Risks of pedagogical profession: the determination of deformations by the sphere of teacher’s activity

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Abstract – Risks of personality’s professionalization in mass professions are usually associated with the duration of the realization of the main professional functions, without considering the specifics of the risks within the framework of individual specializations. Perhaps this explains, in practice, the lack of researches studying the risks of transformation of the personality of teachers working with different contingent of students. This problem is particularly relevant and urgent for teachers of social asylums, whose activities are highly socially significant because of their considerable contribution to the correction and introduction of customers into society, support of their personal development.

The importance of this problem solving is due to the fact that employees of social asylums are in conditions that require, first of all, the manifestation of high moral responsibility for the health and life of pupils. The risks of this profession also include permanent stress that occurs even in the simplest interaction with customers and their representatives, continuous monitoring of problems encountered by customers. As a result of a long stay in this profession, there is a transformation of professionalism, which gives rise to various professional deformations. All this also caused an urgent necessity to study the peculiarities of the risks of long-term realization of the functions of a teacher of a social asylum, to analyze the determinants causing professional deformations.

Accordingly, the aim of the work was to study the risks of long-term professional activity of teachers of social asylums.

The obtained data demonstrated the presence of specific risks in the professional development of teachers of the social asylum, when a long stay in everyday stress distorts the process of professionalization, leads to the appearance and development of professional deformation.

Structurally professional deformations of the representatives of socionicmprofessions have the following focus: personal-semantic, individual activity operational and communicative. The risks faced by teachers of the social asylum are reflected in the psychological characteristics of their deformation, which differ from those of secondary schools teachers.

Comparison of professional deformations in two groups of respondents revealed significant differences in all components. Thus, the deformation of the personal-semantic sphere of social asylum employees is characterized by a lower degree of understanding of their existence, in comparison with teachers of standard schools. Employees of social asylums were also more focused on the past, seeing in the previous life fullness of the most beautiful and productive things. Risks of individual activity vector of transformation of personality of social asylum teachers are associated, first of all, with open dissatisfaction with the work, beginning from conditions and a working situation, finishing with a salary and opportunity of career growth. In addition, unlike school teachers, social asylum employees often tried to demonstrate asocial behavior in situations of intense communication. In the same group of respondents the syndrome of emotional burnout reveals itself more clearly.

Specific deviations of employees of social asylums in the communication sphere are due to the expressed intolerance and unfriendliness. They also tend to use the mechanism of psychological protection inhibiting the manifestation of emotions, as a reaction to psychotraumatic actions from the outside.

The result of the conducted research was identification of the features of professional deformation phenomenon among teachers of the social asylum and their difference from teachers of secondary schools. The obtained data significantly deepen and expand the existing scientific understanding of the process of professional transformations of teachers working for a long time in a social asylum, and allow us to define the ways of their correction.

Keywords – the risks of professionalization, professional deformation, deformation of personality, deformation of activities, the deformation interaction.

I. INTRODUCTION

The researches of the process of personality’s professional formation in different professions are widely presented in the scientific literature. However, the special attention paid to the problem of teachers’
According to the authors’ opinion the emotional intensity of school work is one of the factors the development of teacher’s professional deformations. Long intensity can promote the decrease of man’s psychological stability, weakening of its activity, and as a result lead to the development of professional deformations (E.F.Zeer and E.E. Simanuk, 2005).

A big number of researches of schoolteachers’ deformations is devoted to the development of negative emotional conditions and mainly aggression in the activity (M.-L.Chang, 2010). Doherty Erin Neave showed that an aggressive teacher doesn’t only influence destructively on pupils mind but it is an example for imitation and fixation of response aggressive reactions enriching their behavioral repertoire (E.N. Doherty, 2009).

Bonner, Debora L. Found that teacher’s willing to reach dominating position in all positions, depression, lack of belief in pupils abilities have a negative impact not only on his behavior in the class but also on I-conception of his pupils and even on their progress (D.L. Bonner, 2010). T.E. Maiorova established interrelation of the conflict behavior of the teacher at school with the level of his deformation (T.E. Maiorova, 2010). The teachers with high level of professional deformation have a low level of conflict competence, which is displayed in the authoritative and manipulative interaction in the pedagogical process, in the competition, humiliation of the pupil in the conflict situation, in the demonstration of suspicion, touchiness, distrust and displeasure with others.

The examination of scientific researches results allows to make a conclusion that by the nature of their activities the comprehensive schools’ teachers are involved into a long strained communication with pupils, their parents, colleagues, and their professional work is characterized by high emotional intensity. In connection with it for professional activity it is typical to have professional deformations representing the distortion of professional development and appearing in the form of negative changes violating the integrity of a personality, changing personal and professional profile of the teacher, that lead in its turn to the decrease of his professional labor efficiency. In spite of different approaches in the research of professional deformation phenomenon the majority of scientists agree that such deformations as authoritativeness, demonstrativeness, didacticism, pedagogical aggression, formalism, conservatism, etc. are typical for teachers.

At the same time the problem of professional changes happening with teachers who work with children in other types of educational establishments, social asylums in particular, has been worked insufficiently. The psychological aspects of the researches are mainly devoted to the study of professional qualities, skills, professional competence pf social employees (M.V. Firsov, 2013).

The main distinctive feature of the activity of different educational establishments’ teachers is defined by the peculiarities of the children with whom the pedagogical interaction is realized. At characterizing social asylum contingent N.B.Troitskaya notes that every child entered the asylum is psychologically traumatized. Mental retardation, pedagogical or social neglect, deviations of different types is typical for majority of children. They don’t have necessary social experience for valuable life in the society, at the same time the requirements to social services is in contradictory condition. From one side, the requirements to social asylums’ teachers for the quality of the provided services increase, from the other side, one can observe the catastrophic lack of qualified pedagogical personnel, low social status, and increase in the number of pupils with serious psychological and somatic problems or with negative social experience. The professional activity of social asylum’s teacher refers to the group of professions with increased moral responsibility for pupils’ health and life. Stress situations in which the teacher occurs in the process of difficult social interaction with wards, parents or persons substituting them, constant penetration into the core of social problems of the wards, personal vulnerability and other moral and psychological factors impact negatively on the process of professionalization.

As a result long presence in the profession, influence of specific character of professional activity and its subject distort the trajectory of professional development and determine the appearance and development of professional deformation of social asylum’s teacher. In connection with it there appears an urgent need to study psychological peculiarities of social asylum’s teacher professional deformation, its structure and content, to analyze factors determining the appearance and development of professional deformation of social asylum’s teacher.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In modern science the researchers have substantially studied the professional deformations of comprehensive school’s teachers. The problem of deformations in pedagogical activity was initially meant implicitly in the frames of professional development conceptions (D. Super, 1980; Ch. Buhler, 1971; J.L. Holland, 1973; etc.), later it was examined directly and investigated as a part of professional development of teacher personality. Hereinafter it became a background for carrying out complex researches of personal and professional deformations of comprehensive school’s teachers (E.F. Zeer and E.E. Simanuk, 2005; A.K. Markova, 1994; E.I. Rogov, 2014, etc.).

Studying the negative influence of professional activity on teacher personality E.F. Zeer and E.E. Simanuk use a more wide term – “professional destructions” of the teacher including here not only professional deformations but also professionally conditioned accentuations, learned helplessness, professional alienation and professional incompetence. Among the allocated professional deformations of school teachers the researchers indicate such types as authoritativeness, demonstrativeness, pedagogical dogmatism, dominance, didacticism, etc. (E.F.Zeer and E.E. Simanuk, 2005).

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The main distinctive feature of the activity of different educational establishments’ teachers is defined by the peculiarities of the children with whom the pedagogical interaction is realized. At characterizing social asylum contingent N.B.Troitskaya notes that every child entered the asylum is psychologically traumatized. Mental retardation, pedagogical or social neglect, deviations of different types is typical for majority of children. They don’t have necessary social experience for valuable life in the society, at the same
their individual experience is burdened by different negative habits (N.B. Troitskaya, 2009).

Unlike comprehensive schools’ pupils, children and teenagers of the asylum have different deviations in the development: in cognitive sphere expressed in pedagogical neglect, delay in verbal and psychoverbal development, underdevelopment of the intellect. Their sex-role socialization is often broken. As a rule, asylum’s wards are the children from asocial, problem families where they receive negative social experience: use of psychoactive substances, begging, vagrancy, theft, prostitution, etc. Such closest social environment influences perniciously on the formation of child personality, distorts his ideas about healthy lifestyle and socially acceptable ways of vital activity on the whole (N.B. Troitskaya, 2009).

A social teacher takes increased responsibility for the life and health of the wards, and this fact is a difficult psychological weight for him. Besides providing support including psychological to the psychotraumatized child, gaining his trust, winning him in order to carry out rehabilitation measures, the teacher must constantly control the life situation of this pupil. Simultaneously the teacher should perform his professional duties in regard to other wards who probably have not less difficult problems. During wards stay in the asylum the task of all the specialists and first of all teachers working with them is consisted in the rehabilitation, adaptation of wards in the society, reeducation of children and teenagers by involving them into the healthy system of social interaction. The important target of the teachers is to show their wards that there exists another system of values, another system of relations – without violence, without aggression.

The professional activity of asylum’s teacher is connected with high level emotionally stress burdens and increased moral responsibility. It forms excessive psychological tension which can lead to the appearance of emotional burnout symptoms development of which promotes the increase of irritability, decrease of frustration tolerance, occurrence of dissatisfaction with profession, loss of prospects of professional growth. Emotional exhaustion fosters the loss of motivation and working efficiency that can cause regress of professional activity. Besides, the specific character of teacher’s professional activity is that it is formed according to the laws of communication assuming active emotional interaction. Based on the above, it can be stated that pedagogical personnel of the asylum refer to the “risk group” in probability of appearance and development of professional deformation.

Summarizing foregoing it is possible to conclude that high psychoemotional tension of the activity of social asylum’s teacher, psychologically difficult object of pedagogical work; intensive emotional interaction; increased responsibility for performed duties – all these moral and psychological factors determine the specific character of professional activity of social asylum’s teacher. With work experience increase it probably leads to the development of professional specific deformation of the social asylum’s teacher.

III. METHODS AND TECHNIQUES OF RESEARCH

According to the conception of personality professional development the professionalization of the subject takes place in the space formed by three vectors indicated as psychological peculiarities of the subject, peculiarities of professional activity itself and the third vector defined as specific peculiarities of the object of the activity and interaction with him (E.I. Rogov, 2014). Correspondingly it can be stated that the development of professional’s deviations will also happen within this professionalization space and go in three directions: abnormality of the activity, destruction of the personality, defects of professional interaction. So deformation of the personality is reflected by personal-semantic component, deformation of the activity – by individual-active component and deformation of professional interaction – by communicative component.

150 employees of social asylums, as well as 60 teachers of secondary schools were interviewed to study the risks deforming the behavior. The survey was carried out with the help of standard techniques: SACS questionnaire (S. Hobfoll), the test of aggressiveness level (A. Bass and A. Darky), the test-questionnaire of self-evaluation (V.V. Stolin), the test "Life meaning orientation" (D.A. Leontiev), the test "Satisfaction with the job" (V.A. Rozanova), methods of diagnostics of level of emotional burnout and general communicative tolerance (V.V. Boyko). For mathematical treatment the computer program of statistical analysis and processing SPSS® 21 was used.

IV. THE EXPERIMENTAL BASE OF THE RESEARCH

The total sample size was 210 respondents, including 150 teachers of social shelters of the Rostov region and 60 teachers of secondary schools of the Rostov region. The study was conducted on the basis of the state budgetary institution of social service of the population of the Rostov region “Center for social assistance to families and children” of Rostov-on-Don.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study of the personal-semantic component of teachers’ professional deformation showed that the degree of expression of self-relation structure components of social asylums’ and schools’ teachers is different. Reliably significant differences were identified by three self-relation components on the level of concrete actions towards “I”: “self-confidence” (U=3018,5, p=0,000), “self-interest” (U=3028,0, p=0,000), and “self-understanding” (U=2558,0, p=0,000). It is proved that an adequate level of self-relation is typical both for social asylums’ and comprehensive schools’ teachers, that testifies about quite positive relation to themselves, self-acceptance. However, social asylums’ teachers are differed by lower level of self-relation.

The results of the research of life meaning orientations of social asylums’ and comprehensive schools’ teachers reflect the medium degree of the indicators expression in both groups. It is interesting that in both groups in spite of medium degree of expression of all life meaning orientations the total level of life meaningfulness is rather high, and it allows to claim about the typicality of targets
The analysis of the results of stress situations coping strategies allowed to identify the most expressed coping-strategies of social asylums’ and comprehensive schools’ teachers. Reliably significant differences were revealed in such behavior strategies as “impulsive actions” (U=2437.5, p=0.000), “avoidance” (U=3020.5, p=0.000) and “asocial actions” (U=2706.5, p=0.000). So in spite of domination of prosocial behavior models in both groups the teachers of social asylums in comparison with teachers of comprehensive schools have more expressed tendency to act on the first impulse, under the influence of external circumstances and emotions, without preliminary thinking about their actions, weighing all the “pros” and “cons” and taking the most appropriate and reasonable decisions. It is typical for them to avoid decisive actions requiring great tension and responsibility for the consequences, desire to move away from a conflict situation, to postpone the solution of the arising problem, to be distracted by other classes and types of activity.

It is interesting that for social asylums’ teachers it is more typical to perform asocial actions in stress situations which are characterized by the tendency to go beyond socially acceptable limits and restrictions, by egocentrism, intention to satisfy their own desires regardless of the circumstances and interests of others. As a result of the identified differences in separate behavior strategies of teachers in stress situation there were also revealed reliably significant differences in the degree of constructiveness of coping behavior on the whole (U=3021.5, p=0.001). It is possible to make a conclusion that the degree of constructiveness of coping behavior of social asylums’ teachers is in general lower than of comprehensive schools’ teachers.

The research of psychological peculiarities of communicative component of teachers’ professional deformation identified reliably significant differences only in the level of “suspicion” (U=2485.5, p=0.00) and “verbal aggression” (U=2910.5, p=0.00). Thus, social asylums’ teachers are differed by more expressed verbal aggression manifesting as causing psychological harm with usage of mainly vocal (cry, change in tone) and verbal components of speech (swearing, abuses, etc.). And comprehensive schools’ teachers are characterized to a greater extent by suspicion expressed in the extreme criticality, tendency to refuse people in trust, in assuming deceit in the actions of others.

Basing on the identified indicators in every reaction there was carried out the calculation of hostility and aggressiveness indexes in teachers groups. The results of the statistical analysis proved that it is more typical for social asylums’ teachers to have reactions manifested “externally” actively to the concrete persons firstly through verbal aggression. Comprehensive schools’ teachers are differed by the tendency to take a negative position towards others.

Having identified the reliable differences between social asylums’ and comprehensive schools’ teachers (U=3280.5, p=0.002) the study of communicative tolerance enables to state that social asylums’ teachers are less tolerant to others in different aspects of relations and situations. The differential data analysis aimed at the study of behavioral signs allowed to identify statistically reliable differences in such aspects of relations as “tendency to evaluate people
using yourself as a standard” (U=3454.5, p=0.008),
“categorical on evaluation of others” (U=3336.5, p=0.003),
“ability to hide unpleasant impressions from communication
with uncommunicative people” (U=3461.0, p=0.008),
“tolerance to uncomfortable states of others” (U=3202.0, p=0.001) and “adaptive capacities” (U=2116.5, p=0.000).
All this points that the level of communicative tolerance of
social asylum’s teachers is lower than of comprehensive
school’s teacher both in separate components and in general
level.

VI. CONCLUSION

With a long stay in the profession there are risks of
professionalization of the individual, under the influence of
the specifics of professional activity (extreme emotiogenic
of professional labor, psychologically difficult object of
labor) there occur distortion of the process of social
asylum’s teacher professional formation that in its turn leads
to the appearance and development of professional
dermatation.

The professional deformation of social asylum’s teacher
represents complex multi-faceted phenomenon distorting
the process of professional professionalization which develops
in three directions: abnormality of the activity, dysfunction
of the personality, disruption of professional interaction.

The structure of professional deformation of the teacher
includes three components: personal-semantic, individual-activ and communicative. The manifestation of signs of
personality’s deformation is reflected by personal-semantic
component that is seen in the distortion of value
orientations, in the violation of goal-setting and forecasting,
decrease or loss of positive self-relation, reduction of
professional duties, violation of integrity of personality, its
adaptation. The manifestation of symptoms of activity
dermatation is reflected by individual-active component that
is demonstrated in reduction of professional duties, emotional
detachment, depersonalization, disruption of self-
control functions. The manifestation of deformation
symptoms of professional interaction with the object of the
labor is reflected by communicative component that is
displayed in the violation or loss of constructive interaction
skills.

The psychological peculiarities of professional
dermatations of social asylum’s teachers in comparison with
the teachers of comprehensive schools are reflected in every
structural component of professional deformation:

- the psychological peculiarities of personal-semantic
component of teachers’ deformation lie in more low level of
self-relation and meaningfulness of life than of
comprehensive schools’ teachers;

- the psychological peculiarities of individual-active
component of social asylum’s teachers are the fact that they
more often express dissatisfaction and utter dissatisfaction
with their job, its conditions, organization, possibility of
career growth and also financial component in comparison
with the teachers of comprehensive schools. Also for social
asylum’s teachers it is more typical to perform asocial
actions in stress situations. Moreover, social asylum’s
teachers are differed by more expressed syndrome of
emotional burnout than teachers of comprehensive schools.

- the psychological peculiarities of communicative
component of professional deformation of social asylum’s
teachers lie in more high intolerance, more expressed
aggressive reactions manifested mainly through verbal
agression.

The study confirmed the fact that during a long stay in
the profession, there are risks of professionalization of the
individual, allowed to study in more detail the phenomenon
of professional deformation in the teaching profession; to
investigate the structure and the content of professional
dermatation of social asylum’s teachers; indicate
psychological peculiarities of professional deformations of
social asylum’s teachers in comparison with the teachers of
comprehensive schools. The received data enable to deepen
and extend scientific understanding about the process of
professional development of social asylum’s teacher.

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