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Research paper

Designing a Comfortable Educational Environment

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Abstract

Introduction. The problem of maintaining the physical health of teachers in educational organizations is discussed in the article in the context of professional "burnout" and conflict prevention. Research methodology. When studying the content and essence of a comfortable educational environment, we were interested in the works that provided for an understanding of the nature of human interaction and reflected the interdependence and communication style of people in direct contact with each other. Research results. The most important factor of external and internal order, determining the content, direction and intensity of work activity, has always been a special atmosphere in the team, which in scientific and social discourse was defined by various terms such as: "microclimate", "moral and psychological microclimate", "sociological microclimate", "comfortable educational environment". Discussion. Designing refers to the category of innovative creative activity, since it primarily involves a purposeful transformation of reality, the need for which arises whenever there is an awareness of the necessity to move to a prognostic model of an educational or upbringing system. The main purpose of such "educational changes" consists in the possibility for a person himself/herself to learn and self-change during life, to apply knowledge in solving professional tasks. Conclusion. The term "comfortable educational environment" is used to denote a special atmosphere in the team that determines the content, direction and intensity of work activity and manifests itself in such group effects as team members' mood and opinion, individual well-being, assessment of the person's living and working conditions in the team. This special atmosphere is regarded on the whole as a result of people's joint activity, their interpersonal interaction.

Keywords: *Child; Comfortable educational environment; Parents; Teacher.*

1. Introduction

Socio-economic changes in the country, the reform of the education system as a whole, the emergence of an increasing number of children from disadvantaged or incomplete families, an increase in the employment of parents, the popularity of civil marriages without obligations, the tendency to recognize material well-being in the family, the replacement of verbal communication in the family with information and technology-based one – all these increase the requirements for a comfortable educational environment in children's preschool organizations. The social order for the implementation of such requirements can be fulfilled only by those preschool educational organizations that are effective and efficient in accordance with the Federal State Educational Standard of preschool education.

The relevance of the research in this regard, firstly, relates to the problem of maintaining the physical health of teachers in educational organizations, which we consider in the context of professional "burnout" and conflict prevention. Secondly, modern society makes high demands on the educator, which causes the need to identify effective ways of personal development and self-correction. A favorable comfortable educational environment in the pedagogical team is one of the conditions for the teacher's receptivity to the new, his/her need and opportunity for constant professional and personal growth. The relevance of the stated problem is also evidenced by the fact that in accordance with the Federal State Educational Standard of preschool education one of the main factors in the successful development of the child's personality corresponding to the specificity of preschool age is an optimally organized pedagogical interaction, including among other things the designing of educational and upbringing processes in preschool educational organizations [1].

In the context of the research problem, the recognition of the crisis of the childhood traditional model (D.I. Feldstein) is actualized, when under conditions of the predominance of single-child families, the small number of multigenerational households, the replacement of constant contact with adults for chaotic information flow from TV and the Internet,

such problems as the primitivization of children's consciousness, the growth of cynicism and aggression, an increased level of anxiety tend to reveal themselves [2].

However, current research indicates the prevalence of clan-type organizational culture in preschool educational institutions, which adversely affects the interaction of teachers with each other and with children's parents, and also prevents pupils from being as effective as possible in educational and gaming activities, and the staff – in their professional work [3].

Of no less importance in terms of substantiating the urgency of the problem is the social order of society, which determines the requirement of teachers' readiness for innovation, use and introduction of advanced technologies in pedagogical practice. In this regard, it is the favorable comfortable educational environment in the team that is one of the most important conditions for the suc-

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cessful implementation of innovative education and upbringing systems, for the formation of teachers' readiness to implement the new in pedagogical practice. However, modern indicators of the level of innovation (namely, technological innovation, and not the fashionable renaming of classical methods and techniques) are represented in the range from 0.7 to 0.9 percent, and, according to researchers, the level is highest in teams with a favorable comfortable educational environment [4].

Besides, the tendencies towards the rapprochement of countries and peoples, the activation of migration processes also play a great role and, in this respect, set before education (including preschool education) a complex task of preparing for life and activity in a multicultural environment, for dialogue and intercultural interaction.

Thus, today the comfortable educational environment serves as the most important multifunctional indicator of the preschool educational team's purposeful activity in solving social and pedagogical issues, the optimal realization of personal and group opportunities, the level of each teacher's involvement in the innovative processes of the child's subjective development and the level of pedagogical interaction efficiency on the axes "teacher-child", "teacher-parent", as well as the degree of direct pedagogical influence on the comfort of communication between children, between children and their parents [5].

2. Methodology

In view of the integrative nature of the problem under study, it is possible to talk about the development of its certain aspects in pedagogy, psychology, sociology, management, valeology, management theory, etc. Indeed, there are studies devoted to the consideration of the teacher's professionally important qualities significant for increasing the effectiveness of educational activities in an educational institution; to the analysis of innovative approaches to the organization of the pedagogical process within the framework of the personality development problem; to the investigation of the personality's emotional and volitional self-regulation and the relationship of self-organization, self-control and self-correction in the formation of a comfortable pedagogical environment. The study of social communication aspects was carried out by such foreign scientists as P. Berger, J. Habermas, A. Schütz [6, 7], as well as by domestic specialists including N.D. Arutyunova, M.M. Bakhtin, I.A. Zimnyaya, G.G. Pocheptsov, F.I. Sharkov and others [8, 9, 10]; questions of the psychology of personality development are discussed in the works by S.G. Vershlovsky, V.V. Gorshkova, S.V. Kosheleva, V.Yu. Krichevsky, E.P. Tonkova, etc. [11, 12, 13, 14].

Works by N.M. Anisimova, V.P. Bespalko, V.V. Guzeeva, S.L. Polyakova, A.S. Prutchenkova, G.K. Selevko, V.A. Slastenin and others [15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20] are devoted to the studies of the problem of searching for new pedagogical technologies.

When studying the content and essence of a comfortable educational environment, we were interested in the works that provided for an understanding of the nature of human interaction and reflected the interdependence and communication style of people in direct contact with each other [21, 22].

With all the great theoretical and practical significance of the conducted research, it should be noted that the issues of the targeted pedagogical design of a comfortable educational environment in preschool educational organizations are not presented in scientific content; there is no special comprehensive study of the problem under discussion. In this connection there are contradictions between:

-innovative tendencies in the development of the preschool education system, the requirement that preschools move from the state of functioning to the state of development and traditional approaches to the understanding of such a transformation, including underestimation of personal participation and potential;

-the growth of economic, legal and sociocultural changes in society and the absence of mechanisms for supporting and regulating a comfortable pedagogical environment and developing pedagogical interaction in preschool educational organizations;

-recognition of the importance of preschool training and education in the context of a subject-oriented educational paradigm and underestimation of the axiological, valeological, communicative, psychosomatic and pedagogical components of a comfortable educational environment in preschool educational organizations.

3. Results

The most important factor of external and internal order, determining the content, direction and intensity of work activity, has always been a special atmosphere in the team, which in scientific and social discourse was defined by various terms such as: "microclimate", "moral and psychological microclimate", "sociological microclimate", "comfortable educational environment", etc.

The notion of a "comfortable educational environment", manifested in such group effects as the mood and opinion of team members, individual well-being, assessment of the person's living and working conditions in the team and viewed on the whole as a result of people's joint activity, their interpersonal interaction, received the widest application. When studying the specificity of the manifestation of educational environmental "comfort" in scientific discourse, such notions as "group consciousness", "state of collective consciousness", "emotional and psychological attitude" and "expression of organizational culture" are also used.

Proceeding from the understanding of a comfortable educational environment as "a qualitative aspect of interpersonal relations, manifested as a set of conditions that facilitate or impede the productive activity and all-round development of the personality in the team", the research suggests that this refers to a comfortable team atmosphere that is characterized, on the one hand, by everyone's awareness of their "self" in a microsocium (work team), by the level of team members' common interests manifested in people's behavior, motivation for work, and in arbitrary and involuntary reactions to organizational changes; and, on the other hand, – by a system of established interpersonal relations between colleagues that determine their "social and psychological state" and "everyone's subjective well-being". This was also reflected in E. Schein's theory of organizational culture and E. Mayo's "human relations" theory, containing ideas about the paramount importance of a comfortable educational environment in relations between teammates. It is no accident that many authors consider the notions of "organizational culture" and "comfortable educational environment" as synonymous ones. It is also interesting to see K. Leonhard's opinion that the prevailing mood of a particular group of people determines the measure of each individual's inclusion in group activity, as well as the nature of its orientation, its effectiveness, and therefore, the comfortable educational environment is the factor through which any activity of the team is interpreted and mediated.

Thus, when studying the content and essence of the notion of "comfortable educational environment" in domestic and foreign scientific discourse, we can state, in the first place, that a comfortable environment is not a sum of group states, but the result of the entire team's effort. In this respect, within the framework of the research a comfortable educational environment is considered as an integrative concept that relates to the common content and goals of people's work, the results of their joint activities and interpersonal interaction; to emotional well-being; to organizational culture and the system of value orientations adopted by each member of the team.

In our view, the comfortable educational environment manifests itself in the following forms:

- attitude (to the work performed, innovations, the team and norms of behavior in it);
- management approach and style of employee relations;

- emotional and psychological phenomena and states within the team: interpersonal attraction and antipathy; phenomena of imitation, emotional contagion; manifestations of authority, popularity, conformism, etc.;
- job satisfaction level. The latter correlates not only with external factors (salary, career opportunities, working conditions and the content of labor), but also with internal ones including achievability, visible (and observed) results of activity, satisfaction with established relationships between colleagues, focus on conscious participation in joint activities.

The most important components of a comfortable educational environment are as follows: satisfaction with being part of the team; trust; high degree of emotional inclusion in joint activity and conscious motivation for personal and professional development; sufficient awareness of teammates about their goals and the state of affairs when performing tasks; recognition of team members' right to make meaningful decisions for the group; mutual assistance; taking responsibility for the overall state of affairs in the team.

In this regard, it can be stated that a comfortable educational environment, combining the interaction of the whole variety of social, group and personal factors, not only acts as a generalized, integral characteristic of all manifestations of preschool educational team experience, but also predetermines the effectiveness of team work in the context of targeted pedagogical designing.

4. Discussion

Designing (from Latin projectus – "thrown forward") refers to the category of innovative creative activity, since it primarily involves a purposeful transformation of reality, the need for which arises whenever there is an awareness of the necessity to move to a prognostic model of an educational or upbringing system. The main purpose of such "educational changes" consists in the possibility for a person himself/herself to learn and self-change during life, to apply knowledge in solving professional tasks.

Many researchers, including N.V. Kuzmina and her followers, considered designing and construction as integral parts of pedagogical activity, along with conceptual, organizational, and gnostic components. However, it should be recognized that the ideas of designing were confirmed in domestic pedagogy much earlier – in particular, within the framework of A.S. Makarenko's pedagogical theory, who advocated an orderly, purposeful pedagogical process based on goal-setting and forecasting the results.

Besides, of no less importance for the development of the theory and practice of pedagogical designing were the ideas of the scientific organization of labour (A.K. Gastev), the ideas of the significance of cause-effect relationships in the solution of pedagogical tasks (V.S. Sukhomlinsky), and G.P. Shchedrovitsky's theory of pedagogical design. The latter argued that designing is always aimed at changes, the development of teaching practice, and in this regard identified the two types of polar strategies, which are environmental adaptation, or adaptation to social living conditions, and the transformation of the environment in accordance with one's own values, beliefs, and goals.

At the present stage, the problem of pedagogical designing is being developed: first, in the context of the search for pedagogical systems to implement a new educational paradigm; second, as part of the mechanism to enhance the effectiveness of personal development in the context of a person-centered approach; third, in connection with the issues of technologization of the educational process.

According to V.P. Bespalko, the results of pedagogical designing are as follows: 1) the pedagogical (educational or upbringing) system; 2) the education management system; 3) the methodological support system; 4) the model of the educational process.

In this respect, in the context of the research, designing is understood as an activity meant to facilitate: 1) the transformation or creation of systems, processes, relationships in the form of their models to optimize and develop real life, to solve various social and pedagogical tasks; 2) the development of each team member's personal and professional qualities. At the same time, the essence of designing is not only in the implementation of pedagogical innovations, but also in the deep reflexive nature of the realization of each stage of activity as a functional system.

The use of pedagogical design as a technology involves: 1) the existence of a problem that requires its investigation and the search for a solution, 2) the construction of the gradual transformation model of existing objects (phenomena) and the creation of new pedagogically relevant objects (phenomena) with a view to a systemic and effective solution of learning goals and personal and team education, 3) the implementation of feedback (systems of control and self-control, evaluation and self-evaluation) as part of the entire monitoring system of the pedagogical process.

In the context of the educational space of the preschool educational organization the teacher, the parent and the preschool child are included as subjects in the designing of a comfortable educational environment;

therefore, the problem of their interaction becomes the most urgent and is considered most often in the plane of pedagogical communication. The confusion of concepts is caused mainly by the fact that communication is understood as a complex multidimensional process of establishing and developing contacts between people in the communicative form, or the exchange of information, interaction, or the exchange of activities, social perception, or the perception and understanding of the partner. And many researchers tend to evaluate pedagogical communication exactly as a form of interaction between teachers and other subjects of the pedagogical process in solving educational and upbringing tasks.

The specificity of the relationship system in the preschool educational organization reveals itself in the tightness of contacts, the long-term stay of the child in the preschool, as well as the child's close contacts not only with teachers, but also with the team of adult educators (preschool educational staff, specialists, teachers of additional education). Besides, it is necessary to consider the issues of ensuring the socio-psychological health of preschool children in the aspect of child-parent relationships as well, since they are immeasurably important in the child's personality development.

In view of the above, in the context of the study it was important to consider not just interaction but pedagogical interaction, which allowed the possibility of mutual influence with account of the subject parameters of all its participants not only in the cognitive, but in the emotional-volitional sphere as well. It should be noted that "the development of the child's personality is largely determined by the preschool child's communication with the teacher, the communication style of the teacher as well as the parent with children, and, most importantly, their value orientations are reflected in children's value orientations" and "the preschool teacher is naturally included in the preschooler's small, intimate circle of communication".

In the process of pedagogical interaction the basic personality phenomena emerge and develop: they are personalization, event community, referentiality, subjectivity, personal meanings, self-awareness, and the child's life models. These indicators are the basis of the socialization or formation of the personality, and they cannot arise otherwise than in the process of pedagogical interaction, and this is the reason why the basic communication tactic is considered to be cooperation, empathy and joint activity.

This approach is also in demand in cooperation with parents; in this connection the concept of "triad interaction", or interaction in the "teacher-child-parents" system, acquires special relevance, which allows to become more open to the educational process, to make parents its equal participants and to ensure continuity between the preschool and the family. However, today some teachers tend to be inert and skeptical about the meaning of educational changes, and also the connection between them and various demographic, economic, socio-cultural trends in all spheres of public life. And for the community of parents this process is even more

difficult to understand, and for this reason parents either resist innovations, believing that this harms children's health and development, or, on the contrary, speed up the events in an effort to prepare the child for school. This sets a precedent when, on the one hand, teachers and parents want to be subjects of the educational process, and, on the other hand, plan their interaction from the standpoint of the traditional approach: "the educator teaches how parents should correctly behave with children, and parents listen and act the way their parents acted with them, i.e. proceed from their life experience", and "the effectiveness of such interaction between teachers and parents is zero".

This is why, within the pedagogical design of the "triad interaction" as the most important component of the formation of a comfortable educational environment in preschool educational organizations, the following criteria acquire the greatest significance: the teacher's stable value orientations, educators' awareness about the features of family education, the need for interaction with parents, involvement in joint activities, emotional manifestations in interaction, analysis and evaluation of the quality of interaction.

5. Conclusion

The term "comfortable educational environment" is used to denote a special atmosphere in the team that determines the content, direction and intensity of work activity and manifests itself in such group effects as team members' mood and opinion, individual well-being, assessment of the person's living and working conditions in the team. This special atmosphere is regarded on the whole as a result of people's joint activity, their interpersonal interaction.

The analysis of the essence and components of a comfortable educational environment in the preschool educational organization allows to consider it as an integrative complex of qualities and characteristics which correlate with the common content and goals of people's work, the results of their joint activities and interpersonal interaction; with emotional well-being; with organizational culture and the system of value orientations adopted by each member of the team.

The most important characteristics of a comfortable educational environment are the following: satisfaction with being part of the team; trust; high degree of emotional inclusion in joint activity and conscious motivation for personal and professional development; sufficient awareness of teammates about their goals and the state of affairs when performing tasks; recognition of team members' right to make meaningful decisions for the group; mutual assistance; taking responsibility for the overall state of affairs in the team. In this respect, the problem of the pedagogical designing of a comfortable educational environment in preschool educational organizations, which is understood as an activity meant to facilitate the transformation or creation of systems, processes, relationships in the form of their general model to solve social and pedagogical tasks, is actualized.

Taking into account the specificity of the relationship system in the preschool institution (the tightness of contacts, the long-term stay of the child in the preschool educational organization, the child's close contacts with teachers), the optimization of the "triad interaction" between teachers, parents and children becomes one of the most important aspects of the pedagogical designing of a comfortable educational environment, providing a person-centered approach to each child, the possibility of mutual influence with account of the subject parameters of all its participants not only in the cognitive, but in the emotional-volitional sphere as well, along with the formation of the child's value orientations and life models. This is especially significant in the context of the objective process of globalization, when it is obvious that in the system of broadcasting universal values from generation to generation the family is weakened, and this can be achieved through pedagogical interaction, the basic tactic of which is cooperation, empathy and joint activity.

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