” is within the normal range. This may indicate the insignificance of the parameter “Fame”.

6.4.7. Our previous studies of high school groups also show abnormally low ratings for fame (Lukina, Finogenova, Eflova, & Peterson, 2018). So, gifted high school students of the Krasnoyarsk Regional Gifted School (School of Cosmonautics) and schoolchildren of Karelia showed low value the importance of fame. It is possible that since the normalization of the questionnaire, social changes have occurred that have affected people's desire for fame. One of the factors influencing the decline in the importance of fame may be the preference of the Internet as in the main space of life. On the Internet in social networks there are several mechanisms for gaining fame. "Likes", subscriptions, the possibility of publishing any kind of achievements increase the chances of media and popularity. Such accessibility of fame can explain regarding high grades on the scale of “Fame/ attainability”. Low estimates of the importance of fame can be explained by the depreciation of fame in society as a whole due to the avalanche-like growing ability of social networks to get their “minute of fame.” This question requires additional research on different cultural groups.

In general, the results for all the methods used indicate that pre-service primary teachers:

- adequately represent the activities of elementary school teachers;
- their value orientations are relevant to the requirements of teaching;
- their aspirations are much closer with in-service teachers than with peers of other professions.

Our proposed model for the organization of the educational process contributes to the identity activation of pre-service elementary school teachers.

7. Conclusion

7.1. Analysis of the initial prerequisites for choosing the profession of a elementary school teacher shows that applicants have a high level of altruistic aspirations, an undivided understanding of the content of a future profession, inadequate ideas about their own readiness for professional activity and the demands for the professional and personal qualities of a teacher.

7.2. The organization of teacher`s training with:

- continuous pedagogical practice, with constantly complicated tasks;
- design-modular training system, requiring the development and implementation of real group projects based on practice;
- constant reflection of one`s own activity, one`s own development;
- solves the problems of activating identity of pre-service primary teachers.

7.3. In conditions of identity activation, pre-service teachers refine their perceptions of the future pedagogy profession throughout teacher`s training, activate values that match to the shape of professional pedagogy activity and bring values closer to the values of in-service teachers, and form a more critical attitude to their personal and professional readiness.

References

- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development From the Late Teens Through the Twenties. *American Psychologist*, 55(5), 469-480. <http://doi.org/10.1037//0003-066X.55.5.469>
- Beijaard, D., Meijer, P. C., & Verloop, N. (2004). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20, 107-128. Retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.454.2571&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Bergmark, U., Lundström, S., Manderstedt, L., & Palo, A. (2018). Why become a teacher? Student teachers' perceptions of the teaching profession and motives for career choice. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 41(3), 266-281. <http://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2018.1448784>
- Chirkov, V. I., & Deci, E. L. (1999). Relations among students' health, life aspirations and perception of parents and teachers. *Voprosy Psikhologii*, 3, 48-57. [in Russ.]. Retrieved from <http://www.voppsy.ru/issues/1999/993/993048.htm>
- Kasser, T., & Ryan, R. M. (1996). Further examining the American dream: Differential correlates of intrinsic and extrinsic goals. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 22, 280-287. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0146167296223006>
- Kotelnikova, Yu. A. (2013). Life aspirations of a person and the scenario of his life as constructs of personality analysis. *Russian Journal of Education and Psychology*, 9(29), 17. [in Russ.]. Retrieved from <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/zhiznennye-stremleniya-cheloveka-i-stsenariy-ego-zhizni-kak-konstrukty-lichnostnogo-analiza/viewer>
- Kotelnikova, Yu. A. & Selin, A.V. (2013). Opportunities for studying life paths in patients with chronic somatic disease. Retrieved from <https://www.psyoffice.ru/18-14361.htm> [in Russ.].
- Lukina, A. K., & Volkova, M. A. (2016). Teaching practice of pre-service teachers in their professional identification. *European Journal of Natural History*, 6, 98-102. Retrieved from <https://world-science.ru/en/article/view?id=33681>
- Lukina, A., Finogenova, O., Eflova, Z., & Peterson, I. (2018). Values of the self-determination of young people who are in various educational situations. *NORDSCI Social Sciences Conference Proceedings*, 57. Retrieved from https://issuu.com/nordscicon/docs/book1_nordsci_proceedings_2018_digi
- Rokeach, M. (1973). *The Nature of Human Values*. New York: Free Press.
- Roness, D., & Smith, K. (2010). Stability in motivation during teacher education. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 36(2), 169-185. <http://doi.org/10.1080/02607471003651706>
- Sapchenko, N. A. (2016). The forms of joint activity of the teacher and students in higher school educational practice. *SGEM 2016, BK 1: Psychology and Psychiatry, Sociology and Healthcare, Education Conference Proceedings, In 3rd International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conferences on Sciences and Arts, III*, 1083-1090.
- Van der Klink, M., Kools, Q., & Avissar, G. (2017). Professional development of teacher educators: what do they do? Findings from an explorative international study. *Professional Development in Education*, 43(2), 163-178. <http://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2015.1114506>
- Van Tol, J. (2017). Student activism: An exploration of pre-service teacher engagement. *Australian Universities Review*, 59(1), 47-57. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1130326.pdf>