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**RISKS IN EDUCATIONAL SETTING: THE ISSUE OF
IDENTIFICATION**

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Abstract

The problem presented in this paper is highly relevant in view of the fact that educational settings have a complex multifaceted nature which manifests itself through the system of professional and interpersonal relations among the subjects of educational processes. The contents of such relations determine the quality and nature of risks that teachers and their students face. The concept of risk is examined in this paper along with the issues concerning the identification and classification of educational risks; the description of the developed diagnostic complex aimed at identifying risk zones in educational environment is presented. The main methods employed in our research were as follows: comparative analysis, diagnostic surveys (surveys, tests and discussions), and the method of pedagogical design. Part-time students and teachers of the Republic of Tatarstan took part in this study. These materials can be used by teachers and instructors of higher education institutions involved in the process of preparing future teachers.

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Keywords: Pedagogical riskology, risks in informational educational environment, teacher preparedness, noxological competence of teachers, educational environment evaluation.



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1. Introduction

The category 'risk' has a multidisciplinary nature. Risk can be defined in a number of different ways and this is due to the fact that it is a complex concept that entails a variety of aspects, some of which are contradicting. In a general sense, risk is viewed as a potential failure, danger. However, scholars from different fields view risk and study its nature differently.

In pedagogical scholarship, risk is defined as a possibility of an ineffective pedagogical process arising from the inability of its participants to fully understand the nature and possible consequences of external threats coming from society and compromising biological, social, cultural and economic security of people (Shabrov, 2009). Based on this statement, we can single out noxological competence as a specific component in the system of professional teacher competence. Within the system of teacher education, noxological education constitutes the preparation of individuals to use in their professional lives a set of skills and knowledge necessary for ensuring safe environment at one's workplace; to view and treat the issues of security as a priority (Boyarov and Abramova, 2012). Noxological competence is defined as a stress resistance of teachers and implies an ability to assess, prevent and minimize the negative factors of one's environment (Malychev, 2013).

The works of the following Russian scholars are devoted to noxology: Devisilov (2011), Boyarov and Abramova (2012), Bagnetova and Sharifullina (2013), Polovneva (2011), Arlamova (2010), Khabibullin (2008), Abramov (2012), Prichinin (2014).

It is important to note a few works devoted to the formation of culture that fosters security of schoolchildren and helps teachers prepare to teach under risk: Akhmetvalieva, Gafner, Ismailov, Moshkin, Golubeva (Gafner, 2013), Galoyan (2005).

2. Problem Statement

The theory of pedagogical risks was proposed in 1996 and developed by Irina Abramova (1996). She introduced the concept of reasonable pedagogical risks which entails the sum of the ideas, approaches, principles and methods of dealing effectively with new challenges arising from situations that require decision-making. The concept of reasonable pedagogical risks comprises of creative materials and spiritual activities of people. Russian scholars view risks not only as a negative entity but they also highlight their positive aspects. This approach can be understood through the main functions of a pedagogical risk: protecting, ecological, regulative, assessing, expert- evaluating, organizational, developing.

We have analyzed the dynamics of the development of the pedagogical risk theory in the context of Russian scholarship through considering the studies of Abramova, Mikhailova (2010), Sabinina (2011), Belyaeva (2014), Kayumova and Zakirova (2016). Based on the conducted literature review we can reasonably argue that research in the area of riskology remain relevant to this day. Moreover, the current situation in Russia calls for the careful consideration of potential educational risks in view of rising migration levels.

3. Research Questions

The main goal of this study is to identify and conceptually develop the area of informational educational risks that are related to increasing migration.

4. Purpose of the Study

In order to achieve this goal, we have set the following tasks:

- To design a diagnostic complex aimed at identifying risk zones in the informational space of a school which are arising from increased migration;
- To identify and conceptually develop the risk zones in the informational space of a school which are arising from increased migration;
- To assess the level of teacher preparedness for work in potentially risky situations (assess their noxological competence).

5. Research Methods

We differentiate several potential zones of pedagogical risks arising from active migration processes: the interaction of the subjects of educational processes with different ethnic identities; the difficulties of migrant children with adaptation stemming from the differences between their home and new host cultures; the implementation of educational programmes which involve migrant children. While assessing risk zones, it is important to establish the intensity and function of their influence on the subjects of educational processes.

Our diagnostic complex is based on the methods of studying the informational space of educational processes and methods of assessing the preparedness of teachers to work under risk. The following methods were used: modified Podmazin's method of unfinished sentences, Soldatova's and Ryzova's survey for establishing ethnic identities, the method of the social portrait of a class, Heim's test for determining coping strategies, the method of teacher effectiveness monitoring.

5.1. Modified Podmazin's method of unfinished sentences.

Participants are offered a list of unfinished sentences (56) which describe complex controversial situations that can potentially happen in the professional life of a teacher. The participant is expected to read and finish the sentences providing a possible solution to a situation. If the participant is having difficulties with finishing a sentence, then he/she has to circle the number of this sentence and leave it to the end and then try to finish it again. This diagnostic method was used in two stages: at the first stage the participants were asked to finish sentences and at the second stage they were asked to assess their own emotional attitude towards the endings of the finished sentences.

5.2. Soldatova's and Ryzova's survey for establishing ethnic identities.

This method allows to assess a person's ethnic self-awareness and the level of its transformation under the conditions of inter-ethnic tensions. Participants are offered statements and asked to assess how much these statements correspond to their own beliefs. There are 30 questions in the survey covering 6 scales which

correspond to the following 6 types of ethnic identities: ethno-nihilism, ethnic indifference, the norm (positive ethnic identity), ethno-egoism, ethno-isolationism, and ethno-fanaticism. In the context of multiethnic society, positive ethnic identities (the first three types) are normal and the majority of people have these types. However, when inter-ethnic relations are damaged the ethnic identities of people are subject to transformation leading to people developing hyper-identities (the latter three types of identities).

5.3. 'The social portrait of a class' method.

According to Frolov (2003), the 'social portrait' method involves collecting and sorting the materials within a specific group of people, in our case it is a class of schoolchildren which is a subjective component of a teacher's work. For our diagnostic complex, we have selected a standard form with a table for compiling general characteristics of a class. A teacher is offered to fill in the form specifying the following: the number of children, children's age, children facing adversity, children with a single parent, migrant children, children with special psychological and physiological needs.

5.4. Heim's test for determining coping strategies.

This method helps identify people's individual strategies of coping with stress. This method has three parts which correspond to three groups of coping strategies (cognitive, emotional and behavioral). Within each group there are behavioral options – adaptive, non-adaptive and conditionally adaptive (productive, non-productive and conditionally productive). Those who are tested with this method are asked to select one statement from each group (Dmitriev, Belov & Parfenov, 2010).

6. Findings

This method involves observing the academic and social success of schoolchildren and teachers. The indicators of effectiveness enable the observer to trace the level of teachers' preparedness to deal with risks and exit risky situations.

The described diagnostic complex enables one to systematically monitor and identify potential new risks coming from the informational space of educational processes and to assess the preparedness of teachers to deal with risks. The presence of children in potentially risky situations can be viewed as one of the factors of reasonable pedagogical risks which enable teachers to mobilize and perform creative design work as a result stemming from effective educational design and research competence. This factor is bound to be as described if the teacher employs positive coping strategies and knowledge. The same factor can work against the teacher if he/she cannot be flexible and does not employ positive coping strategies. Thus, it is reasonable to suppose that the following pattern is likely: a teacher with a positive ethnic identity deals with situations more effectively in comparison to his/her counterparts who are under stress in the context of multicultural environment. In order to test our diagnostic system, we have developed an informational recourse used as a platform to distribute our diagnostic materials and to process initial results.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the current dynamic development of informational educational space makes it necessary to acknowledge that the noxological component (which is in essence a system of knowledge, skills and attitudes that teachers display while working under risk) is an important part of teacher competence. Assessing this unified system of knowledge, skills and attitudes is possible through adopting the complex approach which we have realized in our diagnostic system.

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