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## **FORMATION OF HEALTH CULTURE AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

**Abstract.** The article deals with the issues of the primary school pedagogue's health and his role in the process of formation of life values of junior schoolchildren, specifically their attitude to their own health. A number of researchers note that the teacher's activity is connected with nervous-emotional overload which manifests itself in certain psychological and psycho-physiological symptoms. The level of the teacher's health determines the quality of their professional activity; the teacher must also be a model for their pupils in the sphere of health preservation and promotion.

The authors consider the notions of "teacher's health culture" and "professional health". They have carried out questionnaires among primary school teachers of Ekaterinburg and Sverdlovsk Oblast in order to reveal the level of formation of motivation towards healthy lifestyle and the attitude to their own health and the health of their pupils. The questionnaire results show that the pedagogues use various methods and forms of work in order to form health culture and healthy lifestyle in junior schoolchildren, though the role of administration in this area is still inadequate, and the school itself should be interested in healthy teachers and pupils. Some young specialists try to avoid developing bad habits, walk in the open air, sleep long enough, keep to a diet and go in for sports and fitness to preserve and promote their health. Pedagogues aged 26-30 years demonstrate deviations in their dietary plan and nutrition. The development of the teachers' health culture needs support from the school administration, state structures and parents.

The system of modern professional education where the teacher's health is recognized as one of the vital values needs training pedagogues possessing a high level of health culture and capable of applying the knowledge in the sphere of health preservation not only in relation to their pupils but also to themselves.

**Keywords:** health culture; healthy lifestyle; primary school teachers; primary school; junior schoolchildren; professional health.

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According to the professional standard introduced in 2017 by the Ministry of Labor of the Russian Federation, one of the professional functions of the pedagogue of the primary general education consists in formation of the culture of healthy and safe lifestyle in their pupils [16].

E. A. Rudenko (2011) believes that the pedagogue's personality is viewed upon as an important condition determining the effectiveness of the education process and its quality [18]. There is no doubt that the teacher, as well as the parents, should take part in the process of formation of the system of life values of junior schoolchildren, specifically their attitude to their own health.

We agree with the opinion of a number of scholars (A. A. Pecherikina, 2011; L. N. Mitina, 2015; N. N. Belousova, V. P. Mal'tsev, 2016, etc.) that in the system "teacher – pupil – family", the pedagogue plays a significant role in

the orientation of the participants of pedagogical interaction [6; 15; 17]. Therefore, the success of the pedagogical activity does not only depend on how the teacher can coordinate their own behavior, actions, words, emotions and feelings but also on the state of their physical and spiritual health, as well as their social well-being [*as cited in:* 15, p. 14]. In the long run, it determines the effectiveness of cooperation in the system "teacher – pupil – family". The conception of the authors mentioned above agrees with our own data on the problem [8].

The processes taking place in modern education (amalgamation of education institutions in large complexes, introduction of the federal state educational standards of new generation, introduction of the professional standard of the pedagogue, creation of the open educational environment, etc.) lead to intensification of labor and raise the professional requirements for the primary school teacher.

A number of researchers (O. A. Anisimova, 2005; I. A. Novikova, M. S. Zekhova, 2011; N. A. Bazhenova, 2015, etc.) argue that the professional activity of the pedagogue is one of the most strenuous jobs both in the psychological and the social aspects: teacher's work belongs to the group of professions with a large number of stress factors [5; 13; 14].

Some authors (M. A. Ivanova, T. A. Plotnikova, 2015) have figured out that the week's working load of the teacher constitutes 70.5 hours, which is almost twice as large as the established norm for this category of workers; i.e. the teacher's working day lasts more than 11 hours. The same authors note that more than 76% of the Russian pedagogues have irregular meals, more than 90% of the teachers suffer from nervous-emotional tension at work, and the respondents report that they cannot have proper rest at night (they have less than 7 hours of sleep); more than 50% of the participants consult a doctor once or twice a half-year or even once or twice a year; and more than 45% of the teachers resort to self-medication [10, pp. 2—3].

A. I. Anisimov [2] argues that after 15-20 years of pedagogical activity, the teacher finds himself/herself in the state of a psychological crisis – they have frequent nervous breakdowns and develop symptoms of psychological and psychophysiological disorders: de-

personalization and propensity to underestimate their professional achievements and potential. There emerges the risk of professional burnout, and, as a consequence, of impairing the teacher's psychological well-being and health [2]. The teacher's work exhausts the person both psychologically and physically.

E. V. Mettus points out that a significant number of teachers have no motivation towards health promoting pedagogical activity and care of their own health; what is more, they do not possess the necessary knowledge and skills in this field [12].

In her analysis of the factors influencing the teacher's health, N. N. Malyarchuk writes that such factors often include the personality traits of the teacher: absence of motivation towards healthy lifestyle, low level of self-organization and effective use of the working time [11]. The pedagogue has poor skills of health preserving activity because they do not realize its importance.

The same author mentions that, unfortunately, the majority of teachers treat health as something dynamic and hard to achieve and shift the responsibility from the person to external conditions, unfavorable social environment and the like, or consider health as something once given and impossible to change [*Ibid.*].

As many authors state (E. G. Stepanov, R. M. Fasikov, N. A. Diden-

ko, 2011; O. F. Zhukov, N. S. Ros-soshanskaya, 2011; L. F. Savinova, 2012; V. S. Akimova, I. B. Ishmukhametov, 2012; N. A. Bazhenova, 2015; M. A. Aslankhanov, 2016), the issue of the health of the pedagogues as a separate category of persons has been neglected for a long enough time, and the quality of education has not been associated with the level of the teachers' health [1; 3; 5; 9; 19; 20]. At the same time it is quite clear that the teacher with a high level of physical and psychological health, who cherishes the values of healthy lifestyle, is capable to perform their duties more professionally. They could effectively cope with the stresses of the modern school medium, live a long and active pedagogical life, and become a model for their pupils translating their experience in the field of health preservation and promotion.

According to A. I. Bel'skaya, the teacher has no right to treat their health light-mindedly: they are role models and should be responsible for the consequences of their experience imitation, and the school should use the unique opportunity to form the healthy lifestyle of all the participants of the education process in the system "teacher – pupil – family" [7].

Taking all this into account, the scholars define the notions of "teacher's health culture" and "professional health".

N. N. Malyarchuk defines the health culture of the teacher as the subject of professional activity in the capacity of a sophisticated multi-component personal construct targeted at the complex solution of the problems of preservation and promotion of the health of the students, the pedagogue himself and including the culture of personal health and health promoting pedagogical activity [11, p. 6].

E. V. Mettus notes that the teacher's health culture is an integrative personal construct represented by the unity of axiological, technological and personal-creative components, characterized by a high level of acquisition of valeological knowledge and skills, well-formed value-oriented attitude to health, healthy life style, ability to reflect their life activity and salient orientation of the professional-pedagogical activity towards health preservation, promotion and formation [12, p. 38].

E. A. Bagnetova, I. V. Sorokun, O. L. Nifontova believe that the health culture is a constituent of the general system of culture, and its development is a pedagogical problem the solution of which is achieved via the process of education and upbringing [4, p. 309].

Thus, all the above mentioned authors regard health culture as an integrative personal construct, as a constituent of the health culture of the whole society, possessing socially significant value, as well as a

factor of the personal health of the pedagogue, which makes it possible to speak about their high working capacity and professional longevity; what is more, the teacher's health culture is an inseparable factor of the process forming the health culture of the students.

A. G. Maklakov (2001) argues that professional health is a certain level of health characteristics of the specialist meeting the demands of professional activity and ensuring its high effectiveness [*as cited in*: 15, p. 14].

L. M. Mitina defines the professional health of the teacher as the ability of the organism to preserve and activate compensatory, protective and regulatory mechanisms ensuring the working capacity, efficiency and personal development of the teacher under all conditions of their professional activity [13].

A. A. Pecherkina interprets the teacher's professional health as a state of the organism ensuring the working capacity, competence and constructive personal development of the teacher at all stages of professional growth [15, p. 15]. In our opinion, there is direct connection between the teacher's health culture and their professional health.

It should be noted that the current system of higher education and the system of advanced training are basically oriented towards training specialists in the field of concrete sciences and methods of teaching,

whereas the issues of personal development of the pedagogue remain "outside the parentheses" [15]. It means that the teacher may possess the necessary volume of knowledge in the field of human health preservation, but may fail to know how to use it in the real academic process, and, what is still more important, how to apply it to himself, in order to preserve his professional longevity.

In order to reveal the level of formation of motivation towards healthy lifestyle and the attitude to their own health and the health of their pupils we have carried out questionnaires among primary school teachers of Ekaterinburg and Sverdlovsk Oblast. 61 female pedagogues between the ages of 20 and 40 years took part in the experiment. The contingent of the participants is shown in the table.

More than 50% of respondents of all age groups answered the question about the necessity of further knowledge about promotion and preservation of their health in the affirmative. It was only in the fourth age group of teachers that the number of positive answers was less than 45%.

Interesting answers were given by the pedagogues of different ages to the questions about the sources of information on how to take care of their own health and the health of their pupils. It has been found that 73.6% of the teachers of group 1 regard mainly specialists as sources

of such information – doctors, psychologists and pedagogues; 57% of the teachers of group 2 get this information at sittings of pedagogical councils and methods departments; the specialists of the fourth age group receive information about healthy lifestyles mainly from mass media (the number of such peda-

gogues totaled 65%). It should be noted that less than 15% of respondents of all age groups mentioned the leading role of the education institution administration in spreading information about preservation and promotion of the health of the pupils and the pedagogues.

**Table.** Categories of questionnaire participants

Age (years) and age group	Pedagogical experience, years	Proportion of the total number of respondents, %
20—25 (age group 1)	1—5	31.3
26—30 (age group 2)	6—9	22.9
31—35 (age group 3)	7—16	22.9
Over 35 (age group 4)	7—22	22.9

The following answers were received to the question about the most popular forms of work with primary school pupils on the issue of health preservation: 71.4% of the respondents say that more often than not they organize preventive talks on the problems of healthy lifestyle and disease prevention. The fact that 52.6% of young teachers discuss the questions of health preservation at the lessons and via out-of-class activities (contests, lessons of health culture, excursions, etc.) is interesting enough; 50% of experienced teachers believe physical fitness events and games to be more popular.

About 40% of the respondents, when asked about the most efficient methods of formation of healthy lifestyles, mentioned the teacher's role model for the children. Physical fitness activity was ranked second in significance. 10.5% of young pedagogues place great importance on the out-of-class activities aimed at formation of healthy lifestyles among pupils. The more experienced teachers consider the work with parents and training family members on the topics connected with health preservation to be more significant. The fact that only 4.9% of all those interviewed believe that it is necessary to train pedagogues for effective work on

the issues of health preservation causes our concern.

Almost 79% of the teachers note that the state of the health of contemporary schoolchildren is not satisfactory and deviates from the norm, and show well-grounded concern about their health.

Among the most important factors influencing the formation of the modern children's health culture, the experiment participants named the following: family (from 71% to 92% in each age group), second in significance (from 36% to 50%) – the system of preschool and school education, third in significance (26.5%) – the Internet.

Only two respondents evaluated the state of their health as “excellent”; the majority of those interviewed consider their health to be “good” or “satisfactory”, and the negative evaluation is mostly found in the second age group (42%). 35.7% of the specialists of the older age group express health complaints.

In order to promote their health, young specialists try to spend more time in the open air, avoid addictions and sleep well; in addition, they prefer to keep to dietary plan and nutrition. 71% of the teachers of the second age group go in for sports and fitness. The specialists of all other age groups do very little physical exercise, as sports are not popular among them. Only 24.4% of the respondents keep to the daily

schedule, 26.2% consult doctors regularly and follow their advice.

Practically more than half of the teachers of all age groups confessed that their dietary plan and nutrition were not ideal or did not match the age-related norms. It should be noted that such eating habits are found in the teachers of age groups one and two, which makes up 78.5 and 64.2% respectively.

The fact that only 47.5% of the teachers have breakfast before work, 36% do it irregularly, and more than 16% do not have breakfast at all causes our special concern. And more often than not, it is the pedagogues of the second age group that have no breakfast at all (28%).

Summing up the questionnaire results it should be noted that the majority of the primary school teachers demonstrated low health indices and inadequate level of health culture, because they do not abide by one of the main principles of the healthy lifestyle: they violate the dietary plan and nutrition.

The young pedagogues, with no practical experience of application of health preserving technologies at school, use a number of various methods and forms of work aimed at the formation of healthy lifestyle and health promotion, whereas the teachers of groups three and four use a limited variety of health preserving techniques.

Normal functioning of the modern education system is impossible without health preservation and promotion and without development of the health culture of its participants, both schoolchildren and pedagogues. A teacher with physical and psychological disorders is unable to perform their professional duties efficiently and effectively. In this connection, it is important that not only the teacher but also the institution should be interested in a healthy worker.

Socio-political, legal and economic support and assistance in professional, including health preserving, activity of the teacher on the part of the institution administration, state structures, social institutes and parents are the necessary conditions of formation and development of the pedagogues' health culture.

Thus, one of the leading tasks of the modern system of professional education consists in training the pedagogue, including the primary school teacher, with a high level of health culture, capable of using the principles of healthy lifestyle in practice, including the activities for rational organization of their labor and rest, organizing the process of self-education and search for optimal solutions in the field of healthy lifestyles, actively involving the pupils and their parents, and organizing dissemination of various methods of health promotion.

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