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**PERSONALITY TRAITS OF TEACHERS AS A PRECONDITION
FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNICATIVE BEHAVIOUR**

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Abstract

The significance of the study is related to the dissatisfaction of both teachers and students with teacher-student communication. Such dissatisfaction primarily blocks the identity and activity formation of students in educational activities. The hypothesis of the research assumes that constructive teacher-student communication is possible, and it's predetermined by such personal characteristics as self-confidence, as well as formation of professionally significant communication skills. The study is based on a sample of teachers (n = 72) from the middle and secondary level of the Moscow school and students of 7-11 grades (n = 402) of the same school. It uses the original author's methodologies – "Patterns of self-attitude" allowing one to study the constructiveness / destructiveness of self-attitude, and "Communicative skills of teachers". The results of the correlation analysis using the Spearman coefficient confirmed the author's hypotheses. The obtained data on the influence of the teacher's self-attitude on the type of communication with students allows us to state the need to introduce the support for teachers into the practice of psychological assistance. Traditionally, the school psychological service is focused more on students and their parents, while a teacher as one of the most important subjects in education remains without proper psychological support.

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1. Introduction

As practices as well as the results of numerous studies demonstrate, the dominance of authoritarian or overly protective styles of interaction is widely spread in the pedagogical interaction "teacher - students". Such styles do not support the formation of a student's personal agency and the active position, including in the educational activities. Ecopsychology widely uses the term "sustainability of behavior/communication" which describes interactions based primarily on the principles of respect for a partner and for oneself. Such communication supports personal development, reveals the individual's potential and the best self of the parties involved.

In the pedagogical interaction, a teacher is a leader, and he bears professional responsibility not only for the nature of the relations themselves, but also for the way in which these relations predetermine the student's behavior. Achieving mutual understanding and trust from students, as one of the results of the interaction "teacher - pupils", is the area of the adult's professional and personal responsibility, because here the adult is the person who has knowledge and abilities to manage the interaction within the framework of formative and educational tasks.

2. Problem Statement

It has already become a tradition to associate a teacher's professional skills, effectiveness and even talent with a certain set of personal traits. The analysis of significant personal qualities of teachers, ensuring their professional success, was made by Mitina (2019) and her followers. It convincingly shows that the set includes such qualities as love and sensitivity to children, empathy and responsibility. Berdnikova et al. (2019) describe the authorial level model of professional activity. The highest level of professional activity is defined as activity on the personal level, associated with the quest for self-actualization, purpose and belonging (Berdnikova et al., 2019, p. 425). In a study by Fedorova et al. (2019), pedagogical abilities are defined as a complex interaction of universal and special components providing the potential for achieving success in pedagogical activity, that is, pedagogical giftedness. As for the notion of giftedness, experts focus on a wide range of factors, from the knowledge "subject" paradigm to a wide range of personal qualities and intentional-motivational structure of the personality (Fedorova et al., 2019, p. 271). The research conducted by Fokina and Shchegoleva (2015) suggests that reflective activity is one of the most important conditions for the psychological and pedagogical competence formation. Reflective skills are considered the core factor for the professional preparedness of future teachers.

According to ecopsychological types of interaction (Panov, 2017, 2018), the subject-subject type of interaction in the "student-teacher (educational environment)" system has three subtypes: subject-isolated, subject-joint and subject-generating. Panov et al. (2018) defines one of the teacher's competencies as "the ability to take a reflective (self-conscious) position defining who to teach, why to teach, what to teach, how to teach. That is, teachers are required to have a conscious (reflexive) understanding of didactic principles, as well as psychological patterns and regularities of students development, they need to rely on in their work" (p. 122).

In other words, the teacher's reflexive understanding and implementation of the subject-joint and / or subject-generating types of interaction with students contributes to the formation of students' personal

agency. Panov et al. (2018) focuses on the skills associated with both the conscious understanding of the student and the mastery of teaching didactics.

3. Research Questions

The study was performed in the context of an ecopsychological approach to the exploration of a teacher's personal and communicative qualities, which can be considered as conditions for the formation of subject-subject interaction with students. The author explored such communicative characteristics as: the creation of a trusting relationship during the interaction; the formation of students' self-belief; acceptance of the student's personality; the specialist's ability to refrain from putting pressure on the student's personality. As for the teachers' personal qualities, in this article we will consider the features of self-attitude and possible connections with professionally significant communicative qualities.

In Russian psychological science, self-attitude is closely related to "conscious active selectivity of human experiences and actions" (Myasishchev, 1995, p. 356) or is considered as "an experience, a relatively stable feeling, penetrating self-perception and self-image" (Bodalev & Stolin, 2000, p. 440). Chesnokova (1977) in her research notes that the development of self-awareness is being performed in the sequence "self-knowledge - self-attitude - self-regulation", and in this scheme, self-attitude is the emotional component concentrated in the "Self - Self" system (p. 134). A number of researchers attribute self-attitude as a part of the procedural emotional-evaluative side of self-awareness, considering it as an affective component associated with a person's feelings about existing knowledge about oneself (Mokhova, 2012, p. 160), reflecting a value attitude towards various sides and images of one's self in the form of self-esteem, self-acceptance and the experience of one's own success (Belova et al., 2014, p. 625). That allows a person to reflect itself, maintain the internal stability of his self (Khvatova, 2015, p. 10). Self-attitude reflects a complex set of mental processes and states that help a person to isolate himself from the surrounding world form his own views of the world and change attitude towards himself and others (Stolin, 1983).

The psychological literature dedicated to the studies of personal factors in the behaviour regulation generally recognizes the dominant role of self-evaluating and reflexive processes. The nature of a person's relationships with other people, the effectiveness of his activities, and thereby the further development of his personality is mostly defined by his self-perception and self-assessment of his own qualities, talents and personality in general (varying degrees of awareness) (Chesnokova, 1977). Morosanova (2014, 2017) in her studies defines conscious self-regulation as a dynamic multi-level managing metasystem of processes, qualities and states aimed at maintaining activity in consciously stating and achieving the subject's goals.

Summarizing the results of the studies dedicated to the problem under discussion, we can conclude that self-attitude at each specific stage of personality development, on the one hand, reflects the level of development of self-knowledge and emotional-value attitude towards oneself, and on the other hand, stands for the most important internal condition for their development. These characteristics largely explain the nature of the interaction between self-attitude and self-regulation, but they do not deeply reveal the nature of the emotional-value attitude towards oneself effective functioning. The true reasons providing self-realization, or, on the contrary, the process / phenomenon inhibiting self-realization and self-actualization, remain unclear.

We define the emotional-value attitude towards oneself, characterized by congruence and self-acceptance, as a constructive self-esteem contributing to personal self-movement and self-development. Self-acceptance as an emotionally integral characteristic expressing self-belief is one of the sources of personal self-movement and self-development. A destructive-emotional attitude characterized by self-rejection and internal conflict becomes a personal internal barrier leading to deformation or blockage of self-development and self-realization. That is, it destructively affects the general line of personality development, and also leads to the conflicts within the subject's interpersonal interaction. We defined such an emotional-value attitude towards oneself as incongruent, expressed in destructive self-esteem. A person with a constructive system of self-attitude when communicating with others is able to perceive their individualities and to take their opinions into account, as well as to accept himself, be aware of his own motives and actions towards another person. Apparently, the self-attitude system peculiarities can be considered as an important component in the formation of such types of interaction with others as the subject-joint and/or the subject-generating. The recognition of the individuality and subjectivity value of another person is among the core characteristics of these types of interaction.

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is to explore the possibility of predicting the sustainability of teachers' behavior on the basis of such personal characteristics as the constructiveness of self-attitude and professionally significant communicative qualities.

5. Research Methods

The study is based on three methodologies: two for teachers - "Characteristics of self-attitude", "Communication qualities", and one for schoolchildren - "Satisfaction of students with the teachers' attitude". The methodology "Characteristics of self-attitude" is at the stage of approbation; it allows one to study the constructiveness / destructiveness of self-attitude, including self-belief. Self-confidence is expressed in ability to trust oneself; the difference between self-belief and confidence lies in the fact that a person may know that not everything depends on him. He may be aware of his incompetence, lack of opportunities, but at the same time, he believes in his aspiration to achieve goals, believes in his own activity, opportunities to gain knowledge, skills and everything he desires in life.

6. Findings

Empirical study included a sample of 72 teachers from the middle and secondary level of the Moscow school and students of 7-11 grades of the same school.

The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. There we can see the results of psychometric indicators for "Characteristics of self-attitude" methodology. The author also plans to conduct a correlation analysis with the results of the methodology "Teachers Communication Qualities" (Sunnatova, 2018) in order to study the possible connections between the peculiarities of self-attitude and professionally significant communicative characteristics of teachers. The methodology was based on four characteristics, which determined the scales of the methodology being created:

1. Acceptance of the student's individuality.
2. Creating a trusting relationship during interaction.
3. Developing a sense of self-belief in students.
4. The teacher's ability to refrain from putting pressure on the student's personality.

Table 2 shows the percentage distribution among teachers in accordance with the "Characteristics of self-attitude" methodology. A rather low percentage of involved teachers, on average, about 10% of the respondents demonstrated a high level of constructive self-attitude. It should be noted that there're better indicators in self-esteem and self-management; perhaps this is due to the special characteristics of pedagogical work. On the scale of self-confidence, though, only 4.2% of teachers showed a high level of self-acceptance.

Table 3 shows the results of correlation analysis using the Spearman's coefficient. It only presents the results for the emotional component of communication skills, since no statistically significant connections were found for the behavioural component through all four communication qualities. It is the emotional component of the teacher's interaction with students that can be considered as an indicator determining the nature of the interaction. Such a communicative skill as the ability to develop schoolchildren's confidence in their abilities did not receive a single indicator of connection. In conversations with teachers, it was revealed that the teachers were really bewildered with the idea that the style of pedagogical communication can determine the student's self-belief. As teachers think that self-confidence depends on the style of communication and an attitude towards a child in his family. To interpret the revealed fact deeper, additional research is needed.

Students of the same school were offered a methodology, where one of the scales was aimed at identifying the degree of student satisfaction with the attitude of teachers towards them. The attitude of teachers towards schoolchildren was assessed without correlation with the marks the students had during classes – the assessment was based, in general, on the nature of the teachers' perception of adolescents' personalities. Here are a number of exemplar statements from the questionnaire for students in grades 7-11: "Peers at school understand me better than the adults around me", "Most teachers don't care whether children are comfortable at school or not", "Most teachers in the classroom forget that a student is a person with its own life, where the school takes just a fraction of the time". Indicators of descriptive statistics on the scale: asymmetry = 0.146 (with an asymmetry error of 0.122); kurtosis = 0.420 (with a kurtosis error of 0.243); intrascale consistency - Cronbach's alpha = 0.701. Table 4 shows the results of the survey among students.

As we can see from the results presented in Table 4, more than a quarter and / or a third of the school students are dissatisfied with the teachers' attitude. Their dissatisfaction is associated with the dismissive attitude of teachers towards personal feelings, usually perceived by adults as whims, rebellion or as something light and fleeting. As adolescents say, such attitude "discourages the desire to try and even to do anything at all". On the other hand, schoolchildren believe that when teachers trust them, believe in them and "generally see our personalities and respect us," then "you want to even better prepare the homework and behave better".

Table 1. “Self-attitude” Methodology: Descriptive Statistics Indicators

No.	Scales	SD	Asymmetry	Kurtosis	Kolmogorov – Smirnov Test		Cronbach’s Alpha
					Results		
					Test Statistics	Asymptomatic Estimate	
1	Self-awareness	2.76	.184	.316	.099	.079	.813
2	Self-compassion	3.15	.130	.418	.109	.035	.794
3	Self-respect	2.78	-.649	.688	.184	.000	.719
4	Self-belief	2.81	-.151	.039	.119	.014	.732
5	Self-management	4.33	-.676	.477	.123	.009	.754

The standard asymmetry error - 0.295; the standard kurtosis error - 0.563; the valid significance lower bound - 0.200; Alpha-Cronbach for the entire method - 0.803.

Table 2. “Self-attitude” Methodology: Results (n = 71, %)

No.	Scales	Level of constructive self-attitude		
		Low	Medium	High
1	Self-awareness	12.6	83.09	4.22
2	Self-respect	9.85	76.05	14.08
3	Self-compassion	8.4	83.09	8.4
4	Self-belief	8.4	87.32	4.22
5	Self-management	8.45	73.23	18.30

Table 3. Correlation between teachers’ self-attitude and their communicative characteristics

No.	Communicative Skills	Accepting a student’s personality	Creating a trusting relationship	Developing self-belief in students	Refraining from putting pressure on a student’s personality
Self-attitude					
1	Self-awareness	-	-	-	-
2	Self-compassion	-	-	-	-
3	Self-respect	.399**	.364**	-	.411**
4	Self-belief	.344**	.473**	-	.294*
5	Self-management	.382**	.292**	-	.407**

* p < 0,05; ** p < 0,001.

Table 4. Students Satisfaction With the Teachers’ Attitude (%; n = 402)

Students Parameters	Students Parameters					Average of the school
	7 grade	8 grade	9 grade	10 grade	11 grade	
Dissatisfaction with the teachers’ attitude	27.9	27.6	28.8	22.2	30.0	27.3
Self-belief	9.3	14.5	13.3	14.4	13.3	12.9

7. Conclusion

The results of our study, dedicated to the problems of the teacher's relationship with students, show that the professionally important communicative qualities of a teacher correlate with the characteristics of self-attitude. The study revealed the tendency that the constructive characteristics of self-attitude can predetermine the presence and implementation of such communicative qualities of teachers as acceptance of the student's personality (non-judgmental attitude towards the student's personality with the importance of assessing the results of his educational activity). This includes creating trusting relationships with students; developing of self-confidence in students; the teacher's ability to refrain from pressuring on the student's personality and refusal to manipulate.

The collected empirical data demonstrating the influence of the teacher's self-attitude emotional component on the type of interaction with students allows us to state the need to implementing psychological support for teachers in their professional activities. Traditionally, the psychological service is focused more on students and their parents. At the same time, the teacher, being, of course, one of the most important subjects in education remains without proper psychological support so far.

The methodologies in question can be a way to obtain sufficiently detailed information to reveal what components of teachers' communicative behaviour sustainability requires professional attention and exploration by specialists interested in refining constructive communication. The latter most important goal is to create subject-generating and / or subject-joint relations, which in turn determine the activity of the educational activity subjects, i.e. schoolchildren.

The trends identified during the study demonstrate that the ecopsychological approach to studying the types of interaction in the student-teacher system is not only effective, but also reveals that the teacher's professional ability to take a reflexive (self-conscious) position in relation to students and mastery of teaching didactics can contribute to the subject-subject type of interaction.

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