

CONFLICTOLOGY COMPETENCE AS AN INDISPENSABLE CONDITION OF PROFESSIONAL MANAGERIAL TEAM BUILDING IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract: *The considered article gives prominence to conflictology competence notion and discloses its main characteristics. Thus it reveals the main aspects of team building in an educational institution as well as gives all grounds to define the conflictology competence as an indispensable condition of the effectiveness of the professional activity of managers in higher educational institutions. When a team consists of different persons, it contributes to the effectiveness enhancement in general, but at the same time, it may cause a great number of conflict situations, which will hinder the working activity of all participants. In order to avoid a negative influence of conflicts, it is necessary to possess a well-developed conflictology competence.*

Keywords: *conflictology competence, team-building, educational institution, training, conflicts negotiation.*

Under modern stressful working conditions, conflictology terms of reference attract the attention of a wide circle of scientists. Nevertheless, organizations of all kinds still require professionals who can impress with effective communication skills and conflict situations constructive solving. The ability to build relationships based on collaboration and constructive cooperation positively influences the professional activity what contributes to psychological climate improvement and relationships harmonious development among the staff members. High level of conflictogenity in educational institutions raises the topicality of conflictology competence development among the collaborators of educational institutions. Thus, purposeful organization of conflictology competence formation activities becomes more and more important.

Certain scholars (G. Berezhnaia [1], Ye. Bogdanov [2], V. Zazykin [2], B. Hasan [3], O. Scherbakova [4]) have researched the issue as regards the essence, structure and regularities of various spheres professionals conflictology competence functioning and development. Usually the conflictology competence is identified with such notions as conflict

competence, conflictology training, conflictology literacy, conflictology competency. Very often all these notions are applied as synonyms, but to a certain extent it may complicate the research of the mentioned notions and the application of scientific achievements in practice.

Competence is a complicated individual-psychological formation based on the integration of theoretical knowledge, practical skills and significant personal qualities, which provide for the effective performance of professional activities.

I. Zimniaia distinguishes three main groups of competences in her scientific researches:

- competences, which belong to a person as a vital function experiencer (health preservation, knowledge enlargement, value-sense orientation);
- competences, which belong to human-human interaction (conflicts resolution, cooperation, tolerance, communication);
- competences, which belong to human activity (cognitive tasks settlement and solution, nonstandard decisions taking, activity facilities) [5].

While defining the competence characteristics, I. Zimniaia distinguishes its following aspects: motivational (readiness for competence exhibition), cognitive (competence content knowledge possession), behavioral (the experience of competence exhibition in different situations), value and sense (the attitude to competence content and the object of its application), emotional (emotional and volitional regulation of the process and competence exhibition result) [5].

Therefore, we study the conflictology competence as a cognitive and regulatory substructure of a personal professionalism, as a dynamic structural formation which presupposes that a professional should possess the knowledge of what the conflict is, master the skills of strategic behavior when the conflict arises, the ability of emotional self-regulation and have significant personal qualities (such as empathy, reflectivity etc.).

In their researches Ye. Bogdanov and V. Zazykin emphasized the importance of conflictology competence formation. Thus, they have considered the conflictology competence as a cognitive-regulatory subsystem of professionally important qualities of a person, which includes the corresponding special knowledge and skills [2]. Insufficiently developed conflictology competence is a substantial psychological reason of conflicts emergence. Considering the conflictology competence the authors distinguish gnostic, constructive (regulatory), communicative, normative components and components referring to reflexivity and status. Certain knowledge and skills in conflictology sphere demand the development of certain personal and professional qualities, which enable the effective application of the available knowledge and skills for conflicts management. Conflictology competence relates to social and perceptual, auto-psychological, psychological and pedagogical, administrative and legal competences. Therefore, the development of every separate competence provides for the development of the conflictology competence in general [2].

In his researches, B. Hasan discloses the conflict competence as an inseparable component of a general communicative competence, which includes the level of awareness as regards the range of possible behavioral strategies in a conflict situation and the ability of these strategies adequate application in a certain life situation [3]. In its general sense, B. Hasan defines the conflict competence as an ability to refrain the contradictions in a productive

conflict form, what contributes to its resolution. The researcher distinguishes two levels of conflict competence:

- the first level implies the ability to discern the qualities of a conflict, the skills of conflict participants cooperation organization in order to refrain the contradictions for the productive conflict resolution;
- the second level implies the ability to project conflicts necessary for educational results achievement, as well as to create conflicts in course of educational interaction processes [3].

Ye. Bogdanov and V. Zazykin indicate that conflictology competence and conflict competence are different notions. However, we do not agree with such opinion of these researchers as we consider these notions identical.

Firstly, L. Petrovskaia, A. Kulikov and A. Shypilov while studying the conflictology competence include into its basic structure such components as corresponding special knowledge and skills, the abilities of conflict management and conflict negative consequences elimination, reflexive culture (the developed abilities for the reflexive analysis accomplishment) [6; 7]. These components form the bedrock of gnostic, regulatory, communicative components and of the components of reflexivity and status in the researches of V. Zazykin and A. Denisov. Therefore, conflict competence and conflictology competence imply the availability of identical structural elements.

Secondly, L. Petrovskaia and V. Zazykin determine the mentioned competence types as components of a social and psychological competence [6; 8]. Therefore, we can confirm that the notions “conflict competence” and “conflictology competence” are identical.

As regards the difference between the notions conflictology competence and conflictology literacy, we refer to the researches of O. Scherbakova, who discloses conflictology literacy as a basic level of conflictology competence development revealing itself in everyday intuitive experience, which allows solving problems and contradictions in a constructive way without applying special mechanisms [4]. In addition, conflictology competence finds its expression in a preschool age when a person follows the norms of conflict-free communication in role-playing games, fair plays, as well as the norms of a problem constructive solution at everyday interpersonal emotional and direct communication level. Conflictology competence is a system of scientific knowledge on the conflict and conflict management skills, which are purposefully developed in the process of special training in accordance with the situations of communication entities educational and professional interaction. It implies a certain level of knowledge, skills, abilities and qualities of a person on the conflict analysis, management and self-management in course of conflictology conceptual and factual material mastering [4].

We agree with the viewpoint of A. Markova, and consider, that professionalism “notion” is wider in its meaning than “competence” notion, as it implies not only the mastering of a high level of professional activity, but also the desire to consciously change and develop own professional qualities, to make an individual creative contribution to the profession and to raise the profession prestige in society. A person may be a good professional in a certain sphere, but cannot be competent in solving all kinds of professional issues. Such consideration allows studying the competence as professionalism component.

Thus, the analysis of modern scientific publications testifies to the fact, that one of the most important social and psychological reasons of conflicts emergence is a low level of

conflictology competence development. Therefore, the development of a conflictology competence of working specialists is one of the main conditions of their successful professional activity.

Conflictogenic educational environment is formed by real and simulated interpersonal and mental conflict situations and conflicts. Mental conflict situations and conflicts (motivational, cognitive and role) are inherent in all components of the educational process. The significance of mental conflicts in a mental life of a person is defined by the fact, that the conflict itself changes the previous and forms the new relationships of a person and as a result, the personality integrity becomes to be a subject to certain changes. Therefore, the development and solution of a conflict represents the form of a personal development of its participants [9, p.105].

The formation of professionally conflictology competence of a manager of a higher educational institution can be implemented on the basis of an environmental approach, which presupposes the creation of a conflictogenic educational environment with the presence of interpersonal and mental conflicts. Because conflict becomes a central element of a conflictogenic environment, it makes sense to enhance the environmental approach with a conflictology component with the aim to develop a coherent conflict-environmental approach for better conflictology background organization [10]. Conflict-environmental approach unites environmental and conflictology components and is regarded as an organization and self-organization of an educational process which considers the nature of origin, specific features and logic of conflicts processes and events.

Unfortunately, in educational institutions despite the efforts of separate persons the majority of all workers do not possess the mentioned conflictology competence what contributes to the emergence of difficulties on every stage of a working process. Of course, managers bear full responsibility for all processes in an organization. However, the problem is that they have to control not only their own activities aimed at the constructive way of conflict negotiation, but be able to teach other workers to cope with possible conflict situations.

Under manager conflictology competence we understand the availability of abilities to employ the acquired knowledge and skills in the process of professional functions implementation rather than simple bulk of knowledge and experience. In this case the very conflictology competence finds expression in the arisen conflict situation correct assessment ability and optimal decision taking. For the achievement of a constructive communication in a conflict, it is necessary:

1. to establish a contact (it requires to possess knowledge in psychology);
2. to exchange information (it is necessary to know the needs, interests, requirements);
3. to offer reasonable arguments;
4. to make a decision (result).

L. Karpova considers that three spheres and namely motivational, subject-practical (operational-technological) and self-regulation represent the structural components of professional competence. The developed motivational sphere ensures the maturity of cultural, personal-motivational and social competences. Subject-practical sphere is characterized by cumulative knowledge (professional, subject, psychological-pedagogical, methodical, methodological); skills (gnostical, communicative, organizational, diagnostic, projective, constructive, managerial); qualities (obligatory, important and desirable), what stipulates the

effectiveness of teacher professional and pedagogical functions implementation. This sphere maturity contributes to the development of certain professional sub-competences: methodological, practical and assignment, didactic-methodical, special and scientific, economic and legal, valeological, informational, managerial and communicative. Self-regulation sphere maturity contributes to the development of such sub-competence as psychological competence and autocompetence i.e. volitional and emotional spheres management skills and abilities, professional destruction overcoming technologies, reflection maturity [11].

Modern specialist professional competence (considered as a readiness to perform official and professional obligations in accordance with current theoretical and practical achievements and experience, which correspond to the global demands and standards on a high professional level) is regarded by S. Tsymbal in a form of a unity of its three components: value and motivational component, subject and practical component and autoregulatory and volitional component, which are considered as personality aspects concurrently [12; 13].

We consider that the structure of a conflictology competence of managers is represented through the acmeological system and so far includes the system of qualities characterizing an individual and a person – axiological component; content block (knowledge) – informational component; operational block (skills) – operational component. In this meaning, the axiological block is invariable. Both informational and operational components include an invariable part, i.e. knowledge and skills, necessary in all spheres of conflict management, and a differentiated part, reflecting the specific features of knowledge and skills, necessary for the implementation of every sphere of responsibility.

The success of a teamwork relates to the coordinated positive synergy – the capability of all participants to achieve the high productivity of their activity, which presupposes that the corporate result will be extremely higher than the result of every individual separately. As regards the conditions favorable for such synergy emergence and enhancement, except products and services innovativeness, production technologies modernization, marketing and management effectiveness, they include team workers relationships quality. The effectiveness of the activity of an every separate participant, who works for the production process improvement, advertisement strategies development and management system efficiency provision, is determined by relationships constructiveness, which implies the possibility to find a common language, coordinate decisions and solve conflicts.

The necessity to create a competitive managerial team in a higher educational institution and the formation of preparedness to work in such a team are stipulated by the following circumstances:

- high competitiveness between different organizations which afford educational services;
- the complicity of tasks which have to be solved by educational institutions workers;
- the dynamics and variety of all tasks, which imply the formation of target groups.

While analyzing the problem of managerial team formation on the basis of system-structural approach, the researches L. Karamushka and O. Fil determine the following team characteristics as concerns activity common aim definition:

- common aim or set of aims have to be recognized by team members and accepted on the emotional level;

- team activity common aim has to be precisely coordinated with own needs, interests of all team members and accepted on a motivational level [14, p.27].

The formation of psychological and pedagogical preparedness of a manager of educational establishments for the work in a competitive managerial team becomes possible after training programs implementation, which should include:

- the training of positive motivation formation for the activity in a managerial team of an educational institution;
- the training of skills development as concerns main roles fulfillment and partnership cooperation in a managerial team of an educational institution;
- the training of educational institution managerial team competitiveness development;
- conflictology competence formation and enhancement training.

As we consider that team-building effectiveness enhancement directly depends upon the conflictology competence level of every separate member of the team, we offer to implement a number of trainings directed at the intensive development and digestion of knowledge, skills and abilities of a conflictology competence for all members of an organization (in this case of a higher educational establishment). The topics chosen for every separate training session should be thoroughly considered and developed referring to the classification of previously revealed personal qualities, tasks and exercises of the training. But the chosen topics should obligatory include such elements as psychological barriers negotiation, existing stereotypes overcoming, the formation of a person self-control and self-consciousness qualities, the formation of an understanding in communication, intercultural communication means, communication style formation and a technique of cooperation strategy selection, the formation of locus of control. The sequence of all trainings is defined by the stage of different conflicts negotiation and actuarial factors of communication situations development. It is very important to develop and implement exercises aimed at conflictology competence enhancement. Thus to achieve this it is necessary to apply different creative tasks, business games, master classes, lectures, group psychological consultations, personal growth support groups formation, personal creative potential development groups formation, educational blocks etc. The scheme of an educational training for educational institution managers is offered below:

1. aims of the training:

- conflictology competence development;
- stress-resistance development;
- favorable social and psychological climate;
- workers professional development;
- constructive organizational culture development;

2. structure of the training:

- diagnostic stage (the analysis of the qualities and needs of all participants while answering the questions as regards who and what will be taught in order to define the type, structure and content of the training program; at the same time it is required to evaluate the needs of an organization, which include staff policy, organization de-

- velopment strategy, staff potential qualification level, staff dynamics, organizational culture, existing conflicts and stress management system);
- conceptual stage (the definition of the aims of a training, characteristics of participants, their level of awareness, list of requirements, resources, training technology, training format);
 - inforatory (content-related) stage;
 - analytical stage (the analysis of the work, difficulties, workers involvement, the evaluation of the training and the attitude of participants toward it);
3. organizational teaching methods:
- conflict cartography;
 - case-method;
 - business and role games;
 - discussions;
 - behavioral imitation;
 - brainstorming;
 - mini-lectures.

Our further researches imply the correlation analysis carrying-out in order to prove the existence of relationships between the level of conflictology competence of the managerial staff of a higher educational establishment and ability to work in a professional managerial team (team-building abilities and skills). Besides, we are eager to select the battery of psychological tests to reveal individual-psychological qualities of training participants to adjust the influence of the training to the requirements of its participants.

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