THE SPECIFICS OF TERTIARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEFORMATION

Abstract. The peculiarities of tertiary school teachers’ professional deformation are considered in the article. It is noted that there is no unified definition of the “professional deformation of a personality” by now. The interpretations differ according the researchers’ approaches to the causes of professional deformations: curvature of personal traits, the outcome of long professional activity, fatigue, stress. What psychologists think in regard of the phenomenon in general, are personal qualities’ changings that occur under the influence of long-term performance of professional activity. The fundamental principle of the Psychology is laid in the phenomenon of professional activity. It is unity of consciousness, personality, and activity.

Traditionally, most researchers consider the problem of professional deformation in two aspects: an activity- and a personality-based ones accordingly. They focus on personality deformation and on the deformation of activity or labor behavior. Professional deformations are the most common phenomena in the sphere of socionomic professions, among which pedagogics is characterized by more psycho-emotional tension than the others. Acquiring the experience of a certain type of activity, a person gains specific professional traits of personality and behavior. In the process of pedagogical activity a teacher needs adaptation, due to which he himself undergoes changings and transforms the environment.
A number of social, personal, professional factors that contribute to emergence and development of tertiary teachers’ professional deformations is characterized. The more a teacher's length of service is, the stronger the changes in his personality’s structure are, his physical and psychic health becoming worse.

It is noted that today’s social and economical situation influences teachers’ health negatively and contributes to the emergence of professional deformations. Professional deformations are a dynamic process, which has certain stages of formation and development. They can be avoided by applying a system of preventive measures at the national, environmental, and individual levels.

**Keywords:** deformation, professional deformation, professional activity, pedagogical activity, teacher, educational environment, educational process.

Якимчук Олена Миколаївна кандидат мистецтвознавства, доцент кафедри музикознавства, інструментальної підготовки та хореографії, Вінницький державний педагогічний університет імені Михайла Коцюбинського, вул. Острозького, 32, м. Вінниця, 21100, тел.: (063) 884-13-14, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2276-6061

Кравцова Наталія Євгенівна кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент кафедри вокально-хорової підготовки, теорії та методики музичної освіти, Вінницький державний педагогічний університет імені Михайла Коцюбинського, вул. Острозького, 32, м. Вінниця, 21100, тел.: (0432) 27-93-92, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3528-4547

Кушнір Катерина Володимирівна кандидат педагогічних наук, старший викладач кафедри вокально-хорової підготовки, теорії та методики музичної освіти, Вінницький державний педагогічний університет імені Михайла Коцюбинського, вул. Острозького, 32, м. Вінниця, 21100, тел.: (0432) 27-93-92, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3356-9813

**ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ДЕФОРМАЦІЇ У ВИКЛАДАЧІВ ВИЩОЇ ШКОЛИ**

Анотація. У статті розглянуті особливості професійних деформацій викладачів вищої школи. Зазначається, що у науковців немає єдиної дефініції «професійної деформації особистості». Тлумачення відрізняються підходами дослідників щодо причин виникнення професійних деформацій: викривлення особистісних рис, результат тривалої професійної діяльності, втоми, стресу. Загальним розумінням психологів щодо феномену є зміна особистісних якостей людини, які відбуваються під впливом тривалого виконання професійної діяльності. У феномені професійної діяльності закладений фундаментальний принцип психологічної науки – єдність свідомості, особистості, діяльності.
Традиційно більшість дослідників розглядають проблему професійної деформації у двох аспектах: діяльнісної та особистісної, акцентуючи увагу на деформації особистості й деформації діяльності або трудової поведінки. Професійні деформації є найбільш поширеним явищем у сфері соціономічних професій, серед яких педагогічна характеризується більшим психоемоційним напруженням, ніж інші. З досвідом певного виду діяльності у людини з’являються специфічні професійні риси особистості й поведінки. У процесі педагогічної діяльності викладач потребує адаптації, в результаті якої змінюється сам й перетворює оточуюче середовище.

Охарактеризовано низку соціальних, особистісних, професійних чинників, що сприяють виникненню й розвитку професійної деформації у викладачів вищої школи. При збільшенні стажу роботи зміни у структурі особистості викладача посилюються, збільшуються, стан фізичного й психічного здоров’я погіршується.

Зазначено, що сучасні соціально-економічні умови негативно впливають на стан здоров’я викладачів, сприяючи виникненню професійних деформацій. Професійні деформації є динамічним процесом, який має певні етапи формування й розвитку. Їм можна запобігти, застосовуючи систему профілактичних заходів на загальнодержавному, середовішньому, індивідуальному рівнях.

Ключові слова: деформація, професійна деформація, професійна діяльність, педагогічна діяльність, викладач, освітнє середовище, навчальний процес.

Positioning of the problem. Specialists’ activity in today’s conditions of social and economical changings is characterized as highly dynamic. This primarily concerns those who has permanently high psychic exertion. Pedagogical activity is certainly in the list because people are the object of the job.

Society requires much from the teachers: their professionalism and psychological restraint must be high, they must make decisions quickly, be empathic, etc. Such requirements make teachers’ labour tense and exhausting. As a result, prolonged pedagogical performance leads to weariness, psychological burnout, decreased working capacity.

Negative change of personality, occurring under the influence of labour activity were named professional deformation. It means modifications of individual and psychological traits of a person (reception stereotypes, value orientations, ways of communication and behavior, response features and protective mechanics). These modifications are usually evoked by specific factors of professional activity. [1].

Nowadays the question of mutual influence of professional activities and tertiary school teachers’ personality traits is of great actuality. The shift of study paradigm has become a certain challenge for educators for two last years. Forms of distant and mixed communication between agents of pedagogical process suggest
expanding of the range of techniques and methods of study. Therefore the question of the impact of professional activities on a teacher’s personality more and more often becomes the subject of careful study within Psychology.

**The analysis of recent studies.** Domestic scholars dedicated a number of studies to the problems of professional deformations. Thus, the roots of professional deformations are covered in the paper, written by I. Astremska. L. Diachenko’s and M. Mishchenko’s researches reveal psychological peculiarities of a teacher’s personality. Pedagogical activity’s properties are represented in O. Hrynko’s, O. Hryshko’s, M. Rozenova’s works. O. Shkliaruk and N. Myronchuk focus their attention on the motives for choosing pedagogical activities. Psychologists O. Polishchuk, T. Koltunovuch, and S. Lichman explore professional deformations of kindergarten teachers. O. Kosyhina’s and O. Dubchak’s articles are dedicated to the specifics of tertiary school teachers’ professional deformations.

Thus, the article proposed is in the context of the researches of domestic authors. It complements the aspects of the peculiarities of tertiary school teachers’ professional deformations in contemporary social and economical circumstances.

**The objective of the article** is to characterize the content and the determinants of tertiary school teachers’ professional deformations in contemporary circumstances of educational process.

**The basic material.** This is evidenced by a good many of domestic scholars’ publications (1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11).

There is no unified interpretation of the phenomenon of professional deformation nowadays. The reason for this are scholars’ different approaches to the explanation of the concept: violation, curvature of certain personality characteristics, long-term professional activity, the result of weariness or stress.

It should be proper to clarify the meaning of the concept of “deformation” for further definition of the concept of “professional deformation”. It was used for the first time in the field of natural sciences as a change of form or size of an object under the influence of applied forces or heating. Human sciences interpret the concept figuratively as a “changing of size or form under the influence of outer forces; this also regards regressive social changes” [2, с. 218].

The concept of “professional deformation” is relatively young. It came into use not so long ago (only in the early 20th century). The problems of professional deformation became a direct subject of research in the second half of the 20th century in the context of exploration of human’s functional capacity.

It was H. Landerock who applied the word combination “professional deformation” for the first time in his work “A Study in Professional deformation” (1915) that was published in American Journal of Sociology. The author argues that long-term performance of certain professional functions deforms mental processes and healthy assessment of the importance of a person’s activities he/she performs in general work of the group he/she belongs to.
P. Sorokin (1921) introduced the term “professional deformation” into scientific use and noted that professional activity adversely affects a person. He understood a great deforming role of professional activity, therefore he organized the first sociological program on professional deformations research. Careful development of the program and of professional groups research methods stimulated sociological discourse on the questions of personality professional deformation and finding ways to overcome it.

Philosophic and psychological scientific doctrine of the Soviet era positioned labour as an attractive factor that influences a personality only in a positive way. In the late 20th century psychologists-explorers began to prove that toil doesn’t always help harmonic development of human’s psyche. Not infrequent are cases when labour doesn’t enrich a personality but deforms it.

There are different interpretations of the term “professional deformation”, presented by scholars. So, V. Kyrylyshyn suggests to consider professional deformation on three levels:
- the cognitive one as a changing of human's conception of the world around, of other people, the ability to evaluate them as to the features, connected to their professional activities;
- the emotional one as a changing of emotional reactions to standard professional situations (the professional burnout symptom);
- the behavioral one as a changing of forms and ways of interaction with the environment, transference of the ways of professional communication to the situations which is not connected with professional ones [3].

The scholar S. Berezka discerns such types of personality deviations as:
- the reversible one that disappears in the course of time or might be corrected;
- the irreversible one, that is, changings which doesn’t disappear after the personality deformation;
- the natural one as a changing of personality’s features which are connected to the living process (natural aging);
- the artificial one as changings that are caused by the impact of outer factors;
- the partial one – a change of one or more structural elements of personality;
- the general one – a change of all structural elements of personality [4].

I. Khorzhevska proposes a similar classification of professional deformations. She identifies the following types: episodic or constant, superficial or global, positive or negative [5].

Domestic psychologist M. Velykodna discerns three semantic meanings of the phenomenon, according to the explorations on the peculiarities of professional deformation:
- professional deformation as an alienation of the selfhood in favour of profession;
- professional deformation as a distortion of the professional role as a result of disadaptation to the performance of professional activity;
- professional deformation as any (including positive) personality changings, linked to mastering and performing of the speciality [6].

S. Kovalchyshyna claims the main reason of emergence of professional deformation as a fulfilment of professional activity in the same way during a long period of time. It hinders the development of personality and professional activity [7].

Analyzing of domestic scientists’ conceptions makes it possible to conclude that they consider professional deformation in the context of:
- a personality’s inflexible professional adaptation to the requirements of professional environment by the only one way; it doesn’t help development of an agent of activity and activity itself [7];
- as a result of disappointment in the profession, career crisis, lost of authority [6] – all this finds its way in simplified views, stereotypes, templateness, transference of professional habits into the out-of-profession sphere [1; 6];
- as cognitive distortions, personality disorientation that emerges as a result of the pressure by inner and outer factors of professional activity and causes formation of specific professional type of personality [1; 8].

As we see, the phenomenon of professional deformation reflects fundamental psychological principle: indissoluble unity of consciousness, personality, and activities. The definitions given have one thing in common: it is a process of change of a personality traits as a result of professional activity.

Since professional activity is one of the basic causes of professional deformation’s emergence, we consider it appropriate to pay attention to the question of influence of tertiary teachers’ professional activities on a personality.

In the Education Act pedagogical activity is defined as an intellectual, creative activity of a pedagogical (scientific and pedagogical) worker or a self-employed person in the formal and/or informal education, which is directed to education, bringing up and development of a personality, of his/her cultural, civil and/or professional competencies [9].

According to specialists’ general definition, pedagogical activities is one of the types of professional activity, characterized as “person – person”, which deforms human personality most. A number of social and economical problems (low wages, incompatible with a teacher’s emotional and physical costs at work, insufficient level of technical supply, the decline in the reputation of the teaching profession) make teacher’s labour emotionally tense.

As tertiary school teachers’ length of employment increases, their state of inner tension, evoked by great responsibility towards the students and society, grows stronger accordingly. This worsens a teacher’s physical and psychic health condition.

Pedagogical profession is a stressor. The emotional strain of a teacher is a great deal higher, than that of other specialists, working with people. Therefore it requires constant refilling of physical and emotional reserves from the agent of activities.

The specifics of teaching activities in the tertiary school suggests multiple job duties, constant communication during the working day, responsibility for the result
of communication, often missing positive outcome as an indicator of students’ knowledge quality, insufficient social acknowledge and state support.

High emotional tension, caused by permanent multiple stress- and risk-factors, effects a teacher’s feeling, working capacity, professional health, quality of work, etc.

General and specific risk-factors are characteristic of teachers as representatives of intellectual sphere of activities. The general factors involve a neuro-emotional strain, information overload, hypokinesia (inactive way of work); the specific ones include voice load, static labour predominance, preparing educational materials, misbalanced work and recreation, prolongation of professional activities at home.

Among destructive conditions, linked to tertiary school teachers’ activities, specialists distinguish depression, anxiety, frustration, emotional devastation, exhaustion, emotional burnout, professional diseases, etc.

The results of the scientific research [10] indicated that adequate attitude to their own health is characteristic of the teachers with 8-15 years length of service, partially adequate – of those with 7 to over than 25 years, and inadequate – of the teachers, who have worked 16-24 years. Such attitude leads to negative consequences for their psychological health and therefore – to professional deformations.

Thus, the specifics of pedagogical activity, namely, psycho-emotional load, great amount of job responsibilities, communication with the participants of educational process, static way of labour, misbalanced work and leisure are the main risk-factors for teachers’ health and thus – for development of personality professional deformations.

Referring to the domestic scholar’s works [1; 6; 11; 12], concerning problems of forming and developing of professional deformations, it would be appropriate to analyze the main factors of professional destructions tertiary school teachers suffer from, and divide them into groups.

Factors, conditioned by the specifics of pedagogical activity build the first group:
- regulatory character of educators’ activity, suggesting prompt fulfilment of stated norms and regulations (safety rules, job duties’ implementation, careful fulfilment of curriculums, programmes, of classes’ time-table, etc.)
- abuse of authority manifests itself in disrespect for the students, putting yourself above others, usage of mentoring tone, dictatorial sentences, and so on.
- mental and physical overload become the results of long-term pedagogical activity performance, of bureaucratic helplessness. That leads to professional exhaustion, to the syndrome of emotional burnout. The longer an educator’s period of employment is, the more of professional weariness, emotional exhaustion is accumulated. A teacher needs a break, a pause in his activities to make objective analysis of his work – the analysis he mostly cannot afford [1].

Teachers’ mental and physical load has grown greatly during last two years and it is increasing. Distant education form in the circumstances of quarantine, caused by
COVID-19, turned out to be in a great measure more complex and exhausting, than traditional one. It requires more of psychic and physical resources. Conducting a lesson needs preparing not only lecture material, but audio- and visual content. Augmentation of voice load because of direct vivid contact’s absence between agents of educational process enforces a teacher’s psychic and physical load. Severe stress, provoked by Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, has exacerbated educators’ psycho-emotional state, and it had its negative consequences for their health. Thus, according to the Ministry of Health of Ukraine’s data, the population of our country has aged 10 years for the first half of 2022. In the situation like that it is important for teachers to accumulate their inner psycho-emotional resources, dosing them as drops;

- *increased responsibility for pedagogical activities performance and its outcome.* A teacher is responsible for psychic state of his students. Compared to young specialists, teachers with longer period of employment gradually feel more and more responsibility for the performance of their professional activities, and that leads to professional deformation of an educator;

- *factors defined by the object of professional activity.* Students are in different psychic state, their ability levels are different, too. A teacher has to use individual approach to everyone, taking maximum of efforts for collaboration with them in the educational process [8].

The factors of character traits constitute the second group:

- *professionally significant properties of the teacher’s personality* in certain cases become factors of professional deformation (determination, restrain, perseverance, pedagogical and organizational capacities, etc.);

- *overly inflated personality expectations.* The teacher constantly expects more from himself, works at full strength, but feel dissatisfied by the outcome. As a result, he/she hardly has a rest, doesn’t feel that the work is well done;

- *the level of professional training.* The insufficient level of professional training of the teacher may become the cause of usage of activity methods that are incorrect and unnecessary for a student;

- *pedagogical experience.* On the one hand, the teacher becomes more skilled professionally when gaining more experience, on the other – self-control function and augmentation of emotional strain grow likewise and lead to stress resistance reduce;

- *information passivity,* manifesting itself in unwillingness to improve skills and methods which were got earlier but became obsolete in the course of time. Such trait is characteristic of the teachers whose length of service is bigger [11];

- *the existence of socio-pedagogical disadaptation of the teacher’s personality:* he/she uses a certain methodic or programme of teaching and believes in its positive results, despite of the absence of such.

The third group consists of social factors:

- *inadequate style of management* that may reveal itself in non-rational controlling of professional activity process, excessive pretentiousness, authoritarianism;
- unfavorable psychological atmosphere of professional activity manifests itself in prevailing number of women in the pedagogical collective; that causes enhancing of emotional level and therefore – probability of conflicts in the women community [8, c. 128];

- the existence of conflict relations in the system “student – professor”, the root of which might be psychological incompatibility, different values, the objective of education. This factor depends in a great measure not on the teacher’s length of service, but on his/her personality qualities, ability to prevent a conflict, solve it;

- low social assessment of pedagogical activity, caused by decrease of respect to the teacher’s profession in a society. Teachers’ low wages, increase of their workload contributes to this, too. The teacher gets minimal result at great cost of his/her own energy and force. It leads to exhaustion, personal frustration, formal fulfilment of duties, manifestation of aggression [8, c. 128].

All the factors mentioned appear in teachers’ emotional burnout, lost of professional identity, alienation, aggression, etc. Mostly it is characteristic of the teachers with a bigger period of service as a result of above mentioned emotional states, accumulated during professional activity.

Insufficient material and technical support hinders quality performance of professional duty, since it evokes the feeling of impotence, of impossibility of fulfilment of the duties properly.

So, the main factors of emergence and development of tertiary school teachers’ professional deformation are inner and outer ones, such as social factor; those, connected to the peculiarities of pedagogical activity, to personality traits of a teacher.

Conclusions. The analysis of scientific sources provides grounds for the study of the peculiarities of the phenomenon of professional deformation, its characteristics, development dynamics, types, etc.

The explorers define the phenomenon of teachers’ professional deformation as a complicated process of step-by-step development of a specialist within professional activity; it determined by general laws of forming and development of personality, by the specifics of the implementation of pedagogical activity, by individualization of the process of professional functions’ performance [12].

The causes of tertiary school teachers’ professional deformation are specifics, content, structure of professional activity, personality determinants, social factors, etc.

In the perspective the research work has to be directed to the elaboration and implementation into practice of technologies for softening and/or diminishing of the development of tertiary school teachers’ professional deformations.

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