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### DEONTOLOGICAL APPROACH TO HIGHER EDUCATION

**Abstract.** From the point of view of the deontology-based approach, the author considers the topical problem of a specialist's professional personality development in the educational environment of a higher education institution. The author also analyzes certain factors determining some professional deformations of the specialist's personality. It is supposed that such approach will stimulate self-development of future specialists, fostering their professional competences and creativity.

**Keywords:** deontology, professional personality development, professional personality deformation, professional competences, self-education.

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The current change of educational paradigm (from "education for the rest of one's life" to "education during the whole lifetime") demands alteration of the goals, content and technological support for the higher education and criteria of its effectiveness including those connected with the development of the professional personality of a specialist as the subject of communication and activity called upon to efficiently function in the socio-cultural space adequately responding to the challenges of the time.

We consider education from these positions not only as a specially organized process of academic and pastoral work, but rather as motivated and conscious academic activity aimed at self-modification. Pedagogues and students should develop critical attitude the their own (committed and planned) actions and learn to use reflection – the ability to cogi-

tate on one's actions in the course of which man clearly realizes **what he does and how effectively he does it.** **Reflection** is not a consequence of compulsion; it is rather conscious work stimulated from the outside but done of one's own free will to understand oneself in the environment and the environment in oneself with the aim of personal self-development.

Deontological training becomes the central issue of the professional development of the personality of a specialist.

**Professional development** as a personal change in the process of acquisition of professional activity characterizes individual specific path of a person from the beginning of formation of the first concepts about the profession and professional intentions to the end of professional career. The following stages may be singled out in the process of profes-

sional development: optation (formation of professional intentions and choice of profession), professional training and professional preparation, professional adaptation, primary and secondary professionalization, professional mastery and coaching [1].

The system of knowledge, habits, skills, professional and general cultural competences and abilities of a future specialist is formed in the educational space of a higher education institution. So, deontological training in the process of which students individually acquire knowledge, norms, values, principles and requirements of their professional activity functions as the core of higher professional education.

**Deontology** (from Greek δέον, “obligation, duty” and λόγος, “study”) is a science about proper professional behavior and professional and moral duties of workers studying a complex of ethical norms and principles of behavior of the subjects of professional activity. The term was introduced into scientific usage by the famous English lawyer and philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748—1832) whose works *A Treatise on Judicial Evidence* and *Principles of Penal Law* had a great impact on the juridical science and legislation of many countries. In his book *Deontology or the Science of Morality* J. Bentham formulated the moral ideal (“it is the greatest happiness of the greatest number that is the measure of right and wrong”), offered a criterion of morality (“pursuit of benefit, good and happiness”) and worked out the system of utilitarian morality.

Professional deontology as an interdisciplinary science studies the problems of professional duty, obligation and proper behavior in various systems of relationships: specialist – object of their professional activity; specialist – society, state, law, order; specialist – their professional reference group; specialist – their relation to themselves. Uncertainty in the system of social expectations, discrepancy between norms, underlying these expectations and requirements to the subjects of professional activity and groups and inadequate interiorization by the individual of the normative and juridical systems and humanitarian values act as the main sources of negative deviant behavior [2].

Proper behavior is manifested, first of all, by the fact that the professional does not perform their duties formally, but does it in the way optimal for the given situation. According to the outstanding Russian philosopher V.I. Solov'ev virtue consists in proper relation to everything. But it is not individual alone that bears responsibility to society, society has its own responsibilities towards an individual. Upsetting balance between the person's duty towards society and the society's obligations towards the person leads to social deviations and causes structural reorganization of a community. That is why, for example, the concepts about the duty and material stimuli cannot act in opposite directions.

The present moment in the history of our country is accompanied by complicating the situational system and diversifying it which makes some individuals and professional groups

sometimes choose such methods of behavior which get in conflict with normative expectations. It is necessary to create such a system in which the cultural-educational stimuli would act in unity with the market material ones.

For example, due to its social significance, professional activity of lawyers has always been in the focus of social attention, which led to the emergence of police deontology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Society evaluates the activity of law enforcing organs primarily by morality standards. It has every right to expect that the subjects of the law enforcing activity will be true to the oath of allegiance and will perform their professional duties honestly and conscientiously, i.e. not only quickly and efficiently but also morally while defending the honor and dignity of the citizens and taking into account the moral aspects of their activity. The most important social norm demanded by the society's interests and expectations in its relationships with the professional community of lawyers stems from this assumption. This norm-requirement demands that a specialist perform the professional duty honestly, not formally according to the law, but conscientiously, responsibly, morally and ethically.

The main moral requirement of society to specialists is to literally correspond to the social expectations and own mission. The main criterion according to which specialist's activity is evaluated by social opinion is the level of correspondence of their professional behavior and activity to

the image of a perfect lawyer-professional that has been formed in the mind of the population. According to I. Kant, morality is not part of knowledge. It forms the sphere of values. The person who has learnt the laws is not yet their advocate. It is yet necessary to awaken his morality.

Social norms written in professional codes are worked out taking into account the interests of concrete professional groups and social ideas about the duty, i.e. the allowed, possible, approved, welcome or unacceptable, unapproved, undesirable in professional behavior.

Moral norms contain part of the humanity experience and acknowledged social ideals. They cannot be instilled by force; the people follow them according to their inner convictions. An ideal is the highest standard to be achieved, and the norm is a certain boundary below which a person has no right to go. A culturally crippled and, consequently, professionally incompetent pedagogue, doctor or lawyer is as dangerous as a potential criminal. That is why moral norms are to be explained, imbued, studied and thought over for them to become conscious inner motives of professional behavior of university students and graduates.

Freedom is the most important asset of personal dignity. Many philosophers consider freedom as conscious pursuit of one's duty which reflects the necessity of everything happening in the world. According to Seneca, "the fates lead the willing and drag the unwilling". This assumption clearly shows that the ethical norm of

freedom is realized through proper behavior which needs forcing oneself rather than getting a spontaneous desire to be free. That is why, in order to become a really free professional, it is necessary to possess the whole complex of the corresponding formalized and non-formalized norms of proper professional behavior.

It is only natural that in the first place one should acquire and readily fulfill law and moral obligations set out in ethical codes and trade instructions. The necessary properties of a professional may be defined as follows: professional allegiance; conscientious attitude to one's professional duty; responsibility; humanism. Each member of the staff must follow the policy enacted by the government through legislation irrespective of personal political beliefs.

The efficiency of fulfilling ethical requirements by a specialist to a great degree depends on their propaganda and thorough and in-depth training professional ethics in the system of higher education. That is why universities should aim at improvement and expansion of the means and methods of teaching and educating future professional from the positions of deontological foundations of their activity.

It is all-round enhancement of deontological training as an inseparable component of academic and pastoral process in the system of higher education that can facilitate the formation of the necessary professional properties, moral fiber and prevention and overcoming professional deformations of the personality of a lawyer.

Professional development is in-

evitably liable to professional deformations of the personality. Socionomic professions of the "person – person" type (lawyers, civil servants, business managers, pedagogues, doctors, etc.) are the most vulnerable ones. The character and degree of manifestation of professional deformations depend on the character and content of professional activity, profession prestige, work experience and individual psychological properties of a person [3].

**Professional deformation** is interpreted as modification of personality traits (value orientations, perception stereotypes, temperament, ways of communication and behavior) which takes place under the influence of professional activity.

Representatives of socinomic professions who constantly contact other people may display professional deformations on four levels.

1. General professional deformations typical of workers of a concrete profession. Thus, law enforcement officers develop the "asocial perception" which makes them look at any person as a potential law offender; company or institution leaders often have the "all-permissiveness" syndrome which manifests itself in violations of professional and ethical norms and in trying to manipulate the professional life of the subordinates. A complex of general professional deformations makes the workers of a profession similar to each other and easily recognizable.

2. Special professional deformations emerging in the process of specialization of professional activity.

It is well known that the profession of a lawyer unites several specialties which have their own combination of deformations. Thus, an investigator acquires juridical suspiciousness, a detective may become aggressive, an attorney tends to favor prosecution and an advocate often displays professional cunning.

3. Professional-typological deformations caused by overlapping individual psychological personality traits – temperament, abilities, temper – on the psychological structure of activity. The following profession- and personality-based complexes may form as a result of such deformations:

- deformation of professional orientation of a person (activity motivation distortion, rearrangement of value orientations, pessimism, skeptical attitude to innovations and newcomers);

- deformation developing on the basis of certain abilities: organizational, communicative, intellectual, etc. (superiority complex, hypertrophied level of claims, too high self-esteem, psychological closedness, narcissism);

- deformations brought about by personality traits (love of power, dominance, role expansion, “job intervention”, indifference).

4. Individual deformations due to individual personal properties of a worker. In the process of psychological fusion of personality and profession separate professionally relevant or professionally undesirable properties overdevelop which leads to accentuation of personality traits. These properties may be hyper-responsibility, hy-

per-vigilance, hyperactivity, labor fanaticism. These deformations are termed “professional cretinism”.

These deformations result in psychological tension, conflicts, crises, lowering effectiveness of professional activity, and discontent with life and social environment. While analyzing and neutralizing the impact of factors causing professional deformations development, it is necessary to take into account the specificity of professional activity.

The development of professional deformations of the subjects of juridical activity is influenced by the following factors: great variety of professional problems solved on the basis of normative documents; rigid regulation of juridical activity; high emotional tension of professional activity; performance of authoritative activity which demands high responsibility for one’s actions; overcoming the resistance on the part of some persons or groups; and obligatory communication with law offenders during which the subjects influence each other directly or indirectly.

Professional deformations emerging in the moral, intellectual and emotional spheres manifest themselves in the following forms.

**Professional evaluation stereotypes and the corresponding aims.** A professional stereotype or “evaluation scale” is characterized by relative stability and simplification and emerges in the situation of inadequate information about professional activity.

Professional stereotypes can make activity faster, more exact and successful. But at the same time ap-

proaches and evaluation become too stereotyped and activity problems are rather simplified, which may result in lowering the level of professionalism and mistakes in professional activity.

**Inclination towards prosecution** is a professional aim which is formed on the basis of the lawyer's communication with colleagues and law offenders, hyper-suspiciousness, non-critical attitude to incoming information, and inability to assess the professional situation objectively. Inclination towards prosecution may appear as a result of growing negative feelings of guilt, fear and low self-appraisal, as well as such negative emotions in reference to the accused as disbelief, dislike, irritation, anger, hatred, etc. Actions aimed at "beating" the desired evidence out of prisoners or at making a person admit their guilt by all means available are examples of behavioral manifestation of the inclination towards prosecution.

**Confidence in one's infallibility while solving any professional problems** develops on the basis of too high self-esteem and assurance of correctness of one's actions and views; and sometimes it rests on non-critical attitude to unlawful actions. On the level of behavior, confidence in one's infallibility may be manifested by cases of organization leaders taking contradictory decisions on one and the same issue or being unwilling to coordinate these decisions. Peremptory position, confidence in infallibility of one's suppositions and evaluations in combination with ungrounded belief in professional insight and professional experience

may lead to blunders in judicature or even to conviction of the innocent.

**The stereotype of closedness** consists in monopolizing certain information and in inclination to "self-secrecy" for giving oneself false importance. The given stereotype reflects the person's hyper self-control, restraint and predisposition to anxiety. It may reveal itself in the form of aggressive behavior of the subjects of professional activity in response to critical remarks about them in mass media.

The stereotype "boss should be hard, tough and persistent" is based on the widely spread opinion that efficiency of professional behavior of a superior worker towards the inferior one is ensured by the position "above", and manifestation of hard and tough attitude. Such position may lead to professional roles conflicts, cause tension, feeling of inner discomfort, worry and anxiety in the work collective. The subject in such a state is maximally liable to professional deformations.

**The stereotype "the boss is always right"** consists in the idea that the head must demand unquestioning fulfillment of their orders and tasks, and readiness to follow their point of view without discussing it. The subordinate should accept the superior's vision of the problem and follow his instructions whatever they might be. This stereotype may have positive effect in situations of professional coaching, training and education of subordinates by means of a good example. But if it is manifested in all situations, it begins to interfere with

the creative approach of subordinates to solution of professional problems; they lose necessity to think about the purpose of their activity, and the leaders develop an authoritative manner of management.

The authoritative manner of management shows in decline of reflection – self-analysis and self-control, in display of superciliousness and despotism, and in totalitarian leadership through orders and instructions. Authoritarian leaders and teachers tend to use various kinds of punishment and cannot stand criticism.

**Dominance** is connected with execution of power functions: to demand, to evaluate, to punish, to control. The development of this professional deformation is also defined as individual-typological properties of a person. Dominance is more often found in choleric and phlegmatic persons. Juridical and pedagogical activities create favorable conditions for satisfaction of the need of power and of self-affirmation at the expense of others.

**The stereotype of optimal role behavior** closely connected with the previous one consists in the subject of professional activity's conviction that showing persistence and firmness in defending one's position is the most efficient way of resolving problem situations. This stereotype in combination with false understanding of corporatism brings about professional deformation. False understanding of corporatism leads to the wish to preserve corporate reputation at the expense of lawful interests.

**Professional indifference** is characterized by emotional reserve,

and ignoring the partners of professional communication's individual personal traits. This deformation is typical of callous closed people with little empathy having problems with communication. It may produce indifference to people, to their fates, emotions and interests. Indifference develops due to negative personal experience of professional interaction with people and emotional fatigue or emotional burnout syndrome.

Emotional burnout is defined as a mechanism of psychological defense in the form of complete or partial exclusion of emotions in response to psycho-traumatic intervention. As it was stated above, juridical and pedagogical activities are distinguished by high emotional intensity with deficit of positive impressions. And negative emotions are often to be subdued and an emotional relaxation may be put off to a much later time. Emotional burnout manifests itself as an acquired stereotype of professional behavior. On the one hand, it allows a person to use their energy economically and by portions, on the other hand, it may have negative impact on fulfillment of one's professional duties and relationships with partners.

**Conservatism** is manifested in prejudice against innovations, suspicious attitude towards creative workers, and allegiance to traditional methods of work. Development of conservatism is facilitated by the "normative" character of activity when the worker has to reproduce regularly the same forms and methods time and again, which may lead to the habit of acting according to the model

using a normative act, instruction or order from a superior as a cover. Turning to the past, bias against innovations, need of stability and adherence to traditional forms and methods of activity form behavioral stereotypes which may hamper development of both the worker themselves and the organization they work at.

**Professional aggression** shows in the lack of desire to take into consideration feeling, rights or interests of other people, regular use of punishment, demand of total obedience, and abuse of power and office. Complexity of professional activity with inevitable difficulties, barriers and coercion brings about frustration, i.e. motivation-emotional state caused by long-term blockade of purposive professional behavior. Frustration may take the form of aggression, depression, substitution, etc. Recurrent frustrations may stimulate the emergence of negative personal qualities: aggressiveness, spite, dependence, indifference, apathy and business pessimism. Aggression as a professional deformation manifests itself at later stages of work experience when thinking becomes more stereotyped and self-criticism and ability to resolve conflict situations in a constructive way diminishes.

**Role expansionism**, i.e. transposition of one's occupational role onto non-occupational relationships reveals itself in complete immersion in profession, concentrating on one's own problems and difficulties, in inability or lack of desire to understand another person, in prevalence of edifying remarks and preemptory statements. This

deformation shows in rigid role-based behavior outside the organization and in exaggeration of one's role and importance. The person's behavior in this case becomes inadequate to the situation which can prevent one from non-conflict and full interpersonal communication manifesting itself, for example, in tactlessness, rudeness, aggressiveness, etc.

**Behavioral transfer** characterizes the formation of features of role-based behavior and properties typical of partners in professional communication (superiors, subordinates, law offenders, etc.). The proverb "evil communications corrupt good manners" is true about the law enforcement personnel: in their behavior, emotional responses and speech one can often clearly see psychological traits of law offenders. Normative behavior of the latter – aggression, hostility, rudeness, emotional instability – is transferred onto professional behavior of the subjects of law enforcement activity.

**Legal nihilism** consists in conscious ignoring law requirements but without criminal intent. The given deformation has several forms of manifestation: а) disparagement of the requirements of the law or failure to take measures required by the law; б) ignoring the law requirements in the form of pseudo-activity and simulation of impetuous activity; в) arbitrary interpretation of the law when the subject of professional activity manipulates legal categories due to circumstances.

**Hyper-control** is manifested in excessive control of one's emotions,



in orientation to instructions, escape from responsibility, suspicious caution and scrupulous control of activity of the subordinates.

In order to prevent and overcome professional deformation one can use corresponding psycho-pedagogical technologies aimed at revealing and developing the individuality of the students, activization and realization of their creative potential, and optimization of interaction between all participants of the education process. Deontological training includes acquisition of the necessary psycho-pedagogical knowledge for adequate evaluation and assessment of negative factors of professional activity, formation and development of professionally relevant traits (justice, humanism, responsibility, objectivity, sense of duty, honor, dignity, emotional stability), development of professional habits and skills on the

basis of training technologies of professional-personal development.

The efficiency of deontological training of specialists greatly depends on the degree of application of the content potential of all academic discipline of a higher education institution with all pedagogues clearly seeing deontological opportunities of each discipline, and on using adequate methods of education and self-education of students.

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