PROFESSIONAL ADJUSTMENT IN CARRIER DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHER

Z. Ducheva

Technical college – Yambol, Trakia university

ABSTRACT
The dynamic modern conditions, the variety of opportunities that are offered to teachers and the likelihood of frequent change of the workplace, activities and job positions, are a prerequisite for the increased importance of the professional adjustment issue. In this paper we review the adjustment as a process of becoming well acquainted with the profession and harmonization of a person’s interactions with the professional environment, as a long and complex process that starts when a person gets acquainted with the profession and continues throughout life.

Key words: Adjustment, professional adjustment, career development

INTRODUCTION
Adaptation is a subject of examining of lots of psychologists, sociologists, pedagogues as well as physiologists and biologists. It is so because of the fact, that this term designates “adaptation of a living creature, process of changing a particular living system…”[ 5, p.10]. In the Bulgarian language only one term is used to denote all different meanings of the term – psychological, physiological and social. In the English language two denotations are used: ‘adaptation’ and ‘adjustment’ – the former in the sense of biological adaptation and the latter- as social adjustment.

PROFESSIONAL ADJUSTMENT
Job, professional engagements and progress play an important role in one’s life, because the relative share of waking hours spent on work and preparations for it is big. That is why one might say that work is the main source of personal identity and role definiteness.

“Professional adjustment is a long complex process, which starts with entering into manpower and lasts as long as lifetime.” [1, c.896]

Correspondence to: Zlatoeli Atanasova Ducheva
Technical college – Yambol “Graf Ignatiev” str. 38,
zl.ducheva@abv.bg

Basing his argument on different German and Russian sources, A. Kutev draws a general conclusion, that the notion “professional adjustment” includes the following three components:

adjustment labour to man- it means ergonomic conformity of conditions of work and means of production with man;

adjustment man to labour– it includes everything – starting with professional consultation (ascertainment one’s labour and professional suitability for a certain activity) up to one’s professional preparation, training and qualification;

adjustment man to man – i.e. activities, directed towards favourable forms of cooperation, information and communication during the work process.

I agree with the interpretation of some Bulgarian, Russian and western authors who consider professional adjustment to be a “process of entering a man upon a profession and harmonizing his interaction with the professional environment” (V.P.Kashirin and V.A.Slastenin, St.. Zhekova, D.Super and others.). The prevailing point of view is that, professional adjustment is a long and complex process, which starts with entering into profession and lasts all life. What supports this thesis is that perfecting labour imposes the necessity of continual professional development, which differs a lot.
from making progress in hierarchy. Developing in one place in the light of continuous re-adjustment to changing circumstances is not easier than the transition from one kind of work to another.

STAGES OF PROFESSIONAL ADJUSTMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

During their development teachers pass through different professional career stages, connected with age and career development. For that purpose Levinson, Arnold and Feldman’s career model might be applied: pre-career – investigation (15-22 years), early career – trial (22-30 years), early career – establishing (30-38 years), middle career – transition (38-45 years), middle career – development (45-55 years), late career – maintenance (55-62 years), late career – retirement (62-70 years); it involves mastering certain work activities and solving psychological problems, necessary for each stage. Repeated cycle of career development, stabilization and transition in each stage requires from the teacher to go through a period of growth and development of new skills, followed by a period of stabilization, and as for the third one – transition from the requirements of the present career stage to the anticipated needs of the next one. The stage of growth is marked by excitement and challenge, borne by professional position; the stage of establishment is accompanied by bright professional contribution and creative work, and the stage of transition – by revaluation and anxiety about the occupied professional position and role. This characteristic of the transition once more proves the necessity of perpetual adjustment and re-adjustment to the professional obligations, positions and roles.

Donald Super points that professional adjustment goes through three stages– establishment, maintenance and subsidence. Each stage has different problems to solve. In the stage of establishing career one’s first task is to apply his professional preferences and become aware of the necessity of stabilizing his career. During the stage of maintenance one either finds stable job or resorts to less or more constant instability. And in the end one consolidates and makes progress in his professional career. Miller, Form Robert Havigherst define three stages, too, but they formulate them in a different way.

Professional adjustment of different specialists, including teachers, is determined by interior and exterior circumstances, by their professional interaction with the environment and their way of living. According to some Russian authors, a teacher’s professional career is characterized by the fact, that he in his professional development goes through different stages– training, going to work, professional development, maintenance of his individual professional abilities, retirement. These stages professional career development of the personality are connected with so-called internal organization career, in which three main types of career movement are distinguished: vertical, horizontal and centripetal. A teacher’s professional adjustment presupposes not only mastering certain achievements within the profession, but also forming social orientation as a basis of a professional self-defining of the individuality, which is a basis of the common life orientation and values. That is why we can say that there is a connection between the processes of individuality adjustment to the working team and the professional community and forming social orientation and stereotypes, typical for this professional group.

In the Russian psychological school there are different stands on the problem of teacher professional adjustment. A.K. Markova, M.A.Dmitrieva and others consider it a process, which does not finish with the professional training, but starts with it. On the one hand they see professional adjustment as a process of entering the teacher into professional environment, acquiring professional experience, and on the other hand – as a process of active accumulation of professional competence, like the choice of professional behaviour decisions, supposing perpetual professional self-development (A.K.Markova, V.D.Shadrikov). According to these authors, because of the mutual adjustment of man and professional environment, a teacher’s professional adjustment is an active process not only of adjusting individuality to the profession, but also of creative adjusting the profession to the personal individual features and the experience of the professional, practicing the profession. Bolotova considers adjustment a dynamic balance in the system “man- professional environment”. Forming social orientation as a central mechanism of social- psychological adjustment includes forming an orientation towards definite professional activity with all its aspects.
As an active process professional development starts with professional readiness to work, in which reflect social aims, desires, requirements, and professional expectations.

Researchers of professional career and adjustment define different types of adjustment.

V. Podmarkov outlines structural levels of work adjustment according to various criteria – individual’s area of interaction in labour activity (production-technical and social-psychological adjustment) and according to the dynamics of the adjustment process – (primary and secondary adjustment).

Viewed as a level of achieved correspondence of individual prerequisites and contents and conditions of work, professional adjustment is defined as an achieved (realised) adjustment. Other authors define the level of functional adjustment through the degree of acquiring work operations getting accustomed to the working place. The parameters of associating with members of the team and friendly contacts are part of the signs of adjusting to the working team.

Essential role for successful professional pedagogic adjustment of the beginners in the profession of a teacher plays the level of their preparation and the potential of adjustability, which has autonomous nature. Processes of different types of adjustability are mutually connected and conditioned, but under the leading role of professional activity adjustment.

Successful professional adjustment has its own dynamics, contents and peculiarities and is determined by value system of the teacher individuality, system including attitude towards oneself, colleagues, governing body, profession and official duties.

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