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**DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL SYMPTOM COMPLEX OF  
RESPONSIBILITY OF CARING PROFESSIONALS**

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***Abstract***

The paper considers the relevance of responsibility as professionally important quality of caring professionals at the training stage and results of psychological study of personal symptom complex of responsibility of the first- and fourth-year students of Psychology and Psychology and Pedagogical Education. The explication of personal symptom complex of responsibility of caring professionals was carried out via the standardized questionnaire of diagnostics of personal symptom complex of responsibility (QDPSCR) (I.A. Kocharyan) and a group association experiment. The comparative analysis revealed the transformation of responsible behavior from the statement of the general idea on responsibility and avoidance of consciously regulated socially responsible behavior of the first-year students among the fourth-year students. The study illustrates that by the end of their study the majority of future psychologists demonstrate stable positive attitude to responsible behavior as a personally important quality. Among over a third of students the responsible behavior is mainly based on the system of values with expressed readiness to help others, which is caused by the internal conflict between cognitive and semantic components of initial professional experience and may lead to professional deformation in the future. In general, professional education fosters the responsibility of future psychologists and social teachers. The average dynamics of typological options of responsible behavior of students-psychologists is positive and relatively smooth, and the students-future social teachers are characterized by variability and irregularity. The purpose of the study is to reveal and compare development features of the personal symptom complex of responsibility among psychologists and social teachers.

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**Keywords:** Caring professions, qualities, personality, responsibility, education.



## 1. Introduction

Over several decades the reforms of Russian higher education pose higher demands to the quality of educational programs by university graduates, to the level of their professional competence with the considerable focus on personal component (Toisteva, 2014a; Dobrusina, Obdalova, & Voitsehovskiy, 2018). It shall be noted that professional education, irrespective of the key paradigm of the educational strategy of the majority of European states, is mainly focused on the development of personality of a future professional and his personally important qualities. In terms of psychology the career choice shall be made taking into account habits and interests of a subject, its basic qualities, which will most successfully be transformed into critical professional qualities and will influence the professional success of a specialist in the future (Klimov, 2010). In this regard the study of personal qualities of a person as a subject of professional activity remains one of the priority directions of psychology.

The analysis of scientific literature and practical inquiries of the past decades confirms sustainable interest in the problem of responsibility of caring professionals (Enns, 2012) at the stage of their professional training.

The majority of domestic scientists consider responsibility as a basic quality of a personality and as the all-professional quality of a specialist defining the efficiency of any activity and substantial aspects of his life, including self-development and self-improvement. Some authors note that the responsibility as a stable quality of a personality is particularly connected with other qualities thus forming a symptom complex defining the attitude of a person towards himself and others, to ongoing activity, moral stand, strive for self-actualization, his behavior in general (Gavrilushkin, 2011; Kudinov, 2016).

Responsibility plays a special role in the context of psychological and social-psychological-pedagogical help implying not only high level of professional competence, but also a certain level of moral personal development (Bondarenko, 2001; Timoschuk, 2006).

**Table 01.** Diagnostics of personal symptom complex of responsibility (ODLSO) of students of *Psychology* (37.03.01) and *Psychology and Pedagogical Education* (44.03.02)

Year of study, major	1 <sup>st</sup> year Psychology			4 <sup>th</sup> year Psychology			1 <sup>st</sup> year Social Pedagogy			4 <sup>th</sup> year Social Pedagogy		
	low	av	high	low	av	high	low	av	high	low	av	high
Type of responsible behavior												
Adherence to principles	25	75*		30	50*	20	10	70*	20	27	36*	37
Self-assertiveness	25	75		20	70	10	35	35*	30	27	64*	9
Normativity	37.5	37.5	25	30	50**	20	35	25	40*	45	36**	18*
Ethical feasibility	12.5	62.5	25		90**	10	10	35	55	18	64**	18
Self-sacrifice	25	50	25*		30	70*	10	35	55*		27	73*

Note: \* statistical significance at  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* statistical significance at  $p < 0.01$

## 2. Problem Statement

However, the questions on how students' understanding of responsibility determines the quality of responsible behavior and whether professional education affects this type of behavior are still open.

It is known that personal qualities develop through different types of activity such as games, work, education, hobbies. This fact allows considering the stage of professional education as one of the most intensive in respect of transformation and integration of personal qualities. It shall be noted that the development of any quality is caused by the personal system of understanding of these qualities, degree of attraction and a certain level of self-control. Thus, for example, in one of the studies devoted to the phenomenon of responsibility the author points to contradictory tendencies in the understanding of this phenomenon by professional psychologists (Timoschuk, 2006).

### **3. Research Questions**

In this regard the study of typological options of responsible behavior of future caring professionals (on the example of future psychologists and social teachers), their understanding of responsibility at the training stage seems quite relevant. In our opinion, in the course of professional education the idea of responsibility is changed in the consciousness of future psychologists and social teachers, which shall be considered as one of the indicators changing their responsible behavior. At the same time, despite similarities of the training fields, the personal symptom complex of responsibility of psychologists and social teachers will have specifically compelling differences.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

Thus, the purpose of the study is to reveal and compare the development features of the personal symptom complex of responsibility among psychologists and social teachers, their understanding of responsibility in the course of professional education at a higher educational institution.

### **5. Research Methods**

The task of the study was solved via the standardized questionnaire of diagnostics of personal symptom complex of responsibility (QDPSCR) developed by Kocharyan (2008) and a group association experiment (Serkin, 2004). The ODLSO questionnaire makes it possible to record the level of various types of responsible behavior of a person in such areas of his activity as family, study, health and interpersonal relations. The questionnaire actualizes the subjective experience of students and allow evaluating the existing cognitions on responsible behavior, however they do not provide the convincing evidence to define their attitude towards such type of behavior, as well as its motivation. For this purpose, the group association experiment (Serkin, 2004) allowing simulating the activity-based context of responsibility was used for each group of respondents. Primary and secondary mathematical treatment with further qualitative analysis were used to process the obtained results. The use of  $\varphi^*$  criterion – Fischer's angular transformation allowed comparing data on the groups of students under study in terms of quantitative and qualitative features.

The empirical study was focused on the first- and fourth-year bachelor students of *Psychology* (37.03.01) (36 people) and the first- and fourth-year bachelor students of *Psychology and Pedagogical Education* (44.03.02) (31 people) aged 17-22.

## 6. Findings

The empirical data makes it possible to conclude that on the majority of scales the level of components within the symptom complex of responsibility of students-psychologists and students-social teachers are significantly transformed (changed) towards senior years of study. Namely, the 2/3 of the first-year students of both specialties are characterized by the average level of expressiveness of “adherence to principles”. This means that the majority of the first-year students are characterized by the accumulation of negative emotions with subsequent discharge, spontaneity of emotions, insensitivity to the opinion on themselves, moderate demonstration of responsibility, which is mainly based on personal principles and insufficient level of reflexivity. About 1/5 of psychologists and 1/3 of social teachers among the fourth-year students are characterized by high indicators with the corresponding reduction of average values on this scale. In other words, in their behavior this part of students is focused on excessive adherence to principles, strive for truth, self-sacrifice most often to the detriment of others.

Regarding “self-assertiveness” the students-psychologists are characterized by the average indicators of assertive personality seeking for recognition and convinced that the majority of important events in life represent the result of their personal actions. The responsible behavior of such personality shall be called outward, which is often confirmed by misconduct and violation of rules. Besides, if the above described average values of psychologists are stable throughout the entire period of study, then the students-social teachers gain the average level only by the 4<sup>th</sup> year.

The prevalence of average and high values of “normativity” indicate that the behavior of the majority of students may be characterized as socially responsible. The majority of future psychologists and social teachers demonstrate strive to adhere to the established principles, norms and traditions, express doubt in the need for new ideas and show passive and suffering position, seek social recognition.

However, if by the 4<sup>th</sup> year the features of standard or socially responsible behavior are stabilized at the average level among ½ of psychologists, then among future social teachers the high indicators significantly decrease by the 4<sup>th</sup> year in comparison with the first-year students ( $\varphi^* = 3.486$ , at  $p < 0.01$ ), the percentage of average and low indicators increases. At the same time the percentage of low values regarding “normativity” is above average and high. We may assume that this is caused by changes in personal substructures, for example, reduction of Super-Ego dominance or increase of self-esteem, which requires additional study.

Table 1 shows that concerning “ethical feasibility”, the prevalence of average values, which significantly increase by the 4<sup>th</sup> year ( $\varphi^* = 4.695$ , at  $p < 0.01$ ), is typical for the majority of students-psychologists thus characterizing them as “ethical persons”, i.e. persons seeking to behave responsibly in any activity since it is determined by their own desire. The social teachers of the 1<sup>st</sup> year of study demonstrate the prevalence of high values regarding this attribute (more than a half), and among their senior colleagues (4<sup>th</sup> year) these values are 3 times less ( $\varphi^* = 4.165$ , at  $p < 0.01$ ), and the average values increase almost twice. We may conclude that the majority of the first-year social teachers subjectively exaggerate the degree of their responsible behavior, quality of their activities and importance of actions aimed at both themselves and other people. Only at the 4<sup>th</sup> year of study the behavior of the 2/3 of social teachers corresponds to responsible behavior without exaggeration.

Both groups showed the interesting dynamics of “self-sacrifice” indicators. In comparison with the first-year students the level of self-sacrifice of the fourth-year students-psychologists increases 2.8 times ( $\varphi^* = 6.611$ , at  $p < 0.01$ ) and social teachers – 2.7 times ( $\varphi^* = 2.673$ , at  $p < 0.01$ ). Hence, we may conclude that the fourth-year students of both specialties consider themselves as “the personality ready for self-sacrifice”, i.e. seeking to paternalize someone, to help someone thus believing that they are not appreciated enough by the people they care of.

The qualitative analysis of associative material of respondents of both specialties allowed clarifying some discrepancy in the above described indicators received via the questionnaire of diagnostics of personal symptom complex of responsibility (QDPSCR). Since the associative semantic universals reflect similarity of the uniform group of respondents, this allows us describing the specificity of semantic categorization of responsible behavior in the consciousness of students of different specialties with different periods of professional education. Thus, in the group of the first-year psychologists the associative semantic universals to the stimulus word “responsibility” were as follows: duty (0.5), maturity (0.5), honesty (0.5), obligation (0.4). Apparently, the first-year students have the general idea on responsibility. However, in real behavior they most often seek to avoid excessive responsibility, they follow their personal interpretation of moral standards, they are not critical enough towards their actions and mistakes, especially within interpersonal relations. We believe that these features also lead to painful lack of freedom, internal tension, which are so typical for young people only beginning their responsible life.

The following frequency associations were typical for the fourth-year psychologists: actions (0.6), duty (0.5), character (0.5), power (0.4), confidence (0.4), family (0.3), need (0.3), honesty (0.3). Considering weight and ranking of associative semantic universals of the fourth-year students we may conclude on their personal experience of responsible behavior, reflections on such experience, relatively stable positive attitude to such experience, reliance on their personal qualities. Thus, the responsibility by the fourth-year psychologists is not only perceived as value (Leontyev, 1983), but also as a personal meaning (Leontyev, 1983; Artemyeva, 1999) caused by subjective experience of a personality, personal active context.

The following associative semantic universals were identified among the first-year social teachers to the stimulus word “responsibility”: obligation (0.5), duty (0.5), rules (0.4), adherence to principles (0.3). Apparently, the responsibility in the consciousness of the first-year students is also perceived as value and mainly as those stereotypic characteristics, which, on the one hand, require socially desirable responsible behavior and on the other hand, activate age-related search and, consequently, negative experience.

The following frequency associations were typical for the fourth-year social teachers: duty (0.5), standard (0.5), self-control (0.4), actions (0.4), responsiveness (0.3), character (0.3). Considering weight and ranking of associative semantic universals of the fourth-year social teachers we may also conclude on their experience of responsible behavior implemented due to personal efforts, which most likely points to latent intrapersonal conflict. This assumption is based on the comparison of frequency associations and results of the questionnaire of diagnostics of personal symptom complex of responsibility and definitely requires the corresponding verification.

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, in the course of the study such professionally important quality of caring professionals as responsibility is being developed and influencing the change of their individual and professional consciousness.

In the conclusion it shall be noted that professional development is impossible without personal development of a future expert (Klimov, 2010; Bataeva, 2018) and requires that a modern system of higher education takes a thorough understanding of its content and organization, increases the professional level of teaching staff and students (Toisteva, 2014b; Catalano & Catalano, 2017; Chis & Grec, 2017; Dobrusina et al., 2018).

The comparative analysis of empirical data, personal symptom complex of responsibility of psychologists and social teachers of different years of study is characterized by some features reflecting the dynamics of responsible behavior at the stage of professional education. First, the students of both specialties are characterized by the transformation of responsible behavior from the statement of the general idea on responsibility and, as a result, avoidance of consciously regulated socially responsible behavior of the first-year students among the fourth-year students. Second, unlike social teachers, by the end of their study the majority of future psychologists demonstrate stable positive attitude to responsible behavior as a personally important quality. The latter one may be explained by the internal conflict (more than a third of social teachers) between cognitive and semantic components of initial professional experience that may lead to professional deformation in the future.

According to the above, the study of personal symptom complex of responsibility and ideas of responsibility among professionals with different work experience seems quite relevant.

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