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PROFESSIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF UNIVERSITY
GRADUATES AS FACTOR OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING
OF PERSONALITY

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Abstract

The article considers the problems of subjective and psychological wellbeing of the university graduates, their professional consciousness, and professional identity. The theoretical analysis of subjective wellbeing, psychological wellbeing, and their informative characteristics is provided. The results of the empirical research of the structure of psychological wellbeing (a technique of "A scale of psychological wellbeing" by K.D. Ryff) and professional consciousness (a technique of the self-assessment of personality by T.V. Dembo, S.Ya. Rubenstein) are based on the diagnostic data of the selection made of 73 individuals, the graduates of the Economy, Psychology, and Biology directions of Kemerovo State University. The materials of the article show that there are significant distinctions in both the level and the structure of professional consciousness and the level and the structure of psychological wellbeing of the graduates depending on the fields of training. The insufficient level of the development of professional consciousness, which can be connected with the uncertain perspectives of professional activity in the near future, is inherent in many graduates. The nature of interrelation of professional consciousness and psychological wellbeing is significantly diverse for the graduates of different fields of training. The obtained results reveal the additional perspectives in the problem of training of graduates for their professional activity. The article also considers the question of development of programs of the psychological adaptation of graduates depending on their fields of training.

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Keywords: Psychological wellbeing, subjective wellbeing, university graduates, professional identity, professional consciousness.



1. Introduction

The serious problem of modern society and economy is the discrepancy of the requirements of a profession to a personality and the features of this personality. The statistics shows that in case of applying for a job corresponding to their specialty, about 25-30% of the university graduates appear either not capable to seize the effective ways of professional activity, or do not want at all or cannot find a job corresponding to their specialty. The researchers note that the graduates having problems with the employment are quite often characterized by the painful proneness to conflict, sensitivity and suspiciousness, they are differing in an inadequate self-assessment, the overestimated expectations, and the underestimated self-respect, the excess motivation to material benefits and also the low motivation to receiving real experience and gaining seniority (Markelova & Prosekova 1998).

The personality of a professional develops in the process (and simultaneously) of the development of personality of a student. The system of the values and meanings, which are a kernel of any activity including professional, is put in this process (Loginova, 1985).

The important aspect of the professional readiness of the university graduate is his/her personal and professional identity. The professional identity is characterized by both subjective compliance of the subjective model of the specialist and the importance of the profession and professionalizing, which are means of satisfaction of basic needs for the personality, the condition of development of personal potential, self-realization, and self-updating (Lityagina & Samykina, 2001; Goldshmidt & Korytchenkova, 2017).

The professional identity and the features of specialty are connected by the causal dependence (as cause and effect). The professional identity is interconnected with such key parameters as the effectiveness of special training, the level of payment for work, the level of claims in the professional, social, and public spheres. On the other hand, the professional identity is connected with the moral professional goals, which are shown in the emotional experience of responsibility and own professional self-efficiency, the belief in ability to implement the personal potential and intellectual resources in the professional activity.

Today the main problem is the essential part of the graduates does not reach the professional and personal readiness for activity after graduation from higher education institutions. Most often in practice, they are personally and professionally insolvent (Stepanova, 2002). Thus, there is an essential contradiction between the formed opportunities of the graduates and the requirements shown to them in the field of professional and personal activity.

The personal competence of the graduate represents the integral characteristic of the personality reflecting not only the level of proficiency in knowledge, but also the possession of techniques, the ways of self-knowledge, the self-control, and self-development which are defined by the life-meaning orientations and professional values, that provides a possibility of the harmonious development of a future specialist, a sufficient maturity and self-realization in profession and in life. The basis of personal competence is consistency in the ratio of the level of claims and own opportunities and also an ability to predict events of life (Stepanova, 2002).

The question of professional readiness (including professional suitability, corresponding motivation and professional competence) is in the center of attention of the system of the higher

education today. There is not only the search of forms and the composition of the organization of the educational process leading to the development of basic ability as the self-development but also the search of the integral personal formations demanded for adequate professional functioning. The psychological wellbeing of the personality can be considered as the major (subjectively) personal formation. For example, the competences described in the educational standards and the requirements for the personality of the psychologist correlate with such indices of psychological wellbeing as the personal growth, the self-acceptance, the management of environment, the positive relationship with the nearest environment, the psychological autonomy, the self-toward attitude and the attitude towards society. Thus, it is possible to consider psychological wellbeing as the index of personal readiness for professional activity.

In this regard, the advanced studying of the phenomenon of psychological wellbeing is necessary. In Russian, the semantics of the word “*благополучие*” (wellbeing) is a quiet course of life without failures and shocks, which is not broken by misfortunes. The synonyms of this word are “*счастье*” (happiness), “*благоденствие*” (welfare), “*благосостояние*” (richness), “*достаток*” (prosperity), “*довольство*” (content), “*удача*” (luck), “*преуспевание*” (success), “*процветание*” (thrift), “*состоятельность*” (solvency) (Kelly, 1955). The concept of "wellbeing" in the world literature on psychology is formulated in the form of the multifactorial construct representing the difficult interrelation of welfare, psychological, psychophysical, material, and spiritual factors (Pryazhnikov, 1997). One of the variants of definition of person's wellbeing (M. Seligman) connects it with the positive affectivity, which is combined with the success of activity (Maslow, 1971).

So far in psychological science there are two main approaches to studying wellbeing: hedonistic one and eudaemonistic one. In most cases, the researchers working within the hedonistic approach (abroad and in the former Soviet Union) use the definition "subjective wellbeing" reflecting own relation of a person to the life, to the personality, to the processes which are important for the subject from the point of view of the acquired standard ideas of outside and inner world and characterized by feeling of satisfaction. The synonymous concepts which are often used in scientific literature by followers of the hedonistic approach are "satisfaction" and "happiness" (Baturin, 2013).

Unlike the understanding of subjective wellbeing within the hedonistic approach, the eudaemonistic concept defines wellbeing as integrative, rather stable personal experience of informative fullness of the life, the completeness of self-realization of the person in specific life conditions and circumstances, finding creative synthesis between compliance of requests of the social environment and the development of own identity. The followers of this approach use a definition "psychological wellbeing" in their researches, representing it as other than subjective wellbeing. At the same time, the psychological wellbeing is not necessarily followed by the experience of pleasure (Baturin, Bashkatov & Gafarova., 2013).

One of followers of the eudaemonistic approach (Ryff, 1989) formulated the generally accepted today's concept of psychological wellbeing where it is considered as the basic subjective construct reflecting self-perception and self-assessment of the functional state from the position of acme (the highest point of person's excellence). The author formulated the main constructs of psychological wellbeing and designed a tool for their measurement (Ryff, 1996). The structural model of psychological

wellbeing includes the following parameters: self-acceptance, personal growth, autonomy, competence of management of environment, positive relations with people around, availability of the life purposes.

We distinguish between general and professional consciousness in this work. The last one is more specific according to the contents and is closer to the essence of the discussed issue. The professional consciousness includes the idea of a person as a member of the professional community, the carrier of professional culture, including the certain occupation norms, the rules inherent in this professional community. The professional self-concept, according to many authors, has the functional and structural components whose interrelation helps a personality to form the complete professional consciousness. These components are being formed dynamically and heterochronically. As a result, the young professionals (graduates) take the essential non-equivalence of the formed psychological structures.

The basic discrepancy of the used paradigm of high school training (in general and in the corresponding directions of training of specialists) to those requirements which are imposed by modern professional activity has to be recognized as one of the most important reasons of insufficient readiness of young specialists for professional activity (Klimov, 1996). In practical activities of separate higher education institutions there is no system of the effective professional and personal growth of a future specialist that is essentially aggravated with the total transition of the Russian system of higher education to the Bologna one. At the same time, the reproductive methods of the training corresponding to the outdated paradigm providing the student with "outdated" knowledge remain in many higher education institutions. This leads to the insufficient practical orientation of training and dependence in the professional activity. As a result, the professional formation of a future specialist and forming of subjectivity in the chosen activity proceeds through the trial-and-error method after graduation from a higher education institution.

This situation considerably appeared as a consequence of the contradiction between the social contract for the specialists, capable to solve difficult professional tasks in modern conditions, and the weakly studied pedagogical and personal mechanisms of the effective professionalizing of the forming specialist. The process of personal evolution of the students is most interesting in this regard during the training in higher education institution as well as the perspectives of optimization of the level of psychological wellbeing due to the mobilization of the social and psychological processes, which are developed during professional formation of an individual.

The personal practice of teaching and consultation shows that many students pay attention to the decision of own personal and psychological conflicts, the deep-unconscious-roots problems, as the most widespread motive of choosing the profession. It seems ill-being of this sphere appears in the negative self-assessment, the rejection of life circumstances, the inability to form and develop trusting relationships with relatives, the disbelief in the possibility of positive changes in person's life. This is an obstacle in the way of the professional formation of the future specialist and calls his/her practical professional competence and efficiency into question.

The results of some studies (Kabanchenko, 2017) show that many third-year students of the different directions of training (biologists, geographers, psychologists, mathematicians, business administrators, etc.) already assure of unwillingness and impossibility to work in the field of their specialty since it becomes clear that mastering appropriate technologies demands considerable expenses

of personal time, their devotion and it is accompanied by the essential personal difficulties. Students do not wish to take the responsibility because they realize that desire to understand their motivations was accepted by them as the desire to become the qualified specialists in the particular area.

During the numerous studies it was revealed that the students with the raised indices of psychological wellbeing differed also in high rates of readiness for decision-making, bigger harmony of social behavior (the best interaction with other people) and the best progress. Further, it was found in the professional activity of the graduate. The accumulated data bulk speaks about the explicit communication of psychological wellbeing with the success of professional activity (Klishhevskaya, 2001; Saveljeva, 2008). If the employee is satisfied with the job, then s/he works better and tends to change the job to a lesser extent. In other words, the satisfaction with the work is the positive attitude of the employee towards it, its contents and conditions and causes the increase in productivity and qualities of work and also reduces probability of the employee's need to leave the company (i.e. promotes decrease in turnover of staff).

At the same time, the examinees with the low values of psychological wellbeing in one of researches (Saveljeva, 2008) showed correspondingly low parameters of professional activity and, besides, the decrease in the level of income. The data obtained from the similar researches demonstrate the existence of interrelation between wellbeing and activity, vis. the wellbeing can be the cause or the factor, and the efficiency of activity is the effect. The researches also show that the psychological wellbeing can influence activity regardless of education level, experience, age and a sex of the employee. There are data on the interrelation of psychological wellbeing with the risk of change not only the job but also the profession. It is shown that the availability of the psychological ill-being of employees (in comparison with "well-") is more often revealed in change of the job (Saveljeva, 2008; Rodina & Prudkov, 2002).

Thus, the psychological wellbeing can be essentially connected with the index of readiness for professional activity and aiming for its success. In turn, the readiness for professional activity is the factor of successful educational activity and the good predictive index of the future professional success and the satisfaction of the specialist with the activity.

2. Problem Statement

The general insufficient investigation of the problem of psychological wellbeing of the personality, especially, the integral quality of the personality of the specialist and the criterion of the personal readiness for professional activity obviously demands the most detailed studying. We are especially interested in studying the psychological wellbeing at the stage of professional formation, especially graduate's.

The most important aspect of the professional formation is the professional consciousness. Due to the insufficient formation of the professional consciousness of the specialist, the comprehension and self-assessment consisting of the separate properties and qualities (professional, personal) form an unclear, "deviant" image defining further unconstructive interaction and behavior (Mitina, 1998). The high level of professional consciousness allows one to create a complete, adequate I-image fitting into the complete

system of value orientations of the personality which are connected with the understanding the purposes of this professional activity as well as the necessary means.

The specialists with the high successful activity are characterized by the continuous self-knowledge based on the harmonious combination of the various components of experience, i.e. on the high autopsychological competence (Kuzmina, 1990). Such individuals possess more adequate self-assessment, high sensitivity to their merits and demerits, understanding the reasons of successes and failures, ability to analyze and generalize the results of the professional activity. Highly effective specialists are successful in own professional actions thanks to the ability to diagnose their professional opportunities.

The research of the structure of professional consciousness of teachers showed that this structure, the system generally matches with the personal consciousness and consists of three subsystems: *cognitive, affective and behavioral* (Mitina & Asmakovecz 2001; Markova, 1996).

The cognitive subsystem includes specialist's understanding within the complete system of activity together with the interpersonal relations determined by this activity and in the system of own personal development. During the professional interaction (starting with a position of a graduate, a trainee), I-concept is being shaped. It allows (or does not) one to form the feeling of professional and personal confidence.

In the situation of estimating (*affective*) relation of the specialist to him- / herself, it is possible to distinguish both a self-assessment of the relevant opportunities and retrospective and future achievements (an ideal self-assessment), the reflexive aspect of the self-assessment, vis. understanding what people around think of the person. It is possible to speak about the growth of professional consciousness when the relevant assessment is higher than retrospective one but below the ideal one. The specialist's key factor is forming the positive self-assessment in general. Self-confidence, satisfaction with a profession and high performance of the activity is observed in that case. The important fact is the positive I-concept of the teacher contributes to the development of the positive I-concept of the students. (Markova, 1996).

Finally, the third component of professional consciousness is *behavioral* and it means the ability to act on the basis of self-knowledge and self-attitude.

Numerous researches confirm that the driving force of the process of professional development of the subject of activity is the contradiction between the opportunities and requirements to the person's activity. The students and university graduates possess it in the form of contradictions between the image of profession and its real essence on the one hand and between self-identity as the subject of future activity and the real opportunities - on the other.

Thus, the development of the professional consciousness including cognitive, affective and behavioral components is the basis for forming psychological wellbeing of the specialist at each stage of his/her professional formation, improvement.

3. Research Questions

Based on the above-mentioned, the clarification of features of professional consciousness of university graduates in connection with psychological wellbeing was the main question facing us.

4. Purpose of the Study

The research objective is the comparative studying of professional consciousness and its interrelation with psychological wellbeing of the university graduates. The organizational base of the research is the graduates of the different directions of Kemerovo State University (73 persons totally) conducted during the preparation period of final research paper defense. The students of economy (25 persons), psychology (29 persons) and biology (19 persons) participated in this research. The sexual ratio in all studied groups was significantly irregular: only 7 men were almost evenly grouped into divisions, therefore a sex was not considered in the research. The average age was 20.5 and the groups did not validly differ by this index. Testing was conducted during the consultations before the final research paper defense.

5. Research Methods

Studying the level of a self-assessment of professional qualities (knowledge, skills, abilities, professionally important qualities of the personality, etc.) was carried out by means of the modified technique of a self-assessment of the personality by T.V. Dembo, S.Ya. Rubenstein (Yanshin, 2007). The students were offered to estimate the degree of intensity of their different professional qualities: 1 – professional knowledge, skills, abilities; 2 – professional capabilities, thinking; 3 – professionally important qualities of the personality; 4 – success in educational and professional activity; 5 – the authority among teachers and students; 6 – independence; 7 – responsibility; 8 – creative orientation; 9 – self-confidence. Graphic scales of 100 mm in size were offered to the respondents where they marked the level of their wellbeing with lines. The indices were transferred to digital values (in mm.) by means of a ruler.

The self-assessment level of separate scales was estimated using the following gradation: 75-100 points – overestimated, there are problems in forming personal qualities; 45-74 points - adequate, realistic; less than 45 points – a self-assessment is too low that can be the result of appearance of two psychological problems.

The psychological wellbeing of the personality of graduates was estimated via K. Ryff's adapted questionnaire "A scale of psychological wellbeing" revised by T.D. Shevelenkova, P.P. Fesenko (Ryff, 1996; Lepeshinskij, 2007). K. Ryff's model contains six components through the questionnaire scales:

- 1) the relations with others through care and trust - "Positive relations with others";
- 2) the ability to follow one's beliefs - "Autonomy";
- 3) the ability to fulfill the requirements of everyday life - "Management of environment";
- 4) the feeling of continuous development and self-realization - "Personal growth";
- 5) the availability of the purposes and occupations bringing meaning to life - "Purposes in life";
- 6) the positive self-attitude and the attitude towards one's past – "Self-acceptance".

The wellbeing level of separate scales was estimated using the following gradation: higher than 70 points - high; lower than 40 points - low.

Statistical processing was carried out by means of the program "Statistica V.10".

6. Findings

The analysis of results of the research was carried out through three stages. At the first stage, the self-assessment of different groups was compared via a degree of intensity of their various professional qualities. The results are shown in table 1.

Table 01. Indices of a self-assessment of professional qualities of graduates of different specialties (directions)

Scales	Economy dir. (n =25)		Psychology dir. (n =29)		Biology dir. (n =19)	
	M	M	M	m	M	m
professional knowledge, skills, abilities	91	2.22	76	3.3	68	3.55
professional capabilities, thinking	86	4.98	69	2.91	83	2.76
independence	62	2.16	88	2.1	75	4.89
professionally important qualities of the personality	97	4.27	91	1.99	82	3.21
success in educational and professional activity	92	2.8	75	2.63	66	3.78
authority among teachers and students	59	3.1	67	1.47	81	3.14
responsibility	83	3.56	89	5.45	62	5.13
creative orientation	59	2.022	94	4.14	87	6.1
self-confidence	93	4.05	79	3.56	86	3.97

The highest level of a professional self-assessment according to the majority of indices is observed among students (graduates) of economy direction. Their insufficiently adequate self-assessment is observed in such indices as independence, authority among teachers and students and creative orientation (less than 75 and even less than 60 points). At the same time their self-confidence, the confidence in knowledge and success in education "is off the scale" (more than 90 points - unrealistic).

The lowest indices of a professional self-assessment are revealed among biology graduates, especially concerning professional knowledge, success in education and responsibility (less than 70 points). Other indices are in an "adequate zone". Psychology graduates according to the majority of indices are also in the adequate zone and only their creativity and professionally important qualities slightly come into the zone of high self-esteem (more than 90).

It is possible to assume that the existing situation in the country directly or indirectly promotes forming the overestimated claims and hopes among future economists that is encouraged by both the level of teaching and high competitiveness to enter the university. An opposite situation among biologists is problematic for them; not only finding a job but its prestige is too low. The intensive growth of need for psychologists in last ten-twenty years puts this group in an intermediate position by the degree of adequacy of self-assessment.

At the second stage, the indices of psychological wellbeing provided in table 2 were analyzed.

Table 02. Indices of psychological wellbeing of graduates of different specialties (directions)

Scales	Economy dir.		Psychology dir.		Biology dir.	
	M	m	M	m	M	m
positive relations	63	1.4	54	1.01	45	1.28
autonomy	56	1.22	57	0.77	58	1.31
management of environment	67	0.98	56	1.27	50	1.35
personal growth	55	1.9	68	1.80	45	1.04
purposes in life	63	2.87	58	0.51	54	1.19
self-acceptance	59	1.99	42	1.31	51	1.08

The table shows that a rather high level of psychological wellbeing is observed among graduates of economy direction (except the index of personal growth). This confirms more psychologically and emotionally comfortable state of the economy graduates in spite of the fact that according to the position of the author of the test it is the average level. The most positive spirit of this group is in forming the relations, higher subjective feeling of management of the environment, the life purposes are better formed that can be connected with more abstract, rational, formalized attitude.

The situation among psychology graduates is significantly worse though the majority of indices of their psychological wellbeing are in the average zone. They look better in the field of personal growth and worse (low level of wellbeing) in the field of self-acceptance. We think that such combination reflects significantly more expressed orientation of future psychologists towards their personal development in connection with professional activity.

The situation with biology graduates is much worse and is similar to the results provided in Tab. 1. – a half of indices of wellbeing are at a rather low level, with a low level at the border and the others also have a level below that of the previous groups. The insufficient formation of professional skills probably affects it (indices of self-acceptance, personal growth) as well as problems of searching a job (against the background of redundancies in higher education institutions, a small number of jobs for biologists in Kuzbass, etc. – an index of management of environment).

At the third stage, the correlation analysis was carried out. Its purpose was key indices carving of the professional consciousness in terms of interrelation with psychological wellbeing of graduates. Due to the small size of groups and their inequality, we considered only the number of reliable relations. It is revealed that the indices connected with the professional competence of all studied groups are highly loaded with relations (professional knowledge, skills, abilities; professional capabilities, thinking; and professionally important qualities of the personality). Thus, there are 5, 4 and 4 reliable correlations with wellbeing indices among economy, psychology and biology graduates respectively. At the same time the psychology graduates possess the second center of the relations including responsibility and self-confidence (3, 5 and 2 relations respectively) whereas the biology graduates' correlating relations of all indices are distributed more or less evenly and their total number is minimum (10 relations of economy graduates, 9 of psychology graduates and 7 of biology graduates).

The obtained results are quite corresponding to the special literature data, though the problems of graduates are not enough investigated. The level of psychological wellbeing is revealed in the research

(Kabanchenko, 2017) and shows that a half of examinees has it in limits, and 4% examinees have it higher than norm and it is significantly connected with the level of meaning of life, independence and a positive self-assessment. The unpublished thesis of Zhukova E.R. (Zhukova, 2017). shows that the university graduates (the specialty is not specified, but probably they are psychologists of St. Petersburg State University) have not only an increase in the number of correlating relations in comparison with the students, but also the influence of autonomy and professionalism on feeling of wellbeing.

The research conducted with the participation of the students of the teacher training institute shows that the professional consciousness demands special work on its development, however it often develops spontaneously. The dissatisfaction with the professional choice and the negative attitude to the chosen profession (connected with psychological wellbeing) leads to the fact that only 35% (in comparison with 66% of first-year students) consider that they have the qualities necessary for successful work of the teacher among other students of the fifth-year of training (Rukavishnikova, 2002).

Other research also reveals the wide individual range of indices of psychological wellbeing of the students of different specialties (Vinogradova, 2015). Some researchers revealed students' essential reevaluation of the professional qualities against the background of insufficient development of professional consciousness and reflection (Shveczova, 2012). Insufficient structuredness and significant differences in the general structure of psychological wellbeing of students of the different directions are revealed in the research (Buchaczkaya & Kapranova, 2015). A decrease in indices of satisfaction with life among the graduates of the psychology and pedagogical direction in comparison with the first-year students and lack of influence of the competence level are revealed in the research (Kulik, 2016). The research (Kardovskaya, 2011) reveals the significant decrease in the indices connected with professional consciousness of students of "social work" direction till the 4th year of training. The author connects it with falling of perspectives to get a job according to the specialty.

At the same time there are data showing that students of clinical psychology direction can have a realistic image "I-professional" by the end of training at higher education institution. It allows planning development and achievements in the professional sphere (Matveeva, 2004).

Based on the results of our researches, it is possible to claim reasonably that it is necessary to continue research in this field to form specialized programs and practices for adaptation of graduates to future activity taking into account the actual level of consciousness and psychological wellbeing.

7. Conclusion

1. The essential differences in the level and structure of professional consciousness of the graduates of the different directions are revealed.
2. The differences in the level and structure of psychological wellbeing of graduates of the different directions are found.
3. The nature of interrelation of professional consciousness and psychological wellbeing of graduates of the different directions are unlike.
4. There is a need to develop the programs for adaptation of graduates to future profession.

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