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## **THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST IN PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY**

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### **Abstract**

Professional activity of an educational psychologist includes psychological education, psychological prevention, psychological diagnostics, psychological correction, and psychological counseling as the main types of work. Each of these types might be primary depending on the problem the educational psychologist is addressing and the institution they work in. Professional calling is a complex phenomenon characterized by a complex of personal qualities of a professional and their social and psychological readiness to implement the functions of an educational psychologist as a helping profession specialist. The authors argue that the professional activity of an educational psychologist viewed as a helping profession specialist presents one of the most multifaceted and labor-intensive types of professional activity characterized by a variety of problems and tasks to be solved. For the structure and specific features of professional development phenomenon to be studied to the full extent, they must be correlated with the various aspects of professionalism and professional activity, primarily with the professionally important qualities that present a certain foundation for any profession reflecting both the requirements for the profession and the criteria for the success of professional development. The process of professional training of an educational psychologist should incorporate the innovative educational technologies that, according to the authors, promote professional training improvement.

### **Keywords**

Educational psychologist – Professional development – Professional activity – Professional training

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## Introduction

The need for effective training of future educational psychologists is dictated by the requirements of modern Russian society determined by the dynamic socio-economic processes leading to a rise of negative social phenomena: increased crime, unemployment, drug addiction, insufficient attention to the process of raising a healthy, highly moral, and stress-resistant citizen.

Based on the current situation, we argue that the aspects of educational psychologist professional training must be revised and expanded. In particular, we believe that in the modern social reality, an educational psychologist should be trained as a helping profession specialist whose purpose is to provide competent professional social and psychological help to both disabled and normally mentally developing children and adolescents in educational institutions.

Helping professions include the professions where theory, studies, and practice are aimed at helping others, locating and solving their problems, and expanding the knowledge on the further possibilities in that direction. This class of professions refers to medicine (in the broad sense), psychiatry, clinical psychology, and various specialized fields, such as educational and school psychology, social work, research on speech and hearing, etc<sup>1</sup>.

## Literature Review

In this section of the article, we will conduct a comparative analysis of the professional training of an educational psychologist as a helping profession specialist.

The analysis of psychological and pedagogical research on the matter demonstrates that an increasing number of works are being devoted to the study and development of traditional models of the professional activity of a psychologist<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> P. Gorev; N. Telegina; L. Karavanova y S. Feshina "Puzzles as a didactic tool for the development of mathematical abilities of junior schoolchildren in basic and additional mathematical education", *EURASIA: Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education* Vol: 14 num 10 (2018): 178-185.

<sup>2</sup> S. Wang; N. Gorbunova; A. Masalimova; J. Bírová y M. Sergeeva, "Formation of academic mobility of future foreign language teachers by means of media education technologies", *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education* Vol: 14 num 3 (2018): 959-976; S. Neverkovich; I. Bubnova; N. Kosarenko; R. Sakhieva; Zh. Sizova; V. Zakharova y M. Sergeeva, "Students' internet addiction: study and prevention", *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education* Vol: 14 num 4 (2018): 1483-1495; E. Dolzhich y S. Dmitrichenkova, *Computer science terminology (a case study of the Spanish language)*. INTED2018: Proceedings of the 12th International Technology, Education and Development Conference (pp. 2556-2559). Valencia, Spain, 2018; S. Blinova; T. Dugina y A. Zabolotskikh, *Teaching mixed nationality groups (on the example of students from the Northern Caucasus region)*. INTED2018: Proceedings of the 12th International Technology, Education and Development Conference (pp. 7977-7982). Valencia, Spain, 2018; S. Sharonova; N. Trubnikova y N. Sokolova, "Interpreting religious symbols as a basic component of social value formation", *European Journal of Science and Theology* Vol: 14 num 3 (2018): 117-129 y M. Sergeeva; A. Shumeyko; A. Serebrennikova; A. Denisov; N. Bondarenko y E. Getmanova, "Innovative pedagogical experience in practice of modern education modernization", *Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods* num 8 Vol: 11 (2018): 814-823.

According to N.I. Isaeva<sup>3</sup>, the professional activity of a psychologist presents a complex integrated, polysystemic, culture-like process that is value-semantic, creative, and self-organizing and has internal norms and principles. E.S. Romanova<sup>4</sup> identifies the psychological content and structure of the practicing psychologist's professional activity and develops and proposes a structural and functional model of said activity that includes: discovery of the practical problem and its formulation in scientific terminology; research methods selection, data collection and processing; questions of interpreting the results in terms of the selected theoretical model of personality; development of practical recommendations for problem resolution. G.S. Abramova<sup>5</sup> sees the model of professional development of a practicing psychologist in her own way. According to Abramova, personality presents the primary object of the psychologist's professional activity and the psychologist presents a personality themselves. M.R. Bityanova<sup>6</sup> develops and presents an original concept of the model of a school psychologist's professional activity whose purpose is to provide psychological support to school students – an activity directed at creating a system of socio-psychological conditions promoting successful learning and development of every child in a particular school environment.

According to a range of researchers<sup>7</sup>, the goal of a psychologist's professional activity is to introduce the achievements of modern psychological science into the practice of education and upbringing.

In his study, I.V. Vachkov<sup>8</sup> relies on the concept of “psychological help” implying the services a psychologist provides to those experiencing difficulties in socialization and adaptation.

An original model of the professional activity of a practicing psychologist usually involves examining the main types of this activity. The main types of activity of an educational psychologist suggested by various authors are presented in Table 1.

#### 4

<sup>3</sup> N. I. Isaeva, *Razvitie professionalnoi kultury psikhologa obrazovaniia*. Ph.D. thesis. Belgorod, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> E. S. Romanova, *Psikhologiiia professionalnogo stanovleniia lichnosti*. Ph.D. thesis. Moscow, 1992.

<sup>5</sup> G. S. Abramova, *Vvedenie v prakticheskuiu psikhologiu: ucheb. posobie*. Moscow: International Pedagogical Academy, 1994.

<sup>6</sup> M.R. Bitianova. *Organizatsiia psikhologicheskoi raboty v shkole* (Moscow: Sovershenstvo, 1997).

<sup>7</sup> J. Bírová; P. Kružlík; A. Kalimullin; N. Sokolova; Z. Haroun; R. Králik y D. Vasbiev, “Mathematical and Statistical Bibliometric Indicators for Scholars in the Field of Romance Languages and Linguistics”, *EURASIA: Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education* Vol: 14 num 12 (2018); E. V. Burina, “The concept of an artificial language environment for teaching a second foreign language (on the example of the French language)”, *Bulletin of the RUDN University. Series “Russian and foreign languages and methods of teaching”* num 3 (2015): 59-65; E. V. Burina, *The concept of an artificial language...*; V. Utemov; R. Khusainova; M. Sergeeva y V. Shestak, “Full Packaged Learning Solutions for Studying Mathematics at School”, *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, Vol: 14 num 12 (2018); Y. Volkova y N. Panchenko, “Discourse variation of the concepts of destructive emotions. *Vestnik Rossiiskogo Universiteta Druzhby Narodov*”, *Russian journal of linguistics* Vol: 22 num 1 (2018): 175-194 y M. Sergeeva; N. Bondarenko; T. Shebzuhova; A. Vartumyan; S. Lesnikova, “Scientific substantiation of the conception of continuous economic education development”, *Turkish online journal of design art and communication (TOJDAC)* num 8 (2018) 178–185.

<sup>8</sup> I. V. Vachkov, *Gruppye metody v rabote shkolnogo psikhologa*. Moscow: “Os-89” publishing house, 2002.

Many researchers<sup>9</sup> believe that an educational psychologist (or a practicing psychologist in the educational sphere) carries out their professional activities in the psychological service in education presenting its active participant. It is, therefore, considered impossible to examine the work of such a specialist out of the context of psychological service in education.

Authors	Main types of activity of an educational psychologist
E.S. Romanova	Psychological education, psychological prevention, psychological counseling, psychological correction, and psychological diagnostics.
G.S. Abramova	Psychodiagnosics, psychological correction, psychological counseling, and psychotherapy.
M.R. Bitianova	Applied school psychodiagnosics; correctional and developing work with school students; counseling and psychological education of school students, their parents, and teachers (psychological education and psychological counseling of school students, psychological and pedagogical counseling and psychological education of teachers, counseling, and education of parents); social dispatching activities.
A.I. Krasilo, A.P. Novgorodtseva	Organizational and psychological work, developmental and psychofacilitative work (development and self-education facilitation), psychological prevention, psychodiagnostic and psychocorrectional activity.
I.V. Vachkov	Psychological prevention, psychodiagnosics, psychological correction, psychological counseling, psychotherapy.

Table 1  
The main types of activity of an educational psychologist

In her definition of the psychologist's status in an educational institution I.V. Dubrovina<sup>10</sup> highlights that the psychologist presents "an equal member of the pedagogical staff and is responsible for the part of the educational process where they are the only one possessing the necessary competencies, namely, for mental (intellectual, emotional, motivational, communicative, etc.) development and psychological health of children and school students".

Covering the issue of the professional activity of a school psychologist, L.M. Fridman<sup>11</sup> proposes a conception of a school psychological service focused on the scientific psychological support of the pedagogical process at school, i.e. the organization, construction, and conduct of this process based on the modern psychological and pedagogical theories of education and student personality development.

<sup>9</sup> N. I. Isaeva, *Razvitie professionalnoi kultury psikhologa obrazovaniia*. Ph.D. thesis. Belgorod, 2002; M. R. Bitianova, *Organizatsiia psikhologicheskoi raboty v shkole* (Moscow: Sovershenstvo, 1997) y V. V. Rubtsov, "Sluzhba prakticheskoi psikhologii obrazovaniia: sovremennoe sostoianie i perspektivy razvitiia", *Voprosy psikhologii* num 6 (2003): 32-39.

<sup>10</sup> I. V. Dubrovina, *Teoreticheskie i prikladnye aspekty razvitiia shkolnoi psikhologicheskoi sluzhby*. Ph.D. thesis. Tbilisi, 1988.

<sup>11</sup> L. M. Fridman, "O kontseptsii shkolnoi psikhologicheskoi sluzhby", *Voprosy psikhologii* num 1 (2001): 97-106.

According to V.V. Rubtsov<sup>12</sup>, the system of psychological service in education in Russia that provides the “multilevel psychological help to each of the educational space subjects” includes two structural elements: the psychological, medical, and social centers for helping children and adolescents and the staff of psychologists working in the various types of educational institutions directly.

An active interest in the development and search for the models of psychological service in education able to meet the modern requirements of the Russian society and the needs of all the participants of the pedagogical process is observed in both theorists and practitioners.

## Methods

We identified the following types of the professional activity of an educational psychologist as a helping profession specialist: the psychodiagnostic activity, the correction and development activity, prevention, assessment, the prognostic activity, the educational activity, teaching, career guidance, the scientific and methodological activity, the social and pedagogical activity, the upbringing activity, and management.

**Psychodiagnostic activity.** The definition of interest to us is the one provided by K.S. Akhmetkarimova<sup>13</sup>. According to her, the diagnostic activity refers to the scientifically organized process of acquiring information on the state of the activity subject and the specific information processing procedure to establish and verify the diagnosis followed by the corrective actions to achieve the set goal.

Types of professional activity	Activity content
psychodiagnostic	Psychodiagnostics – a special psychological examination of a person or a group allowing to acquire psychological information to diagnose normally developing children and children with disabilities.
correction and development	Purposeful psychological and pedagogical intervention on a mentally healthy person to change (correct) or prevent the developmental deficiencies and deviations, as well as promote the general personality development in the educational process participants.
counseling	Counseling activity contributes to the development of the personality of the educational process participants, helps them solve personal, interpersonal, professional, and other problems, and discloses psychological resources that ensure independent problem resolution.
prevention	Is directed at the timely prevention of possible violations in the mental development of the educational process participants and creating favorable development conditions at every age.

<sup>12</sup> V. V. Rubtsov., “Sluzhba prakticheskoi psikhologii obrazovaniia: sovremennoe sostoianie i perspektivy razvitiia”, *Voprosy psikhologii* num 6 (2003): 32-39.

<sup>13</sup> K. S. Akhmetkarimova. *Razvitie diagnosticheskoi deiatelnosti budushchikh pedagogov*. Ph.D. thesis. Karaganda, 2004.

assessment	Aimed at the analysis of changes in the cognitive processes, mental state, and personal reactions of a child as a result of psychocorrectional interventions.
prognostic	Aimed at creating a prognosis of the psychophysiological, mental, social, and psychological functions of a child or an adolescent.
educational	The introduction of teachers, students, and their parents to psychological knowledge.
teaching	Specially organized activity to inform, bring awareness, and apply knowledge in practice. Teaching involves conducting classes, psychology electives, clubs, etc.
career guidance	The activity of helping adolescents and high school students in professional self-definition and choosing a profession.
scientific and methodological	An activity based on pedagogical and psychological science.
socio-pedagogical	An activity promoting the successful socialization of the educational process participants. The essence of socialization lies in the implementation of the processes of adaptation, integration, self-development, and self-realization of personality.
upbringing	Purposeful activities related to organizing the lives of students, their parents, and teachers that aims at creating the conditions for comprehensive personality development.
management	Purposeful activity related to the organization, coordination, and control of the activity of the educational process participants.

Table 2

The main types of professional activity of an educational psychologist as a helping profession specialist

Psychological diagnostics is a special psychological examination of a person or a group allowing the psychologist to acquire psychological information to make a psychological diagnosis. Following R.V. Ovcharova<sup>14</sup>, we understand the psychological diagnosis as “a conclusion on the condition and properties of the subject based on a comprehensive analysis of individual indicators and characteristics”.

Psychodiagnostics presents a way of addressing the following problems: examining the level of mental development and the separate aspects of personality in the educational process participants; studying the psychological properties, individual characteristics, and traits, i.e. studying the abilities, interests, and predispositions of students; studying the specific characteristics of behavior, communication with other members of the educational process, interpersonal relationships, and psychological climate in the study groups; determining the causes of violations in the development, upbringing, and training of students, etc.; developing recommendations.

In the process of psychodiagnostic assessment, an educational psychologist as a helping profession specialist is guided by the principles of confidentiality, the scientific validity of the applied psychodiagnostics methods, bringing no harm to the subjects,

<sup>14</sup> R. V. Ovcharova, *Prakticheskaia psikhologiiia obrazovaniia: uchebnoe posobie dlia stud. psikhol. fak. Universitetov* (Moscow: “Akademiya” publishing center, 2003).

openness of the survey results for the subjects, the psychologist's responsibility for the survey results, objectivity of conclusions, and the effectiveness of the proposed practical recommendations.

The conducted analysis of multiple scientific sources regarding psychodiagnostics allows us to conclude that to conduct a psychodiagnostic examination, an educational psychologist needs knowledge of the diagnostic methods and the ability to put them into practice.

## Results

Our substantial characteristic of the concept of “professional development of a specialist” is based on the interpretation provided by E.F. Zeer<sup>15</sup>: “We understand the professional development of personality as personality development in the educational and professional activity aimed at the formation of stable positive motives for professional activity, socially significant and professionally important personality traits, readiness for continuous professional growth, and search for the best techniques and methods for correct and high-quality implementation of professional activities in accordance with the individual psychological characteristics of a specialist's personality”.

Professional activity of an educational psychologist presents a consistent system of actions performed in accordance with the knowledge of psychological science and in compliance with the rules of professional ethics for providing psychological and pedagogical services at the request of a client: the socialization institutions (the government, education, social protection, law enforcement agencies, family), the community, a group of people, or a specific individual. An educational psychologist professionally provides the following types of psychological and pedagogical services: psychodiagnostics, personality development and correction, psychological education and counseling.

The problem resides in the minimization of the time required for a beginner educational psychologist to become a master in their craft demanded by many consumers of psychological and pedagogical services. This requires not only the improved effectiveness of university education but also the intensified inclusion of a beginner educational psychologist in professional activity and the creation of conditions for effective professional development.

The effectiveness and productivity in the implementation of professional competencies in the workplace must be analyzed and corrected both by the educational psychologist themselves and their colleagues to advance the professional mastery of a beginner specialist. This process should be clearly structured, substantively justified, and rational in the context of deploying various methods of training aimed at the professional development of future specialists. We are talking about the need to develop a process of professional development of an educational psychologist essential for achieving the level of professional mastery of a specialist demanded in the labor market. In our study, the professionalism of an educational psychologist refers to the complex structural and functional formation represented by the self-organization of its personality-based component (a key function in the development of professionalism) and activity-based component (an applied function in the practical resolution of professional tasks).

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<sup>15</sup> E. F. Zeer, *Psikhologiya professii: Uchebnoe posobie dlia studentov vuzov*. 2nd edition, revised and supplemented (Moscow: Akademicheskii proekt; Ekaterinburg: Delovaia kniga, 2003).

The development of professionalism of an educational psychologist is understood as the continuous process of self-organization of its personality- and activity-related components up to the highest level, which allows making the right decisions for the identification of forms of psychological work to achieve an individual level of mental development.

The ambiguity of the wording of the category “quality of the educational psychologist’s professionalism development” is determined by the ambiguity of the interpretation of the concept of “quality of professionalization of specialists in education”, the latter being understood as “a synthesizer of all the modern problems of education and simultaneously an indicator of the educational policy and educational reform quality”<sup>16</sup>. Due to the constant changes in the social and economic conditions that have a significant impact on the modern educational space the concept is being perpetually transformed by scientists and researchers.

Modern researchers<sup>17</sup> identify the following primary aspects of the educational psychologist’s professionalism manifestation in the system of higher education:

the multidimensionality of manifestations of the “effects” of professionalism as the final result – the integrity and psycho-preservation of the emotional development of students;

the multivariance of the educational subsystems where the formation of the educational psychologist’s professionalism takes place (faculties, institutes, universities of various specializations);

the ambiguity of personality- and activity-based components of professionalism;

the multisubjectivity in the assessment of the professional development quality;

the multicriteriality designed to ensure the objectivity of assessing the leading components of professionalism;

the “polychronism” of the professional quality assessment expressed in the variability of combinations of strategic, tactical, and current aspects of said assessment, since both the competent judges and the psychologists themselves repeatedly review the parameters of the professionalization quality depending on the prevailing educational paradigms.

The analysis of the presented approaches allows viewing the concept of “the quality of educational psychologist’s professionalism development” as the degree of integration of

<sup>16</sup> K. S. Akhmetkarimova, *Razvitie diagnosticheskoi deiatelnosti budushchikh pedagogov*. Ph.D. thesis. Karaganda, 2004.

<sup>17</sup> J. Bírová; P. Kružlík; A. Kalimullin; N. Sokolova; Z. Haroun; R. Králik y D. Vasbieva, “Mathematical and Statistical Bibliometric Indicators for Scholars in the Field of Romance Languages and Linguistics”, *EURASIA: Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education* Vol: 14 num 12 (2018); S. Sharonova; N. Trubnikova y N. Sokolova, “Interpreting religious symbols as a basic component of social value formation”, *European Journal of Science and Theology* Vol: 14 num 3 (2018): 117-129; M. Sergeeva; A. Shumeyko; A. Serebrennikova; A. Denisov; N. Bondarenko y E. Getmanova, “Innovative pedagogical experience in practice of modern education modernization”, *Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods* num 8 Vol: 10 (2018): 814-823; M. Sergeeva; N. Bondarenko; T. Shebzuhova; A. Vartumyan y S. Lesnikova “Scientific substantiation of the... y E.V. Burina, *The concept of an artificial language environment...*

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its personality- and activity-based structural components into the functional complexes that facilitate the choice of the professionalization type (reproductive, normative, or creative) in accordance with the main goal – the harmonious development of a student's personality.

## Conclusions

Taking into consideration the affiliation of the educational psychologist professional with the “human-human” type of professions or helping professions, the following elements can be included in the structure of professional development (as a process of achieving the highest levels of professionalism): the intellectual element (professional training, knowledge, professional skills, etc.), the personal element (personal orientation and personal qualities), the social element (social interaction skills), and the emotional element (emotional sensitivity and responsiveness). The above-mentioned elements manifest on both the personality and activity levels.

Professional skills of an educational psychologist as a helping profession specialist cover the range typical for humanitarian professions and include:

- communication skills (knowledge of communication culture, communication optimization skills, etc.);

- role activity skills (establishing partnerships, changing role positions);

- organizational skills (coordinating the efforts of various social services to solve the client's (child's) problems);

- projection skills (skills of emotional and cognitive perception of other people);

- empathy skills and knowledge of the ways of influencing other people.

However, the success of an educational psychologist as a helping profession specialist not only depends on the acquired system of knowledge and skills but is also defined by the personal qualities including, for example, emotional stability, intuition, empathy, sociability, benevolence, creativity, the ability to deal with the same problem for a continuous amount of time, high social claims, etc.

The necessary qualities and skills of an educational psychologist as a helping profession specialist include empathy, patience, benevolence, willingness to help others, psychological sensitivity, delicacy, and tact, humanity and humanism, mercy, high spiritual culture and morality, the ability to be interesting to others and informal in working with children, the ability to protect the client's dignity, desire for continuous improvement of professional knowledge, honesty, moral purity in professional matters, compliance with the ethics of interpersonal relationships, etc.

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