

XV International Conference "Linguistic and Cultural Studies: Traditions and Innovations", LKTI
2015, 9-11 November 2015, Tomsk, Russia

Professionalism as a Generalized Typical Model of a Professional in the Higher Education System

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Abstract

The purpose of the article is to consider the impact of professionalism and professional activities on creating a generalized model of the professional. The thesis stating that professionalism is a generalized typical model (image) of the professional, prevailing in mentality of a particular society and including normative and actual models, was substantiated. Generalized typical model of the professional in the higher education system was considered in terms of normative and actual professionalism. Normative model serves a benchmark in organizing professional activities and includes the requirements of the profession, education and human being.

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Peer-review under responsibility of the Scientific Committee of LKTI 2015.

Keywords: Professional; profession; professional activity; professional sphere; typical model of the professional; competency; scholarship.

1. Introduction

The relevance of scientific interest in the problem of professionalism in the higher education system is due to professional-educational and cognitive needs of society. Significantly increased dynamism of social life in modern society, accompanied by constant changes in all spheres, radically changes professional-educational and cognitive needs of society, and as a consequence – the concept of professionalism. Until recently, professionalism has been a key characteristic of the subject of professional activity, indicating knowledge, skills and experience necessary for its effective implementation. Today, professionalism is considered within the competency content, and the principle

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implementing an intention to the individual subjectification is a competency-based approach, regarding human integration in the main life spheres that are important at a certain stage of its development.

The mission of education is not awareness of oneself as a mechanism that reproduces existing cultural patterns, but qualification of educational environment as a factor, surpassing and stipulating their formation and development. What are the applicability limits of the concept of 'professionalism' in these changeable circumstances?

2. Existential characteristics of professionalism

Ontological roots of education and, accordingly, professionalism is human development, because education as noted by Scheler (1994), is, first of all, some – in each case original – mode, image and rhythm, within and according to which, take place all the free spiritual activities of a human that manage and direct all the psycho-physical manifestations of life, all human behavior.

The subject of professional activity is a historically developed carrier of specialized social activities, turning the ideal images of social order into the substantive reality that have use and exchange value, professionalism as a set of typical characteristics of the subject of professional activities required for the successful performance of these activities. The peculiarity of social order towards professional education is associated with a focus on current and future needs of the state and social groups, needs of professional sphere and social demands to personal qualities that provides human with successful social and professional adaptation at a certain stage of the society development.

Normative requirements for the professional as a subject of professional activity, set by the public and the profession, are the normative professionalism and an actual set of characteristics, inherent in a particular subject of professional activity, is actual professionalism. Throughout the historical development of society, the transformation of value dominants and hierarchy of values in culture is mediated through the subject (changing the mechanism of goal setting) and has an impact on the functioning of the whole system of social activities, including professional.

British historian Perkin (1996) identified a specific type of revolution, called professional, that has a global impact comparable to the Neolithic and Industrial revolutions, which causes profound structural change in thinking, ways of professional activities, and forms of its social organization. This phenomenon can be traced by the example of evolution of professionalism and professional activities. The evolutionary aspect of the analysis of professionalism transformation allows us to trace the modification of the system of professional activity, the characteristics of its product and the subject (professionalism), according to the dominant value foundations in different societies.

Take the normative minimum of professionalism that is required for its existence. In the pre-industrial society, those were related to the ability to follow traditional models of professional activity and behavior; in the industrial society – the ability to produce maximum standard products at minimum cost, together with the ability to comply with standard rules of employment; in the developing post-industrial society – the ability to innovate (ability to create, perception of innovation, participation in new developments). Objectives of professional activities are also different. In the pre-industrial society, the objective was to manufacture the product in accordance with traditional patterns that best meets the individual needs of the consumer; the objective in the industrial society was associated with replication of standard samples in accordance with the mass market demand; in the post-industrial society, the objective is mainly focused on creating innovative products with maximum consideration of individual customer requests. The main distinguishing feature of the professional activity in the pre-industrial society was imitation and preservation of traditional patterns; in the industrial society – tough standards determination; in the post-industrial – on the one hand, it is creativity and motivation to meet individual needs of self-realization, on the other hand – integration and interpenetration of production and consumption, labor and leisure. The basic characteristics of the product of professional activity differ as well. In the pre-industrial society – consistence with traditional patterns, uniqueness, personification, meeting individual needs of the consumer; in the industrial society – compliance with standards, impersonality, compliance with market standards, reproducibility, mass scale; in the post-industrial society – novelty, non-reproducibility, compliance with universally valid values, personification, matching specific customer requests.

According to Perkin (1996), the third phase of professional revolution corresponds to the current stage of development, forming a new type of the professional – transprofessional, that is characterized by the willingness, due to its thinking and ways of organizing its activities, to work in various professional environments, take into

account the diverse and conflicting interests of individuals and social groups. The reason for transprofessional lifestyle and work, states Perkin, is the concentration on one point of a multidisciplinary complex. Virtualization of professionalism takes place at this stage, when great importance is attached not only to the actual professionalism as a set of inherent characteristics of the subject of professional activity, but also to the image of the professional created by the individual. The key process for the third professional revolution – process of customization, which is characterized by the fact that the expected result is designed together with the customer, taking into account its boundary conditions (Malinowski, 2007).

The interrelation of essential characteristics of the professional activities and social transformation can be observed based on the historical perspective of the professionalism content transformation. Professionalism is changing in the process of social change and depends on the dominant value foundations in the social system of values and targets. In the pre-industrial society such grounds were traditions, in the industrial society – standards, in the post-industrial – innovation and generally valid values, which are understood as the minimum general range of values required for the forced interaction of subjects with different and even contradictory values, accepted by them voluntarily and potentially applying to any social group.

3. Professional type of scholarship

When defining the essence of professionalism as a phenomenon, it becomes interesting the etymology of the term 'profession'. It's derived from the Latin 'profiteer', where 'pro' – a prefix denoting 'onward movement', 'fiteor' – a verb denoting 'to detect, to display'. Traditionally the meaning of this verb was associated with the phrase 'fassum sum' – 'to be dedicated, to be predetermined by destiny'. The combination of these two words united in the word 'pro fassum sum' denoting 'to avow, to claim, to introduce oneself, to talk about one's destiny'. Originated afterwards the term 'profession' retained this meaning. As used today, the concepts of 'competence' and 'competency' reflect the trend to active promotion (the verb 'competo' denotes 'to strive together to achieve anything', 'to comply and be able to achieve anything').

Several authors (Dmitrienko, 1989; Zhukova, 2001; Korableva, 2000; Lyurya, 2004; Petrova, 2001, and others) define professionalism as a set of typical characteristics of the subject of professional activities, required for the successful performance of these activities. Therefore, the parameters of professionalism are the level and qualification of mastering operational actions in order to perform particular substantive work. According to Raven (2002), formation of professionalism is not only and not so much the creation of favorable internal and external conditions of activity as a professional upbringing of a person. Knowledge and skills, that make up the routine and performing part of professional activities, are successfully formed and updated as a result of personal acceptance and awareness of great public importance of correspondent objectives, which determine the formation of high responsibility, initiative, willingness to be creative (Raven, 2002).

Moreover, professionalism is a generalized typical model (image) of the professional, prevailing in mentality of a particular society and capturing, along with the universal concepts of a particular profession, peculiarities of its functioning due to sociocultural factors. Typical model – rather stable normative scheme, which stands a landmark in organizing professional activities, recruitment, professional education and reflects the requirements of the profession to the person. Concepts and constructs of activities, the subject is engaged in, become the image language. Normative requirements for the professional as a subject of professional activity, set by the public and the profession, lie at the heart of the normative model of professionalism, but the actual qualities of the particular subject of professional activity – actual professionalism. Normative professionalism can be considered as an image of the professional, existing in professional culture and an image of the professional, reproduced by the professional education. These images rarely coincide completely and at certain stages of society development can contradict each other, since normative model of professionalism is focused on the identification of consistent mastery of technology in order to turn knowledge into the tool of solving content, technological, personal and professional problems.

In the process of professionalization, takes place the identification and formation of abilities and personal qualities of the subject of professional activity that can and should be used by it for successful career – personal potentials, which include the following ones. The extent of knowledge of the theoretical and applied origin, used by the professional in its professional activities, and its quality determine the level of expression of the *epistemological*

potential. Productive potential is characterized by acquired specialized skills, required for successful creative activity. *Communicative potential* is a set of professional skills to organize effective communication in the professional environment, taking into account the requirements to the norms, values, and behavior undertaken in the first place, in order to create a joint product. *Axiological potential* is determined by the set of value orientations of the professional and reflects a combination of knowledge, experience and relationships, which are inherent to the professional in relation to itself, its activities, people and the world in general.

The process of personal and professional formation is captured in the professional worldview and at the individual level is determined by the degree of identification of the person with the profession that allows emphasizing the personal professionalism and activity professionalism. In this respect, professionalism is characterized by permanently reproducible discrepancy between the worldview of the professional, expanding and deepening in its professional activities, and axiological content of professional activity.

4. Conclusion

To summarize, professionalism is a dynamic characteristic, which reflects the degree of approximation of actual professionalism to normative one, changing its content under the influence of society and culture. Evolution of the professionalism model in the course of historical development occurs based on the removal of contradictions between the requirements for the content of professional activity and the personal design in professional development.

Acknowledgements

The authors acknowledge the financial support from the Russian Humanities Research Foundation Project 'Availability of tertiary education and its quality improvement under innovative reconstruction in Russia' (project № 14-32-01043a1).

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