

The Formation of a Teacher in the Context of Consolidation of Rural Schools (Regional Experience)

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ABSTRACT

The article presents the Program for the formation of a young teacher, describes the purpose and objectives, the main methodological approaches, principles and directions of the methodological service to assist young specialists of rural schools. The study of the problem of becoming a teacher in the context of enlarging rural schools is supposed to be implemented on the basis of personality-activity, competence, systemic and technological approaches. The article defines the rural school, addresses the problem of network interaction of rural schools. The complex of pedagogical conditions is defined, substantiated and tested, taking into account the organization of network interaction of rural schools. The formation of a teacher within the framework of the program for the sustainable development of rural areas allows a young teacher to be ready to undergo attestation for compliance with the position held, to establish a foothold successfully in a rural school.

Keywords: rural teacher, formation, professionalism, methodical service, networking

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of this century in Russia rural schools have been modernized aiming at improving the quality and accessibility of education, its competitiveness through approbation and identifying the effective models for organizing general education in every rural municipal district. In accordance with the Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation of December 17, 2001, No. 871 "About Restructuring the Network of General Education Institutions Located in the Countryside", the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation in cooperation with the subjects of the Russian Federation with the participation of local self-government bodies in 2002-2004 the network of general educational institutions was restructured. As a result, various models of educational institutions that were adequate to the new social and economic conditions and the needs of society, content, forms, methods and means of instruction have been created and tested, ensuring the conformity of educational services with the needs of the individual and the staffing needs of local labor markets. Among such models it is possible to attribute a basic school with a network of branches. The changes in society and education led to a number of social and professional difficulties in the process of adaptation of young professionals to work: a new social demand for education means the simultaneous mastering many necessary old and new statements by a young teacher of, which complicates and hinders his professional development; the need to support beginning teachers and often the lack of highly qualified teaching staff for a particular educational subject. The formation of a teacher in the context of modernizing the rural school activities in modern conditions is one of the important tasks of modern pedagogical science.

Anyone who begins his "journey" in the profession, experiences the difficulties due to a lack of experience. According to the opinion of some scientists becoming a teacher is more difficult, sharper, more painful than that of other intellectual professions [1]. That is why there is an outflow of young specialists from the school. As a rule, beginning teachers have a good theoretical training, but imagine their daily teaching practice poorly. At the beginning of his professional career a young specialist faces certain difficulties: the inability to calculate time in

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class, to build a lesson logically, to be able to speak in class competently and emotionally, to try to interest children with his subject, to teach to learn, etc. He needs to develop his own personal style of communication with children, colleagues and the school administration. From the first day of work a beginning teacher fulfills the same duties and carries the same responsibility as a long-time teacher, but the pupils and their parents do not make any allowance for inexperience. In a rural school environment this problem becomes especially urgent, as often there is no highly qualified pedagogical staff for one or another educational subject, and the requirements for promoting the professionalism of each specialist are increasing. The formation of professionalism in pedagogical activity is traditionally associated, on the one hand, with a sufficient duration of labor activity. On the other hand, the sphere of professional implementation of a young teacher requires professionalism immediately, and there arises the problem of reaching a level of professionalism by young teachers in a short time, which makes it necessary to find different ways to solve this problem. There is a fundamental contradiction between the need of society in a prepared young teacher capable of carrying out pedagogical activity and the inconsistency of pedagogical conditions in the educational environment of a rural school for his successful professional development. Thus, the existing contradiction in pedagogical practice has led to an appeal to the research subject which problem is to identify the set of pedagogical conditions for the professional formation of a young teacher in the educational environment of rural schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The objective complication of professional and pedagogical activity and the strengthening its diversity necessitate a comprehensive analysis of the specialist's educational needs on the basis of diagnosing his real difficulties, the importance of designing models for solving new professional problems. As the results a number of sociological studies [2, 3] show that current trends, unfortunately, have a pronounced negative character in the area of staffing: the continuing increase in the number of teachers of retirement age is worrying. So, in Lipetsk region in the general education system of the region of 2013-2014 academic year there are 7888 teachers, 58% of the total number of teachers have work experience of more than 20 years; 14.3% (1,155 people) are teachers who have reached the retirement age and older; 8.4% - young professionals under the age of 30 [4]. With a significant proportion of teachers who have reached the retirement age, the pedagogical staff is slowly renewing. In general, the renewal of the contingent of teachers in the schools of the region occurs at a rate of no more than 0.3-0.5% per year. A significant part of young teachers are not fixed in the system of education: about 50% of young specialists drop out every year [5]. To achieve success, the young teacher needs effective help at the first stage. It is necessary to create a situation of success of young teacher's work, to promote the development of his professionalism. The formation of a professional teacher is a continuous process of acquiring professional competence by a young specialist, expressed in self-development and self-realization in the pedagogical activity. In the Russian pedagogical science, the professional development as a pedagogical problem was paid much attention to by the scientists, such as O.A. Abdullina [6], Yu.P. Azarov [7], V.A.Slastenin [8], S.V.Vershlovsky [9]. A variety of factors influencing the development of the personal and professional spheres of a young teacher of the rural school in the process of his professional formation were studied by modern researchers, such as I. Alekseeva [1], L. V. Bayborodova [10], D. A. Danilov [11, 12], T. V. Luchkina [13, 14], N.D. Neustroev [15], G.G. Silasseev [16], S. V. Tarasov [17], N. K. Zaoyeva [18]. The scientists note that the rural school is a unique social and pedagogical phenomenon. In the works of L.V. Bayborodova [10] and N.K. Zaoyeva [18] general characteristics of a modern rural school are presented, the main trends of its development can be traced. The rural school is a collection of different types of general education institutions located in rural areas, diverse in terms of occupancy, territorial location, social environment, national composition, and working to meet the educational needs of rural children and solving the problem of basic secondary education, agricultural training of schoolchildren and performing the sociocultural and socio-pedagogical functions [10].

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of the Study: what are the scientific basis and technology of the formation of a young teacher in the context of consolidation of rural schools within the implementation of the sustainable development of rural territories program? Research Questions: 1. To clarify the theoretical basis of the formation of a young teacher in the context of consolidation of rural schools. 2. To identify the basic principles, pedagogical conditions and essential characteristics of the methodological service to assist young specialists in the context of enlarging rural schools by creating a branch network. 3. To test the Program experimentally providing the formation of the young teachers in the educational environment of rural school. In order to confirm the hypothesis we have used the following methods and the research tools: analytical methods of research (the theoretical analysis of philosophical, pedagogical, psychological and methodological literature on the research problem, the analysis of statistical data), the sociometric research methods (questionnaires, tests, a survey, an interview, an expert assessment), the observation methods (direct and indirect observation), the methods of mathematical statistics.

The study of the problem of becoming a teacher in the context of enlarging rural schools within the framework of the program for sustainable development of rural areas is supposed to be implemented on the basis of personality-activity, competence, systemic and technological approaches. The personality-activity approach [19, 20], which is based on the idea of the development of personality through activity, makes it possible to investigate the questions of methodological and technological support of the activity of a young specialist of a modern rural school with regards with the success of the adaptation of the subjects of the educational process to the implementation of the activity in the context of enlarging educational organizations by creating a branch network. The competent approach [21, 22] allows solving the problem of the research taking into account the requirements for a modern teacher. The system approach [23, 24] will provide with the consideration of relatively independent components that affect the efficiency of the functioning of a young specialist of a modern rural school in the system. The technological approach [25, 26] opens new opportunities for conceptual and design development of various aspects of functioning of rural schools as a part of the branch network, allowing to manage the pedagogical processes; to analyze and systematize the available practical experience of organizing the activity of a rural school on the formation of a young specialist on a scientific basis; to choose the most effective and develop new technologies to solve the emerging problems associated with the development of technology for the formation of a young specialist in a rural school in the conditions of a branch network.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the system of philosophical and ideological concepts "formation" is interpreted as spontaneous variability of things and phenomena, their continuous transition, the transformation "into another", as a transition of an opportunity into reality in the process of development. Formation as a category reflects that initial stage through which all the objects and phenomena of the surrounding reality pass in their development, that is, in this case, the formation is understood not as a synonym for development, but represents one of the periods, stages, steps of development [27, p. 652]. This process, the main feature of which is that the existence of the phenomenon has already begun, but has not acquired a completed form yet. Proceeding from the foregoing, we assume that the formation of the professionalism of the young teacher in the first two years of work should be manifested in the "increment" of the professional competence, which allows solving professional problems successfully. The period chosen by us is a period of "entry" into the profession, after which the teacher who begins the pedagogical activity must pass the attestation for compliance with the position held. The achievement of professionalism by a young teacher is inconceivable without an innovative approach, which can manifest itself in mastering new effective algorithms and ways of performing activities, in nontrivial solution of professional tasks through "increment" of professional competence. Only the focus on the creation will allow the young teacher "to get qualitatively new results; to make a breakthrough into the new areas of professional activity, will provide an opportunity to perform the functional duties successfully" [28, p. 92].

The analysis of dissertational studies devoted to the problems of the young teacher [2, 3, 29, 30, 31, 32] shows that young teachers in the first year of work experience have significant difficulties in the individual components of pedagogical activity. The main difficulties of the young specialist are the choice of methods of interaction with pupils, the analysis and understanding of emerging situations. According to the authors [3] they are associated with the breaking of habitual representations and stereotypes, an inadequate level of training, etc. Only 7% of the young teachers questioned believe that they got involved without problems. The current situation actualizes the problem of assisting young teachers in solving emerging difficulties, since the level of professionalism that the teacher is able to achieve in the process of entering the profession largely depends on the success of their solution.

Studying foreign experience on the inclusion of beginning teachers in pedagogical activity shows that the success of the formation of their professionalism is determined by the support rendered to them directly at the workplace. In Russian schools as shown by most researchers [29, 30, 32, 33, 34], mentoring is formal. Emphasizing the role of a mentor in the formation of a teacher-researcher V. L. Dubinina [29] notes that the modern researchers are not deliberately engaged in the problem of mentoring as shown in policy documents [35], every fourth novice teacher has a mentor of inappropriate specialization or does not have him at all; hardly every tenth young specialist receives the help of a mentor regularly. This is a confirmation of the need to develop a program for the formation of a young teacher. As a result we developed a Program for the professional development of a young teacher in the context of enlarging rural schools by creating a branch network.

The purpose of the Program for the professional development of a young teacher is to provide the conditions for acquiring the practical skills necessary for pedagogical activity, for self-realization and the consolidation of young specialists in the team. The following *principles* underlie the management of the process of professional formation of a young teacher:

- the leading organizational form is the methodical work, built on a diagnostic basis;
- planning the methodical work is carried out in the context of designing a professional career of a teacher;

- the subject of planning is the teacher himself;
- in the management of professional development, the priority is to the creation of a system of the support for creative self-actualization, professional-pedagogical and social adaptation of a young teacher. Realizing the Program for the formation of a young teacher in the context of enlarging rural schools through the creation of a branch network, we consider it expedient to focus on the following aspects:

Realizing the Program for the formation of a young teacher in the context of enlarging rural schools through the creation of a branch network, we consider it expedient to focus on the following aspects:

1. The creation in schools of an atmosphere of creative search in schools, in which each teacher can realize his abilities and realize his creative potential more fully, adapt to the profession successfully.
2. Studying and popularizing a pedagogically valuable experience in organizing the work with young teachers in order to introduce the most effective forms into the practice of the rural school.
3. The inclusion of teacher-mentors in the activities of methodological assistance in organizing the process of professional formation of young teachers. The methodological assistance based on the identified difficulties corrects their pedagogical activity. The maintenance of the young teacher by the teacher-mentor presupposes: the creation of psychologically comfortable conditions for the professional activity of the teacher; providing the teacher with comprehensive (pedagogical, psychological, methodical, social, etc.) assistance in resolving the issues arising in the course of work; involving the teacher in solving the problems of the development of school implementing programs, projects, etc. on the basis of cooperation and pedagogical co-creation; ensuring the conditions for the teacher's professional level of his competence, as well as the requests, interests, needs of the teacher himself.

The Main Directions of the Program

Adaptive support

The mechanism of implementation of this direction: - the acquaintance with the school, the presentation of the young teacher to the school staff at the pedagogical council; the acquaintance with the traditions of the school; the study of the regulatory framework; records management; the acquaintance with work programs, the correction of calendar plans of young specialists; the choice and the appointment of a teacher-mentor.

The organization of professional communication

1. Organization of mentoring

For a young specialist, entering into a new activity is accompanied by a high emotional tension, which calls for the mobilization of all internal resources. The solution of this strategic task will help create a flexible and mobile mentoring system that can optimize the process of professional formation of a young teacher, to generate his motivation for self-improvement, self-development, self-realization. This system reflects the vital need of a young specialist to receive the support of an experienced teacher-mentor who is ready to provide him with practical and theoretical help in the workplace and improve his professional competence. The purpose of mentoring is to consolidate and form a positive attitude of young professionals to the work of the teacher, enhance professional skills, develop an initiative, creativity, ability to establish contacts, communicate with students, parents, with their colleagues, school leaders, which is to promote an early entry into the profession [1]. Working with school principals, it is necessary to draw the attention of the administration to the necessity of selecting mentors with the obligatory observance of certain provisions, namely: the compatibility of the characterological features of the mentor's personality and the young specialist; a high level of the qualification of the mentor, his sociability, culture; mutual desire to cooperate.

The organization of mentoring in the process of increasing the professional competence of the young teacher is of a phased character and includes the formation and development of functional and personal components of the activity of the beginning teacher (design, organizational, constructive, analytical) and the professionally important qualities corresponding to them. Therefore, the mentor builds up his activities in three stages.

The first stage is the adaptation stage. The mentor determines the responsibilities and powers of the young specialist, and also identifies the shortcomings in his experience and the skills in order to develop an adaptation program.

The second stage is the main (design) stage. A mentor develops and implements a plan for the professional development of a young teacher.

The third stage is the control and evaluation. The mentor checks the level of the professional competence of the young teacher, determines the degree of his readiness to perform his functional duties.

2. The work of the “Young Teacher’s School”

A great importance in the process of the professional formation of a young specialist has the “Young Teacher’s School”.

In the first year of work young teachers attend a practical-oriented seminar “School of Excellence”, attend teacher-mentor lessons, open lessons of school teachers. In the second year of work (“Independent creative search”) they attend classes of practical-oriented seminars on modern educational technologies, choose the methodological theme of self-education, visit open lessons and master classes of school teachers, participate in the week of a young teacher actively. In the third year of work (“Choice of an individual line”) they attend classes of practical-oriented seminars on the modern educational technologies, present their experience at meetings of the scientific and methodological council, conduct open classes for school teachers.

3. Organization of network interaction

An important feature of the network organization of the process of professional formation of young professionals is that each educational institution is an independent participant in the network interaction. Networking allows the exchange of missing resources, information, innovations. Young specialists as a rule come to the main schools, and with the help of network interaction it is possible to form a single educational space, which is equally accessible to young specialists, which is the expanded diversity of the educational programs of rural schools. Each school, included in the network, gets an access to all resources and thereby enhances its own capabilities. Thanks to the network interaction, the functioning of the educational institution separately and as the whole system becomes more reliable, since all the systems have a lot of interchangeable equivalent options. The organization of the network interaction of rural schools forms the basic principles of the activity of beginning teachers, supports their educational initiatives, coordinates a new type of professional relations, provides the organization of scientific and methodological support for the professional development to young professionals.

4. Motivational readiness

When organizing the work in this area, the following forms of work are used:

- the participation of a young teacher in the in-school system of professional development;
- the involvement of young specialists in the innovative development processes of the school;
- the support for the participation in professional competitions, conferences;
- the creation of a portfolio of a young specialist, testifying to the increase of professional competence and the achievements of personal growth;
- the participation in the work of the association of young specialists;
- the participation in the work of seminars for young teachers and meetings of district subject methodological associations.

5. Psychological support

Conducting consultations, seminars, testing of young specialists.

Target indicators and program indicators

1. Strengthening the human resources

- the share of young professionals who have continued their pedagogical activity after 3 years of work - at least 80%;
- 100% attestation of young teachers after 2 years of experience in the qualification category.

2. Growth of professional skills

- an active participation and its effectiveness in professional competitions, scientific and practical conferences, seminars of various levels - at least 70% of the total number of young teachers.

3. Ensuring the quality of education-indicators of the quality of training and the percent of progress of school students

4. The satisfaction with one’s pedagogical activity

- a lack of turnover of young staff;
- the positive evaluation of professional activities based on the results of a survey.

Expected outcomes of the program

- the formation of a competitive specialist capable of realizing the aims of education in the conditions of renewing practice.
- the increased satisfaction of young professionals with their professional activities.

Unfortunately, the training of future teachers in the university does not fully prepare them for the reality of the school, thereby creating certain difficulties in the performance of pedagogical activity and requiring additional psychological and pedagogical training. To solve this problem, we have developed a modular program of advanced training courses for novice teachers. In 2017 the Institute of Philology of Yelets I.A. Bunin State University have organized training courses for teachers of foreign languages of schools of Dolgorukovo and Dogorukovsky district on the topic "Actual issues of psychological and pedagogical training of a young teacher of school foreign language education". It should be noted that in 2016 in the Lipetsk region the policy of developing education in the countryside was continued. The development of a network of rural schools in the Lipetsk region is seen as an important tool to improve the social and economic efficiency of the region's educational system as well as the educational system of the Russian Federation as a whole. Rural schools account for more than 70% of the total number (390) of all schools in the Lipetsk region, there are about 279 of them. More than 30% of all the pupils study there (34882 people from 113956). In the region with the goal of creating a single educational and socio-cultural space for the whole region, branches of the educational institutions have been created. Nowadays comprehensive rural schools exist as branches of the main school located in the district, the basic school. So, the lyceum of the village of Dolgorukovo has three branches: in the village of Ekaterinovka, in the village of Zhernovoye and in the village of Timiryazevsky. The branch network is connected with the basic educational organization not only administratively, but also with the system of distance education. The basic school is provided with highly qualified personnel, modern teaching and laboratory equipment.

The questioning of young teachers showed the need for organizing refresher courses. The program of advanced training courses for beginning teachers "Actual issues of psychological and pedagogical training of a young teacher of school foreign language education" provides 72 hours of instruction. The purpose of this program is to contribute to the formation of the professional competence of the young teacher in the process of entering the profession by increasing the basic professional competence of the subject content of the course and demonstrating the readiness for a competent action in solving professional problems and passing the attestation successfully for compliance with the position. The result of mastering the program is an increase in the professional competence of the young teacher, manifested in the ability:

- to apply the psychological and pedagogical knowledge in various areas of the professional activity;
- to define, formulate and solve professional problems using modern pedagogical technologies (reflexive, social interaction, project, case, etc.);
- to plan modern lessons successfully, carry out self-examination;
- to work in a team of specialists who implement the educational programs of a modern school;
- to understand and accept the need to learn during the entire period of professional activity;
- to apply the acquired skills, modern technological methods and tools in practice to ensure a high level of the quality of education for schoolchildren.

CONCLUSION

The conducted questioning of the listeners have showed that the acquired increment in the professional competence of the young teacher first of all reflects the successful achievement of an appropriate level of professionalism by him and allows him to be ready for attestation for compliance with the position. Within the framework of the state program of the Lipetsk region "Development of Education in the Lipetsk Region" activities are being implemented aimed at supporting young teachers, replicating the experience of the best teachers, developing the professional communication. Updating the staff of general education institutions is carried out by attracting young professionals through the creation of a system of motivational and stimulating activities at the level of municipalities and the educational organizations themselves and the introduction of mechanisms that allow them to create conditions for their successful professional adaptation, and through competitions of professional skills (the regional public competition "Teacher of the Year of the Lipetsk Region", regional educational forum, professional holiday "Teachers' Day", the regional premium named after K.A. Moskalenko and others). In order to stimulate the influx of young personnel to schools to create the optimal balance between young professionals and more experienced teachers with more than 15 years of teaching experience, the university holds meetings with the best teachers, press conferences with laureates of regional and all-Russian competitions "Teacher of the Year". The result of the effective implementation of a set of measures aimed at developing the rural education system in the region was the enrollment of ten rural schools of the Lipetsk region in Top-200 rural general education organizations.

Materials of the article can be of use to psychologists, teachers, social workers and other specialists working in rural schools.

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