



ISSUES RELATED TO PERSONAL AND SOCIAL SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC STAFF MEMBERS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN TODAY'S RUSSIA

QUESTÕES RELACIONADAS AO AUTO-DESENVOLVIMENTO PESSOAL E SOCIAL DE PESSOAS ACADÊMICAS DE INSTITUIÇÕES DE ENSINO SUPERIOR NA RÚSSIA DE HOJE

CUESTIONES RELACIONADAS CON EL AUTODESARROLLO PERSONAL Y SOCIAL DE LOS MIEMBROS DEL PERSONAL ACADÉMICO DE LAS INSTITUCIONES DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR EN LA RUSIA DE HOY

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Abstract: The issues addressed in the article are of particular relevance due to the growing role of teachers of higher education institutions in the modern society. The article is dedicated to the current issues of self-development of teachers and is aimed to identify the main reasons for their poor social and personal self-development. The most important research method used by the authors was the pedagogic experiment, including such particular empirical methods as monitoring, tests, surveys, questionnaires, interviews, self-assessment and psychological diagnostics. As a result of the study, it was found out that teachers' leisure time is not properly organised, therefore they have no opportunities for rehabilitation and recreation in their free time, which considerably reduces effectiveness of their personal self-development. The article describes a set of measures aimed to enhance the effectiveness of teachers' self-development through the organization of cultural and creative associations in higher education institutions, including four stages and six spheres of activity that can be implemented in such cultural and creative associations. Materials of this article may be useful for the management of higher education institutions and department heads, advanced training centres for higher education professionals and for all academic staff members.

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Keywords: social and personal self-development, contemporary higher school teacher, cultural and creative activities

Resumo: As questões abordadas no artigo são de particular relevância devido ao crescente papel dos professores das instituições de ensino superior na sociedade moderna. O artigo é dedicado às questões atuais do autodesenvolvimento dos professores e tem como objetivo identificar as principais razões para seu pobre autodesenvolvimento social e pessoal. O método de pesquisa mais importante usado pelos autores foi o experimento pedagógico, incluindo métodos empíricos específicos como monitoramento, testes, pesquisas, questionários, entrevistas, autoavaliação e diagnóstico psicológico. Como resultado do estudo, verificou-se que o tempo de lazer dos professores não é organizado adequadamente, portanto, eles não têm oportunidades de reabilitação e recreação em seu tempo livre, o que reduz consideravelmente a eficácia de seu autodesenvolvimento pessoal. O artigo descreve um conjunto de medidas destinadas a aumentar a eficácia do autodesenvolvimento dos professores por meio da organização de associações culturais e criativas em instituições de ensino superior, incluindo quatro estágios e seis esferas de atividade que podem ser implementadas nessas associações culturais e criativas. Os materiais deste artigo podem ser úteis para o gerenciamento de instituições de ensino superior e chefes de departamento, centros de treinamento avançado para profissionais de ensino superior e para todos os funcionários acadêmicos.

Palavras-chave: autodesenvolvimento social e pessoal, professor de ensino superior contemporâneo, atividades culturais e criativas

Resumen: Las cuestiones abordadas en el artículo son de particular relevancia debido al creciente papel de los docentes de las instituciones de educación superior en la sociedad moderna. El artículo está dedicado a los problemas actuales del autodesarrollo de los docentes y tiene como objetivo identificar las principales razones de su pobre autodesarrollo social y personal. El método de investigación más importante utilizado por los autores fue el experimento pedagógico, que incluía métodos empíricos particulares como monitoreo, pruebas, encuestas, cuestionarios, entrevistas, autoevaluación y diagnóstico psicológico. Como resultado del estudio, se descubrió que el tiempo libre de los docentes no está organizado adecuadamente, por lo que no tienen oportunidades de rehabilitación y recreación en su tiempo libre, lo que reduce considerablemente la efectividad de su autodesarrollo personal. El artículo describe un conjunto de medidas destinadas a mejorar la efectividad del autodesarrollo de los docentes a través de la organización de asociaciones culturales y creativas en instituciones de educación superior, incluidas cuatro etapas y seis esferas de actividad que pueden implementarse en tales asociaciones culturales y creativas. Los materiales de este artículo pueden ser útiles para la gestión de instituciones de educación superior y jefes de departamento, centros de capacitación avanzada para profesionales de educación superior y para todos los miembros del personal académico.

Palabras clave: autodesarrollo social y personal, docente contemporáneo de secundaria, actividades culturales y creativas.



1 INTRODUCTION

Under the current socio-economic conditions, the role and significance of higher education institutions as generators of new knowledge and fertile grounds for future specialists are constantly growing in Russia. The key provisions of the Federal Target Program for the Development of Education in 2016-2020 (2015) reinstate the important task of higher school academic staffs to form and develop a new generation of future Russian specialists in all fields of knowledge.

Higher school teachers lay the foundation for students' professional knowledge and skills, set standards of social and cultural behaviour and form their communication skills. These functions require great commitment and constant professional, social and personal self-development, the lack of which significantly reduces the effectiveness of their professional activities. Working consistently heavy workloads caused by the increased number of classroom and extracurricular activities, teachers are now suffering from constant overwork and failing to replenish their physical and spiritual energies.

Hypothesis. Now more than ever, socio-pedagogical tools for the support of higher school teachers in their self-development are of great importance, and search for them is highly relevant, and, in our opinion, culture and leisure associations of higher education institutions can become such tools. Such culture and leisure associations, aimed to develop creative, communicative, social and cultural skills, can help in solving the identified problem and increase effectiveness of teachers' leisure activities.

In order to identify this problem, prove its existence and propose an adequate solution, we used a number of empirical and theoretical research methods. In our study we used such theoretical methods as the theoretical and methodological analysis and terminological concept analysis. The general empirical method was the pedagogic experiment, including such partial empirical methods as monitoring, tests, surveys, questionnaires, interviews, self-assessment and psychological diagnostics.

Let us proceed to an analysis of the concept of self-development and examine self-development in terms of philosophy, sociology, psychology and education sciences. The concept of self-development, as an interdisciplinary research subject, has been studied in the context of different sciences: philosophy, psychology and sociology. Thus, philosophers (Plato (1984), I. Kant (2016), Hegel (1968), K. Marx (1949), etc.) historically studied self-development in the context of research into human development. Modern philosophers (M.K. Mamardashvili (1997), V.E. Stepanova (2003), M. Scheler (1992), etc.) have connected self-development with the system of values and interpreted it as a need for self-improvement and self-motion.

In the works by such sociologists as L.V. Kilimova (2006), Yu.V. Mokerova (2006) and others, self-development is considered in close connection with personality and society. Personality is a product and a subject of social systems, their change and development. Consequently, personal self-development is related



to the social environment and personality changes within the frames of social norms, traditions and rules of behaviour.

In psychology (K.A. Abulkhanova-Slavskaya (1991), L.I. Antsyferova (1978), S.L. Rubinstein (2003), M.A. Schukina (2007)), L.S. Vygotsky (1996), D.A. Leontiev (1997), B.F. Lomov (1984), V.A. Barabanshikov (2008), A.E. Asmolov (1990)), self-development is considered as a conscious change resulting from the inner activity of a person.

In education sciences (V.I. Andreev (1996), E.V. Bondarevskaya (2010), M.R. Ginsburg (1994), A.V. Mudrik (2000), V.I. Slobodchikov (2009), E.I. Isaev (2000), etc.), self-development has been considered as a possibility of choice in life transformation and increased self-awareness, realized by the person over a lifetime.

Issues related to the development of professional skills in higher school teachers were considered by such educationalists as A.A. Derkach (2000), M.N. Berulava (2012), Z.D. Zhukovskaya (2013), A.K. Markova (1993), N.L. Torgunskaya (2007) and others. The issues of teachers' self-improvement were studied by such scholars as O.A. Trukhina (2012) B.E. Fishman (2004) and others. At the same time, there have been fundamental educational studies on professional and creative self-development (I.A. Sharshov (2005)), professional and personal self-development of teachers (E.E. Chudina (2002)), professional and personal development (L.M. Kalninh (2012)), professional and moral self-development of teachers (L.Yu. Romanova (2011)), and creative self-development (Yu.A. Kaverin (2010), G.A. Fedotova (2004)).

Issues related to teachers' self-development based on the use of anthropological concepts were considered in the works by well-known scientists, educationalists and psychologists: V.I. Slobodchikov [24], E.I. Isaev (2000), A.K. Markova (1993), L.M. Mitina (2003), A. Maslow (1982), G. Allport (2002), C. Rogers (1994) and others.

Our analysis of the above-mentioned works gives us grounds to assert that the accumulated theoretical and methodological basis of knowledge related to self-development of higher school teachers reflects various aspects of professional self-development, but so far practically no attention has been paid to personal and social self-development of academic staff members.

Summarising the analysed research findings on personal self-development, we have come to the conclusion that self-development is a qualitative process of personality sphere transformation, reflecting self-motion of personality under the influence of inner contradictions, and some kind of manifestation of human attitude to the external environment. Thus, we have identified the following dominating structural elements of self-development: *attitude to self-development* and *self-development activities*. The attitude to self-development (as a form of reflection of reality) is studied on the basis of *reflection, motivation and the system of values*. Self-development activities are based on three components: *personal traits, individual's self-development ability and self-development techniques and methods*.



2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to confirm our research hypothesis that today's teacher has a need for personal self-development and energy replenishment through cultural and leisure activities, we conducted a study in the form of an ascertaining experiment (establishment of an indisputable fact), which was aimed to identify and ascertain the existing problem. Based on the experiments carried out in one of the leading higher education institutions of Russia – South Ural State University (a national research university), we have identified key problems and trends of self-development of higher school teachers, analysed the factors influencing the self-development and created the program of active leisure activities for academic staff members, which is designed to increase effectiveness of their personal and social self-development.

The conducted questionnaire survey provided the following data on teachers' self-improvement motivation and on possible assessment of self-development skills (Table 1). We introduced age segmentation and, based on the obtained data, came to the following conclusions:

- the highest self-development motivation is demonstrated by young teachers;
- self-development motivation is decreased with the gained experience in professional activities, especially among associate professors;
- self-development skills of teachers are further improved in the process of their professional activities;
- self-development skills are stabilized, without further improvement, after the age of 45 years old;
- self-development skills are closely connected with professional achievements (the better the self-development skills, the higher the teacher's professional achievements);
- decreasing self-development motivation is observed in those academic staff members who have already defended their theses (especially Dr.Sci. theses);
- the level of teachers' self-development is closely related to their professional knowledge and skills;
- insufficient attention is paid to personal and social aspects of self-development.

Table 1 Analysis of self-development motivation and skills

	Age				
	20-30 years old	30-40 years old	40-50 years old	50-60 years old	60-70 years old
Self-development motivation among teachers	6.0	6.4	6.2	5.1	4.1
Self-development skills of teachers	4.5	5.5	5.6	5.6	5.5



We identified personal motives for self-development, which, according to our data, do not depend on age or professional status. There are following motives: self-expression needs – new knowledge, full realisation of personal capacities, competence building; motives related to the need for recognition – growing reputation among colleagues; rational motives related to personal security – salary increase, professional growth.

The observed distribution of self-development motives gives grounds for conclusions on the age-related changes in self-development motivation. For example, such self-development motives as career-building and salary increases were mostly mentioned by younger teachers (under 35 years), while the reputation-related motives were important for teachers in the age range of 35-45 years. The motives related to obtaining new knowledge and realisation of personal capacities were selected by teachers over 45 years old.

Another *survey of our ascertaining experiment* was a questionnaire for teachers on their self-assessment of personal development. They were asked to answer questions regarding their own self-development actions over the previous year. We understand that such assessments could be somewhat exaggerated, as the teachers sought to create a good impression. However, our findings show a general picture of the self-development of today's teachers and allow us to make certain conclusions.

The results of the questionnaire survey allow us to make the *following conclusion*: professional self-development is of major importance for teachers, prevailing over self-development in the sphere of social contacts and development of personal characteristics. Thus, social and personal self-development is carried out spontaneously, without a clear plan, set objectives and assessment of results.

To identify the reasons for this lack of interest in social and personal self-development among teachers, we carried out *interviews* and asked teachers to fill in *questionnaires*, in which most teachers referred to such reasons as the lack of time (78%); lack of money for active leisure activities (72%); physical and emotional exhaustion (89%); lack of opportunities for recreational activities (53%); lack of knowledge on organisation of social and personal self-development (64%); absence of interest or need (61%).

Thus, we have found out the key reasons for the insufficient social and personal self-development of academic staff members. Higher school teachers are suffering from heavy workloads, therefore they have no resources for self-development, and, moreover, they lack necessary knowledge and external opportunities for self-development in personal and social spheres. At the same time, personal and social characteristics of some of the teachers do not require further development.

Our conclusions are supported by findings described in works of other scholars. For example, low satisfaction of teachers with their work is reflected in the works of L.M. Mitina (2003), A.N. Yakunina (2014) and others. Psychological aspects of the interaction between students and teachers are reflected in the studies carried out by R.V. Kupriyanov (2015), T.V. Kryukova (2016) and others. The issues related to personal



self-development of teachers are considered in the academic papers by N.I. Suchkova (2004), E.A. Burdina (2014) and others.

Heads of higher education institutions constantly urge teachers to develop their professional skills. Thus, advanced training programs every five years are mandatory for the academic staff members, and they are also required to write research papers and defend theses in the chosen research fields. However, the administration of higher education institutions does not make any demands for the personal self-development. At the same time, both department heads and students are not satisfied with personal and social characteristics of some of the teachers. The results of the survey conducted among managers (department heads and deans) are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 - Satisfaction of management with personal and social characteristics of teachers (%)

Categories of respondents	Fully satisfied	Not fully satisfied	Partially satisfied	Dissatisfied
Department Heads (350 persons)	3.4	9.64	85.56	1.42
Deputy Deans (70 persons)	6.85	31.51	56.17	5.48
Deans (25 persons)	10.72	32.15	60.72	7.15

Based on our findings, we can make a conclusion that only 5% of department heads are fully satisfied with personal and social characteristics of the teachers in their staff. All the rest identified inconsistency of and dissatisfaction with the social and personal characteristics of teachers.

These conclusions are also supported by the results of the *survey* on teachers' personal and social characteristics conducted *among students*. The students pointed out that 8% of teachers should be banned entirely from working with students. 42% of teachers, according to the students, should correct their personal and social characteristics, while 36% of teachers need to improve their personal and social skills. The students were fully satisfied with the social skills of only 12% of their teachers.

So, our analysis revealed a contradiction between the desired characteristics sought in teachers and the lack of any ways to address the problem of improving the level of teachers' social and personal self-development.

What may be the causes and solutions for this problem? We assumed that teachers' leisure time is not properly organised, therefore they have no opportunities for rehabilitation and energy replenishment in their spare time. This hypothesis was confirmed by our survey, analysing the forms of teachers' leisure activities and the time spent on them. Our findings on types of leisure activities are summarised in Table 3.



Table 3 - Types of leisure activities and number of teachers involved in such leisure activities (%)

Leisure activities	Teachers involved in respective leisure activities
Culture and leisure clubs (creative associations and workshops, chess, gardening)	4.5
Sports clubs, fitness, workout room	5.8
Individual sports activities (skiing, skating, swimming, hiking, jogging)	13.6
Watching TV	97.6
Rest (time with friends, relaxation)	98.99
Reading professional literature and literary fiction	100
Visits to theatres, museums, philharmonics, cinemas	86.7
Internet and social networks	100
Hobbies (dancing, music, singing, breeding animals and flowers, technical creativity, photography)	65.4
Household chores and family communication	86

The results of the conducted survey show that the majority of teachers prefer passive leisure pursuits, like watching television, reading books (professionally-oriented, as a rule) or browsing Internet and social networks. Only 65% of teachers have hobbies, for which they spend part of their free time. The majority of respondents are reluctant to attend sports and hobby clubs. Most of them spend part of their time taking care of household issues and looking after their relatives.

3 RESULTS

Summarizing the results of the described experiment, we have come to the following conclusions. Teachers' free time is either an extension of their professional activities (reading professional literature) or



is not organized at all (or organized passively). This confirms our assumption that teachers do not actually rest in their free time and are not able to replenish their energies, which inevitably leads to the low levels of social and personal self-development.

How can a higher education institution help teachers organise their leisure activities? Search for an answer to this question let us identify ways to improve the effectiveness of teachers' leisure activities and improve their social and personal self-development. Using the experience of the South Ural State University (a national research university) as an example, we performed an analysis of activities in the leisure clubs and associations that were organised by the higher education institution in 2014-2015, with the following results:

1. Academic staff members are poorly informed about opportunities for leisure activities provided by the higher education institution.
2. The University organised various forms of leisure activities, but the academic staff do not actively participate.
3. In the University there are no clubs or leisure associations for teachers only. The academic staff members can participate in the activities of creative associations and clubs together with the students, which negatively affects teachers' interest in attending them.
4. Some associations and groups provide their services to teachers free of charge or at a significant discount. Consequently, the economic factor is not as important as previously described by the teachers in the filled questionnaires.

Summarising our findings, we came to the conclusion that the effectiveness of leisure activities is constantly declining, negatively affecting the social and personal self-development of teachers, which is only possible through cultural and leisure activities. Such lack of attention to cultural and leisure activities among the academic staff results in spiritual emptiness, emotional overload, irritability and fatigue, which affects the mood of teachers and their satisfaction with life. This situation also has a negative impact on the professional development of teachers.

We can see a solution to this problem in a complex of measures aimed to improve the personal and social self-development of teachers in a contemporary Russian higher education institution, which can be tested and introduced into practice at the South Ural State University (a national research university) in the city of Chelyabinsk. This complex includes 4 stages:

1st stage – analysis. At this stage, the consulting centres organised at the higher education institution provide psychological and counselling services to all academic staff members, revealing the motives and internal requirements related to their social and personal self-development.

2nd stage – target setting. At this stage, the teachers set their long-term and short term objectives, based on the earlier formulated motives and needs. This is made possible with the help of personal growth trainings and techniques of building the "Objective Analysis Tree" and "Balance of Success and Failure" (2015).



3d stage – practical implementation. At this stage, the teachers select the types of activities or forms of active leisure corresponding, as much as possible, to the objectives set at the previous stage. We offered a choice of six activities implemented in various cultural and creative associations of the university. There were the following sets of activities:

- 1) Educational (clubs of managerial and political debates, intellectual clubs for communication with interesting people, psychological trainings and seminars, and a club of the New Cinema fans).
- 2) Relaxation (philharmonic evenings, "Prima Vera" choir, theatre studios).
- 3) Arts and creativity (artistic creativity clubs: designing, painting and beading, technical creativity).
- 4) Cultural (historical and cultural clubs, excursions in the region, pilgrimage tours, industrial tourism).
- 5) Extreme activities (extreme sports and tourism).
- 6) Physical training (physical culture and wellness, hiking).

4th stage – summing up. At this stage, the academic staff members analyse the changes and plan further actions aimed to include active leisure activities in their daily routines.

4 DISCUSSION

The identified problem related to teachers' personal self-development has never been considered in this context. Some aspects of self-development were considered in works by V.I. Slobodchikov, E.I. Isaev, A.K. Markov, L.M. Mitina, A. Maslow, and G. Allport. C. Rogers and other scholars. However, they all studied the issues related to the self-development of teachers with the use of anthropological concepts. At the same time, practically no attention was paid to personal and social self-development of teachers. We are the first to assume that cultural and leisure activities can be both the tool and pre-condition for the successful social and personal self-development of teachers.

5 CONCLUSION

In this article we have presented results of our analysis of the identified problem related to personal and social self-development of teachers, focused on several specific indicators:

- motivation of teachers to social and personal self-development;
- self-development skills of teachers;
- satisfaction of departments heads with teachers' social and personal development,
- types of leisure activities for teachers.

Our study has shown that higher school teachers are in need of a complex of measures to promote social and personal self-development through organisation and functioning of cultural and creative



associations at higher education institutions. We plan to publish the results of introduction of these measures into practice in our future articles.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is not a mere coincidence that the issues of personal self-development have become especially relevant in modern times. Information about the identified causes of this problem and solutions proposed in the article can be useful both for the administration of higher education institutions and academic staff members, as the developed complex of measures aimed to improve the self-development effectiveness should lead to better emotional balance, improve teachers' leisure activities, resulting in a more harmonious attitude to life.

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Received on: 02/10/2020

Approved on: 03/30/2020

Published on: 04/08/2020

