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## TUTORS' PSYCHOLOGICAL READINESS FOR PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY IN UKRAINE

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### ABSTRACT

*The article deals with the issue of tutors' psychological readiness for professional activity in the system of Ukrainian higher education. The concepts that are defined are psychological readiness, tutor, professional tutors training, tutor activity, competence, and innovations in the educational system; and the core activity of the Center of Excellence at Bogdan Khmelnytsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University is described. Innovative strategies for the development of the international community lead to the creation of such a system of education which will enable the growth of creative potential of the individuals, and their spiritual and moral characteristics. The cultural and educational institutions have the task to organize the educational process in such a way that the educational-dominant theory and practice of developmental education will focus on methodologies and methods of self-development of the individuals, on the one hand, and the program of expanded professional (psychological) support of self-education of the individuals, on the other hand. The purpose of the article is to determine the update on the problem of tutors' psychological readiness for professional activity in the system of higher education of Ukraine. The analysis of the respondents' answers, and the comparison of the results of teachers training for the tutor activity at the start and end of the experimental work give grounds to fix quantitative and qualitative changes in the formation of psychological readiness for tutor activity in teachers. The level of future tutors' psychological readiness for the tutor activity in the experimental and control groups at the formative stage of the experiment has been increased due to a qualitatively prepared certification program «professional tutors training»; active participation in practical trainings including discussions, round tables, thematic conferences devoted to introduction of excellence tutoring; and conducting training exercises for the development of innovative skills, research and experimental work.*

**Keywords:** Psychological readiness, tutor, professional tutors training, tutor activity, competence, innovations in the system of education.

### INTRODUCTION

Modernization in Ukraine is connected with the new impulses which are provided by the civil society. In this regard, tutor support will make it possible to realize the internal resource capabilities of the individual, to develop its autonomy taking into account the processes of self-

prediction and self-perception through the cultural methods of interaction between man and society, while making strategically important decisions regarding educational, professional and life issues (Beaton and Gilbert, 2013; Constantinou and Nicolaou, 2018; Mynott, 2016; Youde, 2016). The development of innovative thinking, and the creation of the cultural and educational system for the education of individuals by professional tutor is reduced to values as a direct basis in the development of theoretical and methodological principles of the philosophy of «child-centrism» and «human-dimensionality» (Chelnokova et al., 2015).

The research in the field of professional tutors training in the modern system of education in Ukraine involves the scientific substantiation of its essence, the integration of science and education, and the active use of innovative psychological technologies to improve the quality of tutors training. Thus, the professional tutors training in higher educational establishments enables the growth of the level of teachers and students' professional competence. The analysis of scientific sources shows that tutor activity should be considered as organizational psychological, pedagogical and social support of individual education for students, which necessitates the development of systematized knowledge, skills, views and beliefs, value orientations and a certain level of development of cognitive forces and practical training, which provides analytical description, characterization, classification and systematization of mechanisms of psychological, pedagogical and social support of tutor practices; the study of laws that determine the effectiveness of tutor support; studying the genesis and development of various types of tutor practices, and the main tendencies for their improvement (Ferreira et al., 2013; Hadlow et al., 2004; Hayton et al., 2019; Terrion and Leonard, 2007).

The analysis of scientific sources demonstrates that the tutors' psychological readiness for professional activity is not only a property of an individual; it is a concentrated indicator of people's activities, and a measure of their professional abilities (Colvin et al., 2007; Grave et al., 2000). The content of the tutors' psychological readiness for professional activity is the integral characteristics of the individual, which includes professional, emotional and volitional properties, professional-moral beliefs, needs, habits, and professional competences.

On the basis of the execution of the order by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine dated June 30, 2016, № 730 on conducting an all-Ukrainian experiment on the implementation of a scientific and pedagogical project «School of Excellence Tutor», the Centre of Excellence Tutor was founded at Bogdan Khmelnytsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University. The main directions of its activity are carrying out fundamental and applied research on the problem of psychological readiness of tutors for professional activity; provision of professional-oriented educational services in tutoring for graduates of the School of Excellence Tutor; creation of conditions for the training of tutors and the involvement of graduates in research work; development and approval of individual educational programs for implementation of tutoring practices; and an effective use of creative potential of teachers and scientific staff in scientific research departments on the field

It should be noted that the activity of the Centre of Excellence Tutor at Bogdan Khmelnytsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University provides the update of the scientific and methodological support of the pedagogical process, the integration of science and education, and the active use of the latest pedagogical technologies for improving the quality of the tutors training. The staff of the Centre of Excellence Tutor established the educational program «Professional Tutors Training», which is an additional educational service and plays an important role in the



interaction of scientific and pedagogical workers and teachers of secondary schools in the process of forming tutors' psychological readiness for professional innovation activities. The educational program is aimed at intensifying the professional tutors' training by introduction of innovative pedagogical technologies. It should be mentioned that the program is aimed at the experimental testing of the quality and efficiency of the tutors training system with the use of innovative pedagogical technologies. The target audience of the certification program is higher education graduates who are studying for a bachelor's or master's degree or who already have a higher education. The main competencies of the certification program «Professional Tutors Training» are knowledge and understanding of the general principles of tutoring skills; knowledge of international standards, methods and means of designing the educational process, and its software; knowledge of the latest technologies and methods of activating creativity, creativity and independence of thinking of students; the ability to orient in specialized literature (on the problem of tutoring); the ability to represent individual projects to ensure the coordination of all the various structures that aim to help the student in a conscious choice of activities and make strategically important decisions for life; knowledge of the problems and difficulties of the process of self-education, self-improvement and self-development of the individual in the aspect of realization of the student's individual educational route; knowledge and practical skills in using information and communication technologies as a means of expanding the cultural and educational sphere of the individual, raising moral values, involving the newest possibilities in obtaining additional education through distance learning; knowledge and practical skills in building a dialogue for creation an atmosphere of mutual understanding and positive microclimate in a student group; knowledge and practical skills in scientific and educational expertise in self-understanding and designing their own image; and knowledge and ability to choose a creative approach for solving pedagogical problems, which are formed in the process of pedagogical activity.

The purpose of the article is to determine and experimentally verify the current state of the problem of tutors' psychological readiness for professional activity in the system of higher education of Ukraine. According to the purpose, the main tasks are identified as to define the mechanism of individual tutor support in the system of higher education of Ukraine; to characterize the specifics of the Centre of Excellence Tutor on the basis of Bogdan Khmelnytsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University; and to investigate and experimentally test the effectiveness of the program of tutors training in the higher educational institution.

## METHODS

Experimental research at the beginning of the activity of the Centre of Excellence Tutor at Bogdan Khmelnytsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University was conducted by the secondary schools teachers from Melitopol district. To realize the tasks, a complex of modern general scientific methods is used:

- Theoretical methods include analysis (historical, and comparative), synthesis, and generalization, comparison, which served the study of literary sources, legislative and regulatory framework, and experience of professional training of tutors in the system of higher education of Ukraine;
- Empirical methods include observational methods (direct and indirect observation of tutors' psychological readiness for professional activity, methods of expert evaluation and



self-evaluation of tutor's activity); excellence tutoring ranking; and diagnostic methods (questionnaires, expert surveys, interviews), which help to determine the level of readiness of teachers for tutoring;

- Methods of experimental-theoretical level include experimental verification of the effectiveness of pedagogical conditions for the development of professional training of tutors in the higher education system of Ukraine; methods of mathematical statistics, applied for the processing of the data obtained and the study of quantitative dependencies between the analyzed phenomena and processes.

## RESULTS

The questionnaire of teachers of comprehensive educational institutions proved that psychological unpreparedness to innovative pedagogical activity was caused by a number of difficulties for specialists. During the experimental research, the secondary schools teachers performed self-assessment of professional ability to innovation activity. There were 85 respondents who participated in the research. The respondents were asked:

1. to determine the degree of expression of the criteria for assessing the ability to innovation professional activities on 10-point scale: 1-4 points – low level of readiness for innovation activity; 5-7 points – moderate level; and 8-10 points – high level of opportunities for innovation activity;
2. combine points and build a graphic profile;
3. analyze the overall evaluation of the graphic profile: «motivation», «creativity», and «professional skills».

Analysis of the graphs and answers of the respondents allowed to systematize the obtained results (see Table 1).

**Table 1. The Results of the Research**

| №                          | Criterion of Estimation                                   | Levels, % |          |      |
|----------------------------|---|-----------|----------|------|
|                            |   | Low       | Moderate | High |
| <b>Motivation</b>          |   |           |          |      |
| 1.                         | Curiosity.  | 5,3       | 59,5     | 35,2 |
| 2.                         | Striving for success.                                     | 5,6       | 11,4     | 83   |
| 3.                         | Striving for leadership.                                  | 6,4       | 19       | 74,6 |
| 4.                         | The desire to get an external evaluation of the activity. | 7,1       | 43       | 49,9 |
| 5.                         | Striving for self-improvement.                            | 27,2      | 29,3     | 43,5 |
| <b>Creativity</b>          |   |           |          |      |
| 6.                         | Independence of judgments.                                | 58,2      | 27,8     | 14   |
| 7.                         | Fantasy.  | 44        | 32,4     | 23,6 |
| 8.                         | Risk appetite.  | 43,9      | 34       | 22,1 |
| 9.                         | Sensitivity to problems.                                  | 58,3      | 23       | 18,7 |
| 10.                        | Critical thinking.  | 29,1      | 38,3     | 32,6 |
| <b>Professional Skills</b> |   |           |          |      |

|     |  |      |      |      |
|-----|--|------|------|------|
| 11. | Possession of pedagogical research methods.            | 24,3 | 44,6 | 31,1 |
| 12. | Ability to reorganize the activity.                    | 63,6 | 24   | 12,4 |
| 13. | Ability to cooperate.                                  | 12,5 | 48,3 | 39,2 |
| 14. | Ability to accumulate using someone else's experience. | 19,6 | 31,8 | 48,6 |
| 15. | Ability to self-organization.                          | 27,2 | 42,1 | 30,7 |

The data presented in the table shows that the respondents named such qualities as striving for success; striving for leadership; the desire to get an external evaluation of the activity; and the ability to accumulate using someone else's experience. Having analyzed the respondents' answers, we should note that the chosen qualities are extremely important, but they require an addition in the process of introduction of innovative pedagogical activities. In our opinion, the independence of judgments, fantasy, risk appetite, sensitivity to problems and the ability to reorganize the activity are significant qualities for tutors, but they are insufficient and weakly expressed.

In the process of studying the cognitive component, using author's questionnaires, the state of future tutors' psychological readiness for the implementation of tutor activity at the start and at the end of the experiment was clarified. For studying the state of preparation for excellence tutoring at the start of the experiment, it was proposed to answer the questionnaire «Will it be difficult for you to introduce tutor activity in an educational institution?». The following answers were received from the respondents: «yes» – 123 people (56%); «no» – 33 people (15%); «partially» – 64 people (29%).

The answers to the question «Is the modern school ready to introduce tutor activity?» were: «yes» (49 people – 22%); «no» (64 people – 29%); «partially» (107 people – 49%).

The state analysis of teachers' psychological readiness for tutor activity convincingly proves that the level of their preparation for the mentioned kind of professional activity is insufficient. Consequently, it is important to update the content, forms and methods of preparation for excellence tutoring, to develop educational exercises, to create pedagogical situations, to supplement professional training with the certification program «Professional Tutors Training», for the development of significant qualities of teachers – future specialists of tutor activity.

The analysis of respondents' answers, and the comparison of the results of the formation of teachers' psychological readiness for the tutor activity at the start and at the end of the experimental work give grounds to fix quantitative and qualitative changes regarding the formation of future specialists' psychological readiness for tutoring. The results of research and experimental work are presented in Table 2.



**Table 2. The dynamics levels of teachers' psychological readiness for tutor activity at the start and at the end of research and experimental work**

| Levels of Formation. | Criteria for the development of tutor activity |      |                              |      |                                |      |                              |      |                                |      |                              |      |                                |      |                              |      |
|----------------------|--|------|------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|------------------------------|------|
|                      | Motivational                                   |      |                              |      | Cognitive                      |      |                              |      | Activity                       |      |                              |      | Reflexive                      |      |                              |      |
|                      | At the start of the experiment                 |      | At the end of the experiment |      | At the start of the experiment |      | At the end of the experiment |      | At the start of the experiment |      | At the end of the experiment |      | At the start of the experiment |      | At the end of the experiment |      |
|                      | EG   | CG   | EG                           | CG   | EG                             | CG   | EG                           | CG   | EG                             | CG   | EG                           | CG   | EG                             | CG   | EG                           | CG   |
| High                 | 11   | 10,2 | 55,2                         | 28,1 | 14                             | 12,5 | 48,9                         | 15   | 12,2                           | 10,7 | 51,1                         | 13,8 | 11,3                           | 9,1  | 54,2                         | 14,8 |
| Moderate             | 27,2   | 25,7 | 23,7                         | 48,9 | 32,2                           | 29,1 | 34                           | 36,8 | 26,8                           | 24,9 | 42,3                         | 46,9 | 28,4                           | 26,3 | 34,6                         | 70,4 |
| Low                  | 61,8   | 64,1 | 21,1                         | 23   | 53,8                           | 58,4 | 17,1                         | 48,2 | 61                             | 64,4 | 6,6                          | 39,3 | 60,3                           | 64,6 | 11,2                         | 14,8 |

The analysis of the empirical experiment results showed that in the experimental group (EG), where the focused teachers training for the tutoring activity was accomplished, the development level of the excellence tutoring criteria rose from low (59.2%) to high (52.3%) level. In the control groups (CG), the level of readiness for tutor activity increased from the low (62.9%) to the moderate (50.7%).

## DISCUSSION

The program «Professional Tutors Training» provides substantiation, development and introduction of means for the implementation of psychological support of individual professional and innovative tutor's development in the context of excellence tutor as a component of the implementation of the training system in a higher educational institution in the formation of a single educational sphere and the internationalization of specialists' competencies.

Within the framework of the program «Professional Tutors Training» such disciplines are taught: «Historical Sources and Theoretical Foundations of Tutoring», «Innovative pedagogical technologies», «Teaching and tutoring technology», «Methodology of Tutoring», «Tutor Support at Secondary School», «Tutoring in Inclusive Education», «Professional Tutors Training at a Higher Educational Institution», and «Features of Tutor Support in Postgraduate Education».

In general, the program promotes the formation of the necessary ideas about the specifics of tutor skills; creation of a professional standard of tutor activity; and certification of tutor's professional qualifications, scientific and educational examination of the tutoring skills. The subject of the program is the process of tutors training. The subject is aimed at the content and features of the professional tutor activity in the context of innovation activity.

The basis for mastering the material is systematic, active, independent work of tutors, aimed at understanding the educational, scientific and specialized literature about excellence tutoring, solving educational tasks, writing essays, and scientific reports. The practical tasks of the

program will help the future tutors not only to form certain theoretical foundations, but also the necessary skills for self-organization in their own professional work in the sphere of tutoring.

In summary, we emphasize that there are such components in the structure of the tutors' psychological readiness for professional activity as: motivational, orientation, cognitive-operational, emotional-volitional, psychophysiological and evaluative. It should be noted that the pedagogical orientation as a form of manifestation of pedagogical abilities and inclinations is a very important component of the structure of psychological readiness for tutor activity.

During the experimental work, we have identified the criteria for motivation, cognition, activity and reflection in accordance with the distinct components of the structure of the future tutors' psychological readiness for innovative tutor activity. The criterion of motivation for psychological readiness for tutor activity is based on the following indicators: motivation to study professional disciplines by means of a humanistic teacher self-centration; the ability to perform problem-solving tasks in tutor activity; and the disclosure of the practical application of educational material. The criterion of cognition regarding the teachers' psychological readiness for innovative tutor activity is specified by a number of indicators: possession of a basic knowledge system of tutoring skills; structuring the educational material of professional tutors training; awareness on the essence of innovation activity; and readiness for implementation the interdisciplinary approach to excellence tutoring. The criterion of the teachers' psychological readiness for implementation tutoring skills is realized by the generalized indicators: the use of modern educational technologies and innovative pedagogical systems in practical activity; successful tutors training based on the results of curricular practical training; the development of skills of innovative and research experimental work; and the ability to present educational material in the form of cognitive operations and actions. The criterion of the reflection of teachers' psychological readiness for innovative tutor activity is represented by the following indicators: the development of innovative competence and constant professional self-realization of the future tutor; self-understanding of the implementation level of innovation activity; self-interpretation and self-determination of the individual work style; and the ability to reflect the results of professional activities.



## CONCLUSION

Consequently, the level of future tutors' psychological readiness for the tutor activity in the experimental and control groups at the formative stage of the experiment has been increased due to a qualitatively prepared certification program «Professional Tutors Training»; active participation in practical trainings including discussions, round tables, and thematic conferences devoted to introduction of excellence tutoring; conducting training exercises for the development of innovative skills, research and experimental work; the quality of the model's defense of the introduction tutor activities (the ability to present and defense their model, use both graphic and verbal description); prepared scientific and methodological recommendations for teaching the certification program «Professional tutors training»; and the quality of the conducted trainings at secondary education institutions about the introducing tutor activity.

Prospects for further research we see in the development of educational and methodological complexes, scientific and methodical literature for the participants of the project «School of Excellence Tutoring»; testing practical experience of tutor support; creation of educational content for teachers-researchers (planning training activities and exchange of experience

between project participants); the development of methodological recommendations for teachers and psychologists; and the development of criteria and mechanisms for assessing the impact of the implementation of the scientific and pedagogical project «School of Excellence Tutoring».

### *Conflict of interests*

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

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