

OVER-PROFESSIONAL SKILLS «SOFT SKILLS» IN THE PROCESS OF PERSONAL SELF-IMPROVEMENT OF FUTURE TEACHERS OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Introduction The development of a teacher's personality today is becoming an important component of a holistic educational process, and its result should be a person who is a model for moral behavior and spiritual development, who is focused on the values of world and national culture, capable of creative self-realization and self-improvement in the professional and pedagogical sphere and in the world, cultural values. Therefore, we can conclude that the search for a solution to the entire complex of civilizational problems lies on the path of the spiritual revival of man and society, namely through the process of personal self-improvement.

Personal self-improvement is a complex integral process, the mechanisms of which are studied in philosophy, psychology, pedagogy. Differentiation of the subject of study between the sciences is often quite difficult to make, since personal self-development and the higher of its forms – self-improvement – the problems have not been sufficiently studied [1].

Analysis of recent studies and publications in which the solution to this problem was started

The basis for defining the leading ideas of personal self-improvement was the ideas of pedagogical acmeology, which examines ways for a person to reveal his potential and achieve, on this basis, the most optimal results of progressive positive improvement of the personality, subject, individual and individuality of specially

created educational conditions (K. Abulkhanova-Slavskaya, B. Ananiev, A. Bodalev, V. Vakulenko, Y. Gagin, N. Guziy, G. Danilova, A. Derkach, N. Kuzmina, V. Palchevsky, V. Maksimova, L. Rybalko, A. Stepanova).

Analysis of the problem of personal self-improvement in the context of training future teachers is fundamentally important for the scientific substantiation of ways and means of effectively ensuring the quality of this process. Indeed, in the conditions of the formation of the Ukrainian statehood, the question of an intensive search for ways of a person's exit from the spiritual crisis and awareness of the goals of upbringing and educational tasks becomes especially urgent.

We assume that the «soft qualities» of a person play a leading role in the process of personal self-improvement.

The purpose of the article is to reveal their meaning of «soft skills» in the process of self-improvement of future teachers of higher education.

Statement of the main material with a complete justification of the scientific results

Today in science there is no unambiguous interpretation of concepts denoting non-objective, over-professional competencies of a specialist, in particular: «soft skills», «key competencies (skills)», «universal competences (skills)», «skills of the XXI century», «metasubject skills (skills)», soft skills. For example, in the Oxford Dictionary, «soft skills» or soft skills are defined as the personal qualities of a person that make it possible to interact more effectively and harmoniously with other people [2].

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Scientists A. Ivonina, O. Chulanov give an integrated definition of soft skills. In their opinion, soft skills are «a social and labor characteristic of a set of knowledge, skills, skills and motivational characteristics of an employee in the field of interaction

between people, the ability to competently manage his time, the ability to persuade, negotiate, leadership, emotional intelligence, possessing emergence, necessary for successful performance of work and meeting the requirements of the position and the strategic goals of the organization, this is a characteristic of the potential quality that allows you to describe almost all elements of staff readiness for effective work in a given situation at the workplace in the work collective» [4, p. 4].

The developers of the international project «Key competencies and new literacy» suggest using the term «universal competencies», understanding competence as «the ability to effectively mobilize (select and use the most appropriate) knowledge and skills to solve problems, including in new non-standard situations». At the same time, it is emphasized that the universality of these competencies reflects both their massive (necessary for all) nature, and their unlimitedness in any specific field of activity [5].

In this study, we use the formulation «over-professional skills» or soft skills, in contrast to hard skills, which we understand as professionally conditioned skills (competencies).

In 2016, at the World Economic Forum in Davos (Switzerland), the main soft skills (or soft skills) necessary for a person in the 21st century for a successful professional activity and everyday life were formulated. They represent a set of skills or competencies that could be called metasubject or common for various types of activity, and include some characteristic features of cognitive and intellectual activity in general, emotional intelligence, management of one's own activity and constructive interaction with other people [5].

We believe that the development of soft skills in people engaged in pedagogical activity deserves special attention, since they are called upon to form «flexible skills» in the younger generation.

T. Yarkov and I. Cherkasova rightly note that since the teaching profession is public, the skills of self-presentation are especially important; the ability to build relationships with all participants in the educational process; ability and willingness to solve creative problems; show leadership qualities [6, p. 223].

These skills and abilities become especially relevant in the era of digitalization, characterized by the processes of transformation of both society in general and education in particular, which entails the transformation of the concept of the teaching profession [7].

Let us define the content of the main soft skills in relation to pedagogical activities for personal self-improvement of a teacher of a higher educational institution.

- *Comprehensive multi-level solution of pedagogical problems.* This competence provides for an independent definition of the problem and the entire complex of causes and sources of it; identifying and eliminating the cause of the situation, and not its consequences; systemic interdisciplinary approach to problem solving. The teacher must be able to determine the range of tasks within the framework of the goal and choose the best ways to solve them, based on the current legal norms, available resources and restrictions.

- *Critical thinking as a professionally oriented type of thinking contributing to the productivity of teaching.* Competence presupposes doubts about the reliability of all incoming information, already existing rules and even their own ideas about the world; choosing facts, not information, as the basis for decisions and actions. According to the Educational Standard of Higher Education, the teacher should be able to search, critically analyze and synthesize information, apply a systematic approach to solving the tasks.

- *Creativity as an ability for creative search, non-standard solution of pedagogical problems, characterized by the criteria:* speed (productivity) and flexibility of thought, originality, curiosity, accuracy and courage. It means the skill in creating a situation of doubt about the reliability of all incoming information, already existing rules and even your own ideas about the world; choosing facts as a basis for decisions and actions, and not just information received.

- *Managing people (learners).* This competence presupposes the skill of creating conditions for the disclosure of creative potential and maximum achievements in the

people around them; a combination of having a «vision» for solving the situation and organizing people to implement this «vision».

- *Collaboration with others (colleagues, management, parents, learners, external partners)*. This competence involves the ability to build interaction with participants in the educational process at various levels from the exchange of information to the exchange of meanings; creation of a common field of activity for solving educational problems.

- *Emotional intelligence*. This implies the skills to: recognize emotions and understand the intentions of others; managing your own emotions and states; influence on the emotions and emotional state of others.

- *Judgment and decision making*. Competence involves the skills of forming one's own opinion and the courage to make independent decisions and their consequences.

- *Customer focus*. This competence means the skill of interacting with others and solving people's problems based on an understanding of their values and needs.

- *Ability to negotiate*. This is the skill of communication from the perspective of the negotiation process aimed at long-term cooperation; convincing communication of their position through verbal and non-verbal techniques, taking into account the specifics and interests of the second party to the negotiations.

- *Cognitive flexibility*. It involves quickly switching from one thought to another, as well as thinking over several ideas and tasks at the same time.

- *Self-management*. Competence involves a multilevel process of self-organization and self-realization of the teacher's personality

As part of the study, the authors of the article in 2020 conducted a questionnaire survey of teachers of higher pedagogical institutions regarding their assessment of the importance of soft skills in teaching.

The most developed from the point of view of all respondents are the following competencies: the ability to conduct a dialogue and management of students. The teachers also identified the competencies «cooperation with others» and «the ability to manage oneself, one's professional and personal development». At the same time,

the teachers singled out as the most developed in their competence «managing their own emotional state, influencing the emotions of students». At the same time, university professors considered the competencies «focus on the development of students» and «judgment and decision-making in pedagogical activity» to be more highly formed in themselves and in their colleagues.

Conclusions and prospects for further research

Today, in the context of the moral disintegration of society, the decline in the value of mental work, science, creativity, education leads to inhibition of the development of the personality of a specialist who is free from stereotypes in thinking, one who has knowledge of the world and the features of interaction with it. Raising spirituality in the system of social values and needs is one of the main features of our time. The modern world requires us not to be limited only to the improvement of moral, aesthetic or any other type of education. We must look for integral ways in the implementation of the formation and education of people.

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