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ROLE OF INVOLVEMENT WITH PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATION OF LIFE-SENSE ORIENTATIONS OF TODAY'S STUDENTS OF PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The article discusses students' personal growth and preparedness for their future professional occupation during their learning in a pedagogical university. The authors address the effects of involvement in professional occupation during their university study on the life-meaning areas. The following methods were used to conduct this study: questionnaire surveys; "Who am I?", a reflective self-assessment test developed by V.S. Mukhina; the life-sense orientation test developed by D.A. Leontiev; the Value Survey by Milton Rokeach; Occupational Motivation Methodology by C. Zamfir updated by A. Rean, and the statistical methods of empirical data processing: Pearson's χ^2 criterion and cluster analysis. The research covered the students of the pedagogical institute, with 100 students in the 1st through 4th year. The empirical research identified five subject clusters distinguished by their involvement in professional activities and life-sense orientations. The research allows us to view professional involvement during students' higher education periods as a factor of their professional motivation in the context of digital education.

Keywords: *life-sense orientations, profession, adolescence, transition of young people, pedagogical support, occupation, research.*

INTRODUCTION

Students' personal development and forming their commitment to future professional activities are key issues in the theory and practice of improving the performance of today's higher educational institutions. At the stage of initially learning the profession, young people search for their identity, form their life and world views and internalize individual skills and approaches in their behaviour and communication. While the old system of vocational training is disintegrating, many high school graduates chose their vocation by chance, and it is very important to trace changes in their life-sense orientation during their higher learning and identify the reciprocal influence of their vocational involvement and life-sense orientations on their identity and look for the opportunities to give them psychological and pedagogical support in their personal growth at college.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The transition of young people from high-school learning to vocational training is a new stage in their socialization. This is a critical point in the life of young people when they "change their scope of activity and face important personal transformations" (Ananiev, 2008, p. 283). According to A. N. Leontiev (Leontiev, 2005), the area of meaning becomes the "kernel" of a student's personal identity and a structural element of their learning and vocational training and determines simultaneous learning of social, psychological, and professional vectors. To study the effects of involvement in professional activities, it is important to consider the conclusion of D.N. Uznadze (Uznadze, 2001, p. 637) that human behaviour can be modelled down to two categories: 1) "exterogenous", where an individual is driven from the outside and 2) "introgenious", which is determined by the inside impulse. Students' involvement in their professional occupation (an external impulse) facilitates the formation of a positive attitude to their vocation, acceptance of its norms and values, development of important personal qualities that have social and professional values, and satisfaction with their vocational learning. In this research, a student's involvement in professional occupation is a factor that influences their identity in general and life-sense orientations in particular. V.S. Mukhina (Mukhina, 2019, p. 162) describes adolescence and states that an individual faces the challenge of finding life values in this period. Individuals seek to formulate their inside position towards themselves and others and their moral values. Thus, a young person perceives, interprets, and adopts social values. K.A. Zhatkina highlights the

importance of the social environment: "it is education that has a critical influence on the formation and development of the individual life-sense concept because, on the one hand, educational institutions (schools, colleges, and higher institutions) are the main establishments for socialisation and contacts with teachers and peers give a certain meaning to the life of students; on the other hand, knowledge facilitates their individual growth and development and their subjective worldview." (Zhatkina, 2011, p. 3) According to V.S. Mukhina (Mukhina, 2019, p. 162), self-reflection has a special meaning for personal development in adolescence. Self-reflection helps young people to understand themselves and seek to identify their own "I" and find an answer to the question "Who am I?" Self-reflection is a critical value in professional growth. In adolescence, young people develop their reflexive abilities in a self-absorbed manner.

According to modern studies, today's student motivation for learning depends on different types and forms of education (full-time or remote) (Silke Vanslambroucka, Chang Zhua, Koen Lombaertsa Brent Philipsena, Jo Tondeurb, 2018, p. 34). While the importance of mixed and online learning (Charles Graham, Wendy Woodfield, Buckley Harrison, 2013, p. 4-14) and individual education (Silke Vanslambroucka, Chang Zhua, Koen Lombaertsa Brent Philipsena, Jo Tondeurb, 2018) grows, the authors highlight motivation as a crucial factor of the efficiency of the educational process (Silke Vanslambroucka, Chang Zhua, Koen Lombaertsa Brent Philipsena, Jo Tondeurb, 2018, p. 34). Self-perception results from an "individual choice" in a family and profession. According to A. A. Rean, "to find the purpose of life, an individual must meet the challenge of work and vocation. The involvement with a certain professional world is conjugated with professional development" (Rean, 2002, p. 414). The empirical research by V.V. Golysheva states that "there are no life-sense goals in meditation. Life-sense orientations are always linked to human activities" (Golysheva, 2012, p. 122). According to T.N. Sakharova (Sakharova, 2018, p. 35), the life-sense orientations of an individual change from teenage years to adolescence and are filled with a different meaning.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The meaning area of an individual as a dynamic model faces changes at every age influenced by different factors, including an individual's involvement in a professional occupation.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the features of the individual life-sense area in adolescence?

2. How does the individual life-sense area change during the period of higher education?
3. How do life-sense orientations change in adolescence depending on an individual's involvement with their professional occupation?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to identify the interconnection of involvement with professional occupation and life-sense orientations in adolescence.

RESEARCH METHODS

To achieve the above goal, we used the following methods: questionnaire surveys, "Who am I?", a reflective self-assessment test by V. S. Mukihna (Mukhina, 2008, p. 116); life-sense orientation test by D.A. Leontiev (Leontiev, 2006, p. 18); The Rokeach Value Survey (Raigorodsky, 2009, p. 637), Occupational Motivation Methodology by C. Zamfir updated by A. Rean (Rean, 2002, p. 415) and the statistical methods of empirical data processing: Pearson's χ^2 criterion and cluster analysis (Nasledov, 2008, p. 392).

The questionnaires included the following questions:

1. Gender;
2. Age;
3. Specialization/area of your learning (please specify your first degree if this is your second higher degree);
4. Are you employed full-time?
5. Do you work for an educational institution?
6. Do you plan to work for an educational institution after graduation?

RESULTS

The total results were subject to clustering analysis. The clustering analysis identified five clusters. We described every cluster based on respondents' life-sense orientations and professional motivation. We assigned reference names to every cluster. We referred to the first cluster as "Professionally Involved" (14 respondents); it included only young women in the third-year course who had full-time jobs in educational institutions and planned to continue their work there. By age, this cluster consists of young women from 20 to 21 years old. These respondents had meaningful goals for their future life and viewed life as interesting and full of emotions. They view themselves as having a strong and free identity and are sure they are in control of their lives. This cluster

prioritises such values as health, love, and self-confidence. Respondents included in this cluster showed strong external positive motives, which is evidence that their professional motivation is based on their pursuit to satisfy their other motives, which are external to the essence of their occupation.

This cluster is focused on social prestige and salary. Such socially important roles as social status and vocation rank high in their life-sense area. The second cluster referred to as "Undefined" (14 respondents), consists of 4 young women and 3 young men in the first year, 3 young women in the third year, and 4 young women in the fourth year who have no full-time jobs and do not work or have no plans to work for educational institutions after graduation. By Rokeach Value Survey, this cluster is dominated by such values as well-being and cheerfulness. However, they are not focused on growth, interesting job, performance, and tolerance. This cluster is focused on social prestige and salary. The third cluster, which we referred to as "Hesitant" (24 respondents), consists of those who have a job in educational institutions but do not consider it their full-time occupation and have no plans to continue working in educational institutions after graduation. The cluster includes 6 young women and 4 young men in the first year and 8 young women and 6 young men in the third year. Their priority values include health, love, well-being, interesting job and self-development. This cluster shows high internal motivation for their professional occupation. This shows that their occupation is important for them as it is. They are focused on positioning themselves through socially important roles. The fourth cluster, referred to as "Committed" (9 respondents), includes young men, four in the first year, two in the second year, and three in the fourth year of their program. They are employed full-time but not by educational institutions and have no plans to work there. This cluster has well-thought and clear goals. However, some respondents view their lives as uninteresting and having no meaning. Judging by their responses, respondents feel responsible for their life and view themselves as having strong personalities; however, some are not confident in themselves and their ability to control their lives. Their dominant values include well-being, good education, and self-control. At the same time, they do not value active life, interesting job, or growth. They are focused on positioning themselves through socially important roles and valuable personal qualities. The fifth cluster, referred to as "On the Fence" (29 respondents), includes young women in the first year (15), third year (8), and fourth year (6). By age, this cluster consists of young women from 17 to 21 years old.

This cluster has no full-time job and does not or has no plans to work in educational institutions. The Rokeach Value Survey showed that they rank high such

values as high-performance life and social vocation. They also value well-being. Such clusters showed the influence of involvement in professional occupation on life-sense orientations and professional motivation.

CONCLUSION

This study allowed us to make the following conclusions. Young women who major in educational psychology make a more meaningful choice than young men who learn the same profession. Unfortunately, few young men link their further professional expectations with the profession of an educational psychologist. With professional experience gained in the learning process, most young women plan to continue pursuing their professional careers after graduation. We also found that all respondents are highly motivated to pursue their profession, which is directly related to a high level of understanding of life's purpose. Thus, our initial assumption that the life-sense orientations of students at teachers' training institutes change in the learning process (from their first to the fourth year) is confirmed. Our assumption that the students' life-sense orientations are influenced by their involvement with professional occupations is also confirmed. These data may be used to develop curricula in the main educational programs. In particular, if students are involved in different types of practical training, it can facilitate their professional growth and competence and increase their understanding and meaningfulness.

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