

## IDENTITY CRISIS: PROBLEMS OF TEACHER FORMATION

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**Abstract.** *The article is devoted to the problem of the crisis of personal and social identities as significant components of the “existential crisis” in the context of social transformation. Based on the ideas of existential phenomenology, the authors reveal the changing nature of the teacher identification system, suggest highlighting the notion of the “teacher identity” and consider the crisis nature of its formation. The authors revealed that the process of identifying future teachers is carried out in stages through the subsequent change of academic, educational, professional and professional identity. The transition from one type of identity to another occurs on the basis of identity crises.*

**Keywords:** *identity crisis, formation of teacher identity, phenomenological approach.*

### Introduction

Effective modernization of modern education is impossible without a philosophical understanding of the concept of “identity crisis”. For our study of the formation of identity among teachers, it is especially important to determine what the value scale and ideological orientations of teachers in modern education are, what is the understanding of the socio-cultural foundations of the life of the individual and society. Of particular relevance is the problem of studying the characteristics of the formation of professional identity among students who have chosen the teaching profession. It is during the student period that the targeted development of the system of knowledge, practical skills and

abilities in the chosen professional activity takes place; the formation of holistic ideas about this professional community; the development and filling of the substantive content of the motives and goals of future activities; development of student's professional identity.

World globalization is accompanied by the neglect of many traditional spiritual and social values, which has a significant impact on the identity of the modern man.

The category of identity is one of the most important in the framework of understanding modern socio-cultural processes. However, despite the abundance of theoretical and empirical researches, it is still one of the most complex and theoretically multi-valued. Depending on the field of human knowledge in which the term "identity" is used, it acquires its meaning. American social philosopher A. Etzioni rightly confirms that if the XX century is a struggle of ideologies, the social processes of the XXI century will be determined by identity challenges (Etzioni, 2004).

For Russia, as well as for the entire world community, a crisis of both individual and collective identities is characteristic, polyidentity and "blurred identity" are observed.

The crisis and the collapse of the Soviet ideology and culture once again exposed and extremely aggravated the problem of Russia's civilizational identity, actualizing the various potentials of its transformation, each of which has its own vector of possible sociocultural changes. So, according to A. S. Panarin, the main crisis of modern Russia, is not a social or economic crisis, but the identity crisis. It is this crisis that prevents the "maturing" in society and in the depths of the political elite of the nationwide idea and the formation of subjects of national interests (Panarin, 2003).

The problem of the identity of Russians is most often raised in scientific publications due to the fact that when analyzing the processes taking place in modern Russia, the identity crisis is stated as the most important consequence of the collapse of the former statehood and the source of psychological discomfort of a significant part of the population. The presence of this problem is recognized by both Russian and foreign researchers specializing in various fields of knowledge (Bugaychuk & Koryakovtseva, 2018). For example, I. S. Cohn talked about the "keen sense of loss of identity in modern Russia" (Kohn, 1990), A. Etkind defined "a sudden loss of personal identity" (Etkind, 1996). Thus, the most important consequence of the collapse of the USSR was the identification crisis experienced by a significant part of the population of Russia, and especially by people belonging to the older age groups.

Of course, we view the problem of "existential crisis" and the challenges of identity through the prism of transformation processes in Russia. But a similar situation today is in many countries of the world.

In connection with the above, researchers are faced with the issue of developing technologies and models for the formation of a new identity, and, first of all, a new identity of young people, which is of strategic importance for the future of any country. But since the contemporary social situation is determined by the instability of the traditionally established system of values, stereotypes of thinking and behavior, the loss of ideological orientations, an independent, active and competitive person is becoming the ideal in society, who is forced to self-identify in the conditions of the “identification crisis”. Of course, the process of self-determination and socialization is especially difficult for a young, becoming individual.

It should be noted that the problems of social identifications have recently been sharply actualized. Researches in this area convince us that social identities (who are We?), including civil identity, essentially depend on social status, or rather, the social resource of individuals, the potential of their abilities to independently comprehend and develop their lives.

G. M. Andreeva singled out the main processes inherent in the mass consciousness in the situation of instability that require a socio-psychological analysis: a) a global breakdown of established social stereotypes; b) changing the system of values; c) identity crisis (Andreeva, 2001).

In Russian psychology of the last decade, scientific researches have been conducted in all three of these areas, but especially intensively in the field of studying the crisis of identity or, more broadly, in the field of research of the changing system of identifications. N. M. Lebedeva studied the problem of the identity crisis (Lebedeva, 1999). In her opinion, a radical change in social categories in society that serve as the basis for diverse processes of personality identification is needed for major changes in identity to occur. It should be noted that not only social categories have changed, but also the essence of the processes of self-identification, their orientation and goals. There is a change in basic values and needs: the most common vector of change in values is from homogeneity to diversity, from collectivism to individualism, and the most common vector of change in needs is from the search for a positive sense of self to a search for meaning.

S. G. Klimova studied the crisis of identity and came to the conclusion that in the changing society, people are freed from their previous identity, they are forced to do self-identification: to compare, choose, create new communities, focusing on the coincidence of personal values with those that the community proposes. The individual recognizes the society as “own” not only because the individual shares its goals, but also because the ways to achieve them are morally acceptable for the individual. In the most general sense, the goal of self-identification of the person in the surrounding reality is the search for an answer to the question “Who am I?” (Klimov, 1995).

In the works of a number of researchers who rely on foreign and domestic experience, it is noted that the person's refusal from permanent identification is also a kind of conscious choice. A modern person, unlike a person of a traditional society, tied to a particular culture and tradition, does not stop at the place and avoids any fixation. The identity of a modern person can be defined as "here-and-now-identity" (Ivanova, 2004).

### **Materials and methods**

E. P. Ermolaeva formulated on the basis of ideas about professional identity a new problem for our society – professional marginalism. This concept is a behavioral and conceptual antagonist of professional identity. In her opinion, the essential feature of marginalism as a psychological phenomenon is as follows: with external formal belonging to the profession - internal non-belonging to professional ethics and values of this sphere of professional labour as in terms of identity of self-consciousness (self-identification with responsibility, job duties and morality), and in the terms of real behavior (action not within the framework of professional functions and values, but under the influence of other motives or goals) (Ermolaeva, 2001). Obviously, to combat this problem, the system of training future teachers should be changed.

Innovative training of professional teachers is dictated today by cardinal changes taking place in Russian education. For many decades in high school pedagogy it was said about the need to consider the student mainly as a subject of training. But the realities of life outside and inside the university are such that this position has been declarative for a long time. The time has come to implement it fully as a concrete embodiment of the value-semantic content of pedagogical education.

According to Yu. P. Povarenkov, at the heart of any professional development are identification processes; the question is with what and with whom the person identifies himself/herself, choosing or rejecting one or another profession, this or that style of professional activity, and what life tasks the person solves by means of the profession (Povarenkov, 2003).

In accordance with the concept of the formation of the personality of a professional of Yu. P. Povarenkov professional identity as a criterion for professional development indicates the qualitative and quantitative features of the person's accepting: himself/herself as a professional; specific professional activity as a way of self-realization and satisfaction of needs; system of values and norms that are characteristic of this professional community. In the system of pedagogical education, according to this scheme, it is possible to determine the level of formation and nature of not only professional identity, but also

social and civic identity, since they must be an integral part of the teaching profession.

In full accordance with this assumption, there are three main lines of development of the teacher's identity, and accordingly there are three groups of parameters that can be used to assess the level of its formation. The parameters of the teacher's identity are: acceptance of the profession, namely, satisfaction with various aspects of the professional activity and the profession as a whole; acceptance of oneself in the profession - the qualitative and quantitative features of professional self-esteem (the structure of the ideal and real "Self - concept"); acceptance of the values of the professional community, for example, the peculiarities of the value sphere.

The program of the experimental research on the development of the professional identity of students in a pedagogical university is constructed in the form of an ascertaining experiment. It consists of three stages, where at each stage one of the three groups of indicators is diagnosed, which are used to assess the level of formation of epy teacher's identity (professional self-assessment, satisfaction with teacher's labour, acceptance of social values) (Bugaychuk, 2013).

These criteria are the characteristics served as the basis for conducting the research on students of all courses of the pedagogical university using the following methods of studying the formation of the teacher identity: Dembo - Rubinstein "Ladder", Budassi "Methods of studying self-esteem", Value-orientated unity, "Accepting the profession", Leontiev "Life Purpose Orientations", "Psychosemantic Method for Researching Professional Identity" (Mishchenko, 2005).

The empirical study was attended by students of the pedagogical university 1-5 courses in the amount of 185 people.

## **Results**

From the standpoint of the concept of professional development of Yu. P. Povarenkov based on the results of our research, in which the formation of the identity of future teachers was studied, we can give characteristics of the identity crises of students of a pedagogical university in the learning process.

As the research materials show, in the period from the 4th to the 6th semester of education, there is a significant decrease in accepting the self as a professional, which indicates the presence of a crisis period for this identity parameter, which is most likely associated with the lack of implementation of professional claims. This identity crisis is the basis for the subsequent development of the professional identity, in this case educational and professional identity. From the 4th to the 8th semester of studies, the transition

from the academic identity to the educational-professional one is noted, the student begins to think of himself/herself more as a future teacher, and not as a yesterday's school student. In semester the 10th, the identity crisis manifests itself more on the qualitative level, where the most creative and humane identification process is observed.

From the 2nd to the 6th semester, there is a tendency to a decrease in the acceptance of the teaching profession. Significant changes in the professional inquiries of the first and second year students compared with the third and fourth year students are noted. The tendency to reduce the acceptance of the profession in the 6th semester is associated with the transition from the academic identity to the professional identity. The views of the third-year student about the profession, its content, and conditions of activity change from ideal to real, this pattern is associated with the first introductory teaching practice in school.

By the parameter "acceptance of the values of the professional community," there is a reorientation of values that occurs in the 6th semester and is manifested by the identity crisis. The fact is that in the 2nd and 4th semesters, the values of the professional community for their acceptance and identification with them, according to the students, should be socially active, independent, creative in nature, they are more learning-oriented, as learning identity is developing. In the 8th and 10th semesters, after the crisis of identity in the 6th semester, the trend changes towards the priority of performing, inactive values, this change leads to the formation of educational-professional identity. This trend is associated with the first teaching practice on the 3rd course.

Thus, the process of formation of the professional identity of students of a pedagogical university is carried out step by step through the subsequent change of academic and professional identity. The transition from one type of identity to another occurs on the basis of the identity crises. The basis of the development of the professional identity is the mutual influence and interdependence of its parameters, the leading role among which is played by the parameter of acceptance of the profession. The parameters for assessing the level of the professional identity have a specific dynamics of development, which is manifested in the heterochrony of the identity crises.

### **Discussion and conclusions**

An adequate tool for identifying, understanding and conceptualizing the most important aspects of being a modern person, including young people, in our opinion, is existential phenomenology that stood out in the first half of the 20th century in Germany from the phenomenological movement. One of the most promising areas of analysis of the formation of youth self-awareness in the

Russian province is the use of a number of provisions of the existential phenomenology of E. Husserl and A. Schyuts (Gusserel, 2004 & Schyuts, 2005). The basis of this philosophical concept is the idea of subjectively conscious social communication and interaction of people as the basis of identity.

The formation of the social identity of the future teacher, and above all such its components as the professional and civic identity, is a complex, multidimensional and controversial process, the analysis of which requires consideration of many factors. An outstanding representative of Russian religious existentialism N. A. Berdyaev called the personality a spiritual entity and believed that "the activity of the human spirit" should determine "the activity of its actions" (Berdyaev, 1991). It is these postulates that we propose to build the concept of forming the identity of a young teacher. The active activity-related attitude of a person to the world, that is, socio-historical practice, requires, first of all, the formation of spirit activity in youth, otherwise the subjective factor in history will not work. In the framework of the phenomenological approach, we believe that society develops through the efforts of subjects, but in the process of social activity the Man himself/herself changes. The civil and professional activities are part of public (social) practice. Consequently, today it is necessary to expand the space of such social practice, during which the young teacher would recognize himself/herself as a Citizen and a Professional. Without this awareness, the formation of the Teacher is impossible.

We understand that the experience of the past as a model today is not quite suitable, although, according to students, the emphasis from quantity (the degree of material wealth) is transferred to the quality and novelty of goods and services, to the opportunity to show independence and abilities in the profession and social life. Obviously, we need new ways of targeting young people in reality. The mass standard, unlike the values of traditional group culture, does not reinforce the personal identity, does not give a ready answer to the questions: "Who am I?" And "With whom am I?", "What should I strive for and why?".

A young man has to make his/her own choice from the possible options, to determine his/her attitude towards himself/herself, to the world, to the profession. The field of free self-determination is wide. In the early stages of personal development this choice is very difficult. In our opinion, the task of the state is to help in the main thing: in the formation and development of the teacher's social identity, in understanding the social and professional significance. Otherwise, a developed civil society, about which prominent politicians and the media speak so much, cannot be formed in Russia. In addition, it should be remembered that in the youth itself, due to the distrust in the intellectual competence of social and political institutions and their

information, there is a search for new forms of social activity and communication, which is expressed in the wide spread of informal movements that undoubtedly affect the identification of young citizens.

So, in the works of most researchers, the crisis of identity is considered within the framework of the general transformation of modern society. Today, identity is not established neither by tradition, nor by the place of residence or birth, but it is formed, chosen by any person, including the future teacher, in the course of his/her own life.

In the context of globalization, the identification space is becoming much wider than the limits of an separate state. Processes of identity transformation are characterized by: revising the foundations of the social identity (especially in civil and professional aspects); the emergence of new objects of identification; new forms of identity. The identity crisis is associated with the loss of some of the most important elements of this complex system of values, feelings, rules, traditions, etc. Consequently, the formation of the identity of the teacher must be considered in the plane of restoration, the return of its best features. But at the same time, we should be aware that in many ways the new form of identity will not coincide with the previous one.

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