

“Psychological readiness”. Definition and approaches

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Abstract. The paper is concerned with definitions of the concept “psychological readiness”. The paper discusses psychological and pedagogical approaches to the essence of the concept “psychological readiness” in scientific studies. Various definitions of the concept “psychological readiness” and their content-related components are discussed. Based on the analysis of scientific sources, the functions, types and mechanisms of formation of the psychological readiness are singled out.

Key words: *psychological readiness, professional readiness, activity, personality, attitudes.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Currently, there are several approaches to the concept definition of the “psychological readiness”. In bibliographic sources there is a great variety in approaches to definitions and components of this concept. At the same time, the majority of studies are focused on consideration of the concept “psychological readiness” from the standpoint of readiness to carry out an action. In this work we will consider the studies related to the concept of the psychological readiness to act.

All studies under consideration are classified under five approaches.

II. SURVEY OF STUDIES OF THE CONCEPT “PSYCHOLOGICAL READINESS”

A. Functional approach

Under the functional approach the readiness for activity is perceived as a temporary phenomenon, fitness for working, warm-up activation of mental functions, skill to marshall the required physical and mental resources for implementation of activities (V.A. Alatortsev (1969), E.P. Ilyin (1968), L.S. Nersesyan (1969). Historically, this approach is the earliest. The psychological readiness for activity is thought of as a specific emotional and will state [6].

B. Personal approach

Within the personal approach the psychological readiness for activity is understood to mean a display of individual and personal qualities associated with the nature of future activity (K.A. Abul'khanova-Slavskaya (1991), B.G. Ananyev (1980), L.S. Vygotsky (1920), A.N. Leontyev (1950), S.L. Rubinstein (1950)).

A.N. Leontyev stated that the personal meaning is a sort of sense bearing forms resulting from interconnections of

different actions, behavior, reasons. By the same token, a change of the meaning of action results in behavioral changes.

B.G. Ananyev considers the psychological readiness for activity as a search for personal fulfillment. He considers 3 readiness levels: personality, subject and labor.

C. Personal pragmatist approach

Within the personal pragmatist approach the psychological readiness is investigated as a comprehensive manifestation of all sides of human personality by which one can efficiently solve tasks, he set himself in one or another activity (A.A. Derkach (2004), M.I. Dyachenko (1976), L.A. Kandybovich (1986)).

M.I. Dyachenko, L.A. Kandybovich consider the psychological readiness as a subject's disposition to channel activities through some means [4].

This approach is related to the most fundamental studies of the concept “psychological readiness” conducted within the framework of engineering psychology. A sufficiently big experimental data bulk has been accumulated. However, their use seems to be impossible in the context of the concept of the “psychological readiness for activity”, as they are related to the operational readiness to carry out a certain action.

D. Structural approach

In works of E.A. Klimov (1996) the psychological readiness for professional activities is defined as a complex mental formation or an amalgamation of functional, operational and personal components having a dynamic structure with functional dependencies [2].

It is important to emphasize that the greatest attention to the concept of the “psychological readiness for activity” was paid in the middle of the XX century when conscience became a subject of the Russian psychology, and the unity of conscience and activity was acknowledged as a key principle.

E. Humanistical and systematic approaches

When this issue is investigated within the framework of foreign psychology one can note that the “readiness” here is considered as an attitude (social attitude), the pursuance of self-actualization (A. Maslow (1967)), the organization of dispositions (G. Allport (1961)).

In opinion of G. Allport, an attitude is a pure and simple state of psychoneural readiness, empirically formed and

having the guiding and (or) dynamic impact on response of the individual to all objects or situations he is related to [1]. From viewpoint of A. Maslou, the representative of the humanistic line in psychology, the readiness has close links to the concept of self-actualization. The self-actualization is the pursuance of self-fulfillment, actualization of everything that is contained as potencies, it is a constant implementation of potential opportunities, capacities, talents [3].

III. MODERN UNDERSTANDING OF PSYCHOLOGICAL READINESS

The modern understanding of the psychological readiness is based on the pragmatist approach.

A. N.S. Pryazhnikov

N.S. Pryazhnikov considers the concept of "psychological readiness" from viewpoint of professional personal identity which becomes possible due to development of such psychological characteristics as self-awareness, motivation, reflection, orientation and so on. He lays emphasis on career guidance assistance paying attention to interest in value-based, sense bearing and moral aspects of the future professional activity.

B. Reflective and pragmatist concept

R.D. Sanzhayeva provides insight into the concept of "psychological readiness" through five components: hemispheric laterality, divergence of perception, locus of control, identification and dynamic balance [7].

R.D. Sanzhayeva assumes that the psychological readiness for one or another type of activity presents a developed system of convictions, views, relations, reasons, will and intellectual qualities, knowledge, skills, attitudes, aiming at a specific behavior.

C. Structural approach

N.V. Sizikova as one of the principal components of the psychological readiness for activities considers understanding of this activity by person as well as convictions, views or other relational characteristics [8].

A number of investigations of the psychological readiness for activity are yearly swelling. This is reflected by analysis of thesis works in recent years:

"Psychological mechanisms of readiness for risk in the manager professional activities" (exemplified by railway transport top executive managers) by T.V. Gryaznova (Khabarovsk), "Graduate carrier readiness by A.S. Mironova-Tikhomirova (Khabarovsk), "Rational component of psychological readiness for sporting activities" by N.V. Sizikova (Kemerovo), "Components of youth readiness for marital relations" by S.V. Chimbeeva (Ulan-Ude).

The personal psychological readiness for activity continues to be an active topic and is increasingly elaborated in the modern psychology.

In this paper the psychological readiness for professional activities means:

- A totality of psychological knowledge (skills of self regulation and communicative competence, stitched together by the general notion of emotional intelligence),

- operational block (the extent of development of professionally important PIQ (professionally important qualities) and individual-typological specific personal features (degree of conformity with job).

IV. DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH

Account must be taken of a specific character of working conditions, demands placed on specialists in a specific field. With this purpose in mind in every educational institution there exists a specialist training program. Education comprises a theoretical part, practical skill training as well as fundamentals of psychological knowledge. The learning process in the higher educational institution is focused on the first component while preparation of specialists for professional loads in the field of communication and self-regulation skills requires an additional attention.

In our paper we give consideration just to the psychological content of work of the specialist, associated to the specific working environment of oilers such as climatic and geographic specific conditions of the North, watch-based workplace factors, social peculiar properties (group isolation).

In this context a specialist needs special knowledge about mechanisms of self-regulation of own psycho-emotional states.

The self regulation is directly connected with the specialist personality, and the most important component of activity is a group communication. In the process of communication becoming and manifestation of human social, psychological and mental properties take place.

There are applied tasks which bring to the forefront the readiness for work. They need a nuanced approach to competences which is difficult to implement by the conditional PIQ approach. Soft skills are a nice complement to typical professional competences and allow for matching them to PIQ [9].

Sociological studies for decades prove that for employers important are not only professional skills but also additional knowledge and skills which cannot be acquired in the university: sociability, responsibility, calmness under pressure and many more. They are called "soft skills". They are super professional non-special skills not associated with job duties of the employee.

Professional training is aimed at development and facilitation of competences (personal capacity of solving a specific class of professional problems and readiness for his/her professional role in one or another area of responsibility). Thus, the psychological training is a professional part aiming at facilitation of an adequate image of the future working practice.

We have conducted the study and implemented a training program (38 hours) in formation of psychological readiness for watch-based work in conditions of the North. The participants of the study were 10 third-year students at the age of 18-22 years from the Oil and Gas University who consider to work in the future in severe specific polar conditions. The goal of research is practical testing of the model of formation of the psychological readiness for watch-based working in the northern environment.

Diagnostics of emotional competence was carried out using the methodology of N. Hall of determination of degree of emotional intelligence [10] and emotional intelligence diagnostics – MEI (M.A. Manoilova) [5]

V. FINDINGS

The results were analyzed by the variance analysis with repeated measurements. A significant influence of interaction between training factors and affiliation with the group ($F = 57.76$, $p < 0.05$) was found out. Differences concerning intrapersonal (controlled variable) and interpersonal aspects of emotional intelligence were confirmed.

Thus we may note a tendency of an emotional self-awareness development, an ability to live in tune with inner emotions, a good understanding of the role of feelings in work and in interpersonal relations. The students' awareness on emotional qualities, psychological characteristics of personal states and their role in professional activities has increased that is an important criterion of efficiency of activity.

It is worth noting their high demand for self-understanding that is by no means unimportant for working fit in the group. One may talk of awakening and understanding of their own feelings and emotions that is an intrapersonal aspect of emotional intelligence caused by enhanced attention to the spiritual world.

Consequently, it may be deduced that the men from the experimental group who visited individual consultations turned to be more mentally resilient. An interesting fact is that more independent in interpersonal relations were the women from the experimental group who visited individual consultations. Perhaps, it is caused by the more free expression of emotions by women which largely is unallowable for men. The meaning of psychological training for work is in development among students of the ability to adapt themselves to working conditions of life, analyze situations, knowledge of having control over communication means, evaluate and discover ways of solving of evolving problems, adequately change their activity.

The research demonstrates that students with the experience in watch-based work are capable to control their emotions and also perceive and recognize their feelings, exercise self-control, at the same time, they have a lower emotional awareness than students who never participated in watch-based work.

Consequently, following the results of analysis one may conclude that our hypothesis is confirmed. The training program developed on the basis of the 3-component model of the psychological readiness for watch-based working in the northern environment comprising such structural levels as cognitive, emotional and behavioral is effective. It is confirmed by the obtained statistically significant results bearing evidence of differences between control and experimental groups before and after training. After training the level of parameters under development has increased.

It is worth noting that this training program is only a part of a more extensive comprehensive program of student psychological follow-up that is a continuation of work in this direction.

As a result of the task-oriented psychological training the specialist forms a strategic plan of behavior and a

psychological readiness to implement it in a new situation which ensures his/her fast inclusion in a new social environment and activity in it without any additional energy consumption on reliever of inner tension and resistance.

The psychological readiness for activity starts from setting a goal on the basis of demands and motives (or understanding of the set or evolved problem). The motives of professional becoming are understood to be the focus of personal efforts toward values of the profession acquired which incite the person to set himself a specific aim in the professional environment and take steps to achieve it. Further a plan, patterns and a roadmap are developed. Then the person undertakes implementation of the emerged readiness in particular actions, uses specific means and methods of activity, compares progress and provisional results to the desired goal, makes allowances.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The psychological readiness is a result of professional training, quality of personality. It serves as a regulator of success of professional activity, a form of attitude.

One of the main objectives of psychological follow-up of professional becoming is not only providing timely assistance and support to a person but also teaching how to get over difficulties of this process without assistance, to be responsible in the making, to help a person to become a mature subject of his/her professional life. The need in solving this problem is conditioned by numerous changes in individual and social live of every human being.

The psychological follow-up assumes creation of the orientation field of the professional personal development, enhancement of professional "ego", support of adequate self-appraisal, prompt response and support, self-adjustment of vital life sustenance, acquisition of professional self-preservation techniques.

A result of the psychological follow-up of professional becoming is the professional development and self-consistency, implementation of professional psychological potential of personnel, provision of professional self-preservation, satisfaction with labor and improvement of efficiency of professional activity.

Therefore, the psychological follow-up is a technology based on the unity of four functions: diagnostics of the essence of challenge, information about problem and remedy, consultation at the decision-making stage and elaboration of a problem-solving plan, primary aid at the stage of implementation the problem-solving plan.

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