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THE IMAGE OF THE UNIVERSITY TEACHERS IN THE
PERFORMANCE OF MODERN STUDENTS

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Abstract

In the world community the competence paradigm of qualifications is considered as a priority. Including this paradigm in the education system makes it possible to ensure its relevance to the modern stage of the economic and needs of the population and the nature of social communications. This article discusses various approaches to a certain professional competence of a university teacher, emphasizes the multifaceted nature of the research. In this article, pedagogical activity is considered in the sociocultural aspect as an activity aimed at the formation of a socio-psychological attitude of students to the learning process. From this point, the structure of the teacher's professional competence is represented by cognitive, affective and conative components. The content of these components that was discussed in domestic and foreign studies is analysed. It is noted that one of the criteria for assessing the quality of education is the results of student surveys. A two-stage procedure for ranking students of professional and personal qualities that a modern teacher should have is proposed. The technology of conducting student surveys is described. Criteria for the selection of behavioral indicators characterising the manifestation of cognitive, affective and conative competences are outlined. The technique of forming the content of questionnaires is presented. The peculiarities of perception by modern students' various manifestations of pedagogical reflection are noted. Based on the statistical processing of the results of each stage of the experiment, a system of indicators was formed that characterises the professionalism of a modern teacher according to student's opinion.

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1. Introduction

The quality of functioning of any educational level is mostly determined by the level of teachers' professionalism. In the context of modern educational paradigm, educational quality is determined by the categories of competence-based approach (CBA). In Western pedagogy, the procedures of describing competencies, as well as socio-psychological models of assessing professional activities of teachers, are already organically integrated into educational reality. When assessing the professional competence of a specialist of any profile the unified concept of "educational domain" is used (Spencer & McClellan, 2016). Each domain is defined as a specific function of the respective professional activity and the resulting competency is represented by the set of such domains. The requirements for the formation of such a domain system are clearly spelled out in the relevant professional standards. For example, when assessing the level of teachers' professionalism, the following domains are used: domain for developing curricula and teaching methods; domain of assessments and measurements; information integration domain; research and management domain as well as innovation domain.

In our country, despite the rather long period of official approval of the CBA, the "zone of problematic discussion" of its implementation in educational practise mechanisms is still wide due to the "blurred" regulations for assessing the professional competences of university teachers. In the professional standards developed for the teaching staff only the formal requirements for applicants for the relevant positions are indicated. It is worth mentioning that today in our country quite interesting approaches to solving this problem have been proposed both at the level of building competence models and at the level of developing criterial apparatus for their assessment (Isaev et al., 2015; Minasyan, 2009; Zimnaya, 2007). However, due to the potentially large spectrum of professionally important qualities that can determine the university teacher's qualification, as well as the wide variability of their manifestations, the solution to this problem remains in the focus of the scientific and pedagogical community's attention.

2. Problem Statement

In the world educational community, one of the most important tools for assessing the quality of education is the results of the student evaluation of faculty systems (Hanushek & Kimko, 2000; Marsh & Roche, 1993; Simpson & Siguaw, 2000). Almost all Russian universities are also involved in the development and implementation of teacher assessment by students (Andrushchak, 2017; Bernavskaya et al., 2020; Gatiyatullina, 2016). In general, the unconditional importance of such monitoring methods should be mentioned, both for stimulating the quality of teaching activities, and for the overall teachers' assessment when they pass certification procedures. However, there is a number of general problems that accompany the implementation of the described methods, both at the substantive level and at the technological level. As an example, in some universities the qualities of teachers that were developed more than thirty years ago by the USSR Ministry for the questionnaire "Teacher through the eyes of a student" were included and, obviously, for today's students such qualities are unimportant and irrelevant. At the same time, the opposite situation can be observed – students are encouraged to assess teachers only in the categories of a competence-based approach, which is not always understood by students as well. The main problem of carrying such procedures out, is that students, as the main consumers of educational services, are not really

involved in the process of “forming” the image of a modern teacher”, their functions are reduced to only assessing a certain teacher according to the proposed in university list of parameters of pedagogical activity’s manifestations. It is quite obvious that students are unable to take a direct part in the competence models development. However, their opinion about significance of manifestations of various competencies for the creation of comfortable educational environment is undoubted interest. Therefore, the traditional methods of assessing teachers by students should be the final stage of a whole series of research activities in the following logical order: development of a teacher’s competence model, translation of competencies into appropriate behavioral indicators, organisation of student surveys in order to rank these indicators.

3. Research Questions

According to the problem that has been posed throughout the research, it was necessary to answer the following questions:

3.1. What methodological platform should be chosen to build such a teacher model that would fully reflect all the varieties of pedagogical reflection?

3.2. How to organise a system of student monitoring of various aspects of pedagogical activity on the basis of the constructed model?

3.3. What methods of statistical analysis should be used to assess the results of student monitoring.

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of this article is to develop a system of student monitoring of teacher professionalism based on a competency-based approach.

5. Research Methods

The study used the following methods:

- Method of comparative analysis of teacher competence models developed in domestic and foreign educational systems;
- Focus-group method for developing the content of the questionnaire;
- Open questioning of students;
- Correlation analysis for ranking various manifestation of activities and personality traits of a teacher based on the results of student surveys.

6. Findings

The educational system in any country is considered as a socio-cultural institution. In the aspect of social perception, education has a fundamental difference from other mass media: the improvement of pedagogical activity is impossible without self-improvement of the person himself, i.e. self-improvement of the teacher himself. The impact of the media on a person creates a socio-psychological attitude. In social psychology, attitude is defined as the subject’s tendency to certain social behaviour (Asmolov & Guseltseva, 2019). This definition is undoubtedly synonymous to the definition of competence, which,

despite the absence of rigid conceptual determination, is considered as the willingness of the subject to use his potential in a certain professional or social sphere (Delamare & Winterton, 2005; Grinkrug & Fishman, 2012; Sofina & Kuzmina, 2012).

Considering the structural components of these definitions also allows us to trace their semantic correlation. The structure of the attitude proposed by M. Smith is quite clearly outlined and includes three components: cognitive component that contains knowledge about the attitude object; affective component, that reflects the emotional assessment of the attitude object and conative that expresses the subject's potential readiness to implement certain relation to the object (Smith, 1968). When analysing the work of domestic and foreign ideologues of the CBA, it is worth mentioning that, on the one hand there is certain 'blurring' in the definition of the structure and composition of professional competencies of university teachers, and on the other hand, it should be noted that if we leave out certain terminological discrepancies, almost all authors include all the components described above.

Based on this information, we will consider pedagogical activity as an activity aimed at the formation of socio-psychological attitude of students to the learning process, and represent the structure of the professional competence of a university teacher as cognitive, affective and conative components.

The cognitive area of the personality encompasses the mental processes involved in logical and meaningful processing of the received information, therefore, the cognitive component of the structure of an any profile specialist's professional competence is the leading one. Its structure is represented by wide range parameters that characterise deep knowledge of the subject, readiness and desire to constantly improve their educational level and the need for actualisation and realisation of personal potential. Many researches consider the affective component as the core of the attitude, since it characterises the motivational function of a social attitude. From the point of CBA, this component of specialists' professional competence is also considered as fundamental and it characterises the attitude towards the profession. It seems obvious that, given the vividly expressed axiological component of the teacher's professional activity, it is necessary to include indicators that characterise the emotional-perceptual sphere of the teacher's personality in the systems for assessing and stimulating its quality. The formation of the affective component of the professional competence of the university teacher contributes to effective interpersonal interaction between the teacher and students, which is a necessary attribute of the formation of a positive socio-psychological attitude to the learning process. The conative component of a specialist's professional competence is a direct expression of the attitude in professional behavior, which is formed both on the basis of a socially-oriented system of norms and criteria, and on the basis of an individual's internal value beliefs. The formation of this component, manifested in the ability and readiness of an individual to regulate behaviour, determines the level of professional dignity. The key feature of pedagogical activity is the fact that the ability of a teacher to regulate his behavior is determined to a greater extent by an internal morally grounded position than by external conditions. Value relationships are both normative and original at the same time, therefore, the teacher's moral self-control over his professional activities leads him to search for new forms of organising the educational process and to the variability of pedagogical communication.

Student survey systems were conducted over two years (2017-2019) at three Russian universities: the Far Eastern Federal University, State University of Economics and service (Vladivostok), and Peter the

Great Saint Petersburg Polytechnic University. Taking into account the target orientation of the survey, the most "experienced respondents" were attracted to it – students of 3-4 courses and magistrates. To formulate general conclusions it was necessary to collect ideas about the "ideal teacher" from students of various training profiles – engineering, Humanities, Economics and to conduct a correlation analysis of the responses of students of related training areas from various universities. The total number of students who took part in the experiment is 587.

The comparative analysis of the proposed structures of professional competence of a university teacher, carried out in the course of the study, made it possible to identify more than 50 competencies and more than 70 behavioral indicators formulated for them. However, when developing the content of the questionnaires, certain difficulties arose. On the one hand, it was necessary to “exclude” competencies that could not be objectively assessed by students (for example, “development and improvement of educational programs” and similar ones). On the other hand, to “collect” indicators that most fully characterise the teachers' professionalism in their subject area and the complex mechanisms of pedagogical reflection. In other words, it was necessary to select indicators that characterise not only the teacher's ability to pass knowledge to students, but also characterise the ability to instill in them a desire to learn. These indicators should be presented in questionnaires in fairly simple formulations, easily understood by students. This work was carried out by an expert method, experienced teachers from all universities that took part in the experiment were involved in the examination (the total number of experts was 17).

In the structure of the conative component the experts considered the indicators of teachers' activity, reflecting their ability to present the content and methods of teaching a particular discipline as a means of professional and personal development of students. In total, 14 manifestations of activity were selected (the ability to represent educational information; highlighting key points; explaining difficult places; using modern scientific information, using various forms of control, etc.). To assess the significance of affective manifestations in the teacher's activities by students, the indicators were selected: respectful attitude towards students, patience, interest in students' success, the ability to manage their emotional state, etc. - 9 indicators in total. The structure of the conative component of the teacher's professionalism included such indicators as the teacher's speech culture, the ability to admit one's mistakes, ease in establishing contacts with students, individual communication style, online mobility, etc. (11 indicators in total).

Thus, as a result of expert activities a system of 34 behavioral indicators, that characterise various aspects of the manifestations of the teacher's professionalism, was formed. These indicators formed the content of the questionnaire of the first stage of monitoring.

The students' survey was divided into two stages. At the first stage, all students who took part in the experiment were given a questionnaire containing 35 lines (the last line was empty - the student could leave significant, in his opinion, teacher's quality that was not included in the questionnaire). Structural division of behavioral indicators into the corresponding components of professional competence in the questionnaire was not carried out. The significance of each quality was asked to be assessed by a ten-point system, "weights" were not assigned to the indicators (it was allowed to assign the same points to different qualities). Each university independently determined the time of the survey, by agreement - the autumn semester of the corresponding academic year. The processing of the results (at each stage of the experiment) was also carried out in several stages. First, the correlation coefficients were established between

independent samples of respondents within the same area of study, then sequentially between areas and universities. The formed system of indicators was ranked according to the level of significance - the content of the questionnaires of the second stage of the experiment included behavioral indicators rated at 6.5 or more points.

The students survey was carried out voluntarily and on an open basis. Almost all moderators of the events held stated the fact that modern students to take part in such events with great interest. The sample of students' results who took part in the experiment accounted for at least 72% of the total contingent of the corresponding direction. Obviously, this fact reflects the features of the modern stage of informatisation of society, accompanied by the expansion of the sphere of sociological surveys (Biancani & McFarland, 2013). In addition, it was noted that the situation in which a student acts as an expert is accompanied by a more positive emotional background in comparison with anonymous assessment of the qualities of a particular teacher. Before the start of the experiment, the experts were concerned that the "overabundance" of the questionnaire content (35 items) could lead to their formal filling. It should be noted that this concern was not justified - the students, on the whole, consciously selected the qualities of the teacher that were important, in their opinion, as evidenced by the fact of a fairly equivalent assessment of related behavioral indicators, which were deliberately formulated by the compilers in different terminology. More than 40% of the respondents showed some creativity - they "filled in" the last line of the questionnaire. The scatter of assessments is also very indicative - from 4.2 to 9.6 points.

In the structure of the cognitive component, the "threshold value" passed 9 behavioral indicators (the most highly rated was "the ability to explain the material in a logical, accessible way" - 8.75 points). In the structure of the affective component, the highest score was given to "the ability to manage one's emotional state" - 9.2 points; 5 more indicators were selected for subsequent ranking. The conative component of the teacher's professional competence at the second stage of the experiment was represented by 6 indicators, while the behavioral indicator - "the ability to admit one's mistakes" - 9.4 points was the leading one. Certainly, some detailed results of the first stage of the experiment characterise the nuances of the mentality typical for modern students and require deep pedagogical comprehension. For example, decency received an integral rating of 6.35 points, and a sense of humor was rated at 7.4 points; the ability to admit one's mistakes significantly left exactingness behind (7.25).

The general conclusion of the first stage of the experiment can now be formulated: modern students associate the image of the "ideal teacher" with the manifestation of his personal qualities and behavioral features. These results can be interpreted in both positive and negative aspects. On the positive side, the professionalism of teachers at Russian universities in their subject area is quite high, and therefore does not cause any particular complaints from students. On the negative side, the "pedagogy of cooperation", declared by the main educational doctrine, has not yet fully entered the practice of the educational process.

The second stage of the experiment was carried out in order to correct the "statistical outliers" of the first stage. The questionnaires contained 24 positions, an empty line was not provided. The re-ranking of the teacher's personal and professional qualities was carried out according to the same technological scheme. The structure of professional competence of a university teacher formed on the basis of the results of the monitoring is presented in the Table 1.

Table 1. Student's attitude towards professional competence of a university teacher

Cognitive component	Affective component	Conative component
the ability to explain simply and clearly	the ability to manage your emotional state	the ability to admit your mistakes
the ability to represent educational information	creating a favorable learning atmosphere in working with students	grammatically correct speech
easy orientation in various subject areas	tolerance of the opposite opinion	the ability to improvise in class
the use of regular and varied forms of knowledge control	interest in student success	online mobility
the ability to connect studied material with real problems in the professional field	racial tolerance	consistency to the requirements
the use of modern scientific information	sense of humor	objectivity in assessing students' knowledge

7. Conclusion

The results provided in this article can be considered as an invitation to a broad scientific discussion about the professional and personal qualities that determine the appearance of a modern teacher. Of course, the formed system of indicators does not pretend to be completely reliable and complete integrity, since it was formed on the basis of the opinions of only one group of educational partners - students. For example, most of the teachers who took part in the organisation of the questionnaire systems believe that such qualities as the ability to improvise and a sense of humor are sufficient, but not mandatory, qualities that determine the professionalism of teachers. We believe that such monitoring systems should be carried out in Russian universities on an ongoing basis with the involvement of all interested partners - students, teachers, employers.

Moreover, in recent years, the socio-psychological actualisation of such studies has had a rise, associated with a changed approach to conducting re-certification procedures for faculty members, in particular, to reducing the duration of the certification period. This is due to the fact that in many universities of the country, when building rating systems for assessing the activities of teachers, the "weight constants" of indicators that characterise the very essence of pedagogical activity are practically minimised. There is no doubt that, such indicators, as the number of publications in domestic and foreign scientific databases, external examinations, etc., are extremely important for determining the qualifications of a teacher in higher education organisation. However, overestimated standards lead to the fact that the teacher, in the context of reduced certification periods, should be focused not on improving various aspects of his teaching activities, but on increasing these indicators. The systems of rating assessments of the teacher's activities being developed in universities should, if possible, equally take into account all the variety of manifestations of activity that characterise the teacher's profession.

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