

UNIVERSAL PATHOGENICITY OF AUTHORITARIAN FOCUS IN PEDAGOGUES' PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

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Abstract

The paper examines the specificity of authoritarian focus in pedagogues' professional communications, which can be the source of psychological traumatising, provoke the development of health deviations among the participants of educational process, causing the emergence of functional and chronic diseases. Pedagogue's sensibility to the demonstrations of authoritarianism points out the undeveloped readiness to build effective professional pedagogical communications, which can become the source of traumatising and aggravation of pedagogue's own didactopathy. The results of the empirical study on the influence of the factor "authoritarianism" on pedagogues' occupational health using the author's technique "Occupational health" are presented. The observed correlation tendencies indicate the phenomenon of authoritarian focus in pedagogue's professional communications, that is why the authoritarianism syndrome can be a serious barrier to the progressive professional development of a specialist, a ruining factor for the professional communications, which influence the psychological wellbeing and health state of the employee.

Keywords: *authoritarianism, authoritarian focus of personality, professional pedagogical communications, didactogenesis, occupational health, threats to occupational health.*

Introduction

Authoritarian focus of personality is determined as an orientation to dominating in interactions, willingness to oppress the personality of the other person, put him or her under control. It is characterized by "authoritarian aggression", cognitive egocentrism, "demand" to be understood (or more precisely – demand to agree with the opinion imposed), unwillingness to understand the other person, disrespect of another point of view, orientation to the primitive stereotypic "communication-functioning", communicative rigidity, etc. (Adler, 1997; Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, and Levinson, 1964; Altemeyr, 2004; Bayazitov, 2006; Duckitt, 1989; Feldman, 2003; Fromm, 1941; Podenko, 2010). The behaviour model used by the authoritarian personality is based on the conviction that the status and power authorities are the essentials

of any society. The motives of such behaviour come from the excessive aspiration to power and willingness to obey the authorities, because they are the compensation for insecurity and inferiority (Adler, 1997), support for the tendency of searching for the ways to reduce anxiety by decreasing contacts with people as an alternative to the aspiration for love and loyalty (Horney, 2002), one of the mechanisms to “escape from freedom”. Its inner source is the realization of the authoritarian conscience, i.e., the conscience orientated to the obedience to the external authority (Fromm, 1941).

Another not less important aspect of the examined problem is the fact that professional pedagogical communications include purely specific type of pedagogical interaction, which arises among the participants of educational process. By extrapolating the basic understanding of Fromm’s negative freedom theory on the educational environment, Dillon states that education models and encourages the behaviour of escaping from freedom. According to Dillon, it is “...easy to see the ways in which the teacher is cast in the role of the sadist, while the student is taught to take on the role of the masochist... Too often we can describe the role of teachers in the same way that Fromm describes sadistic tendencies: “to make others dependent on oneself and to have absolute and unrestricted power over them, so as to make them nothing but instruments “clay in the potter’s hand” (Dillon, 2014, p. 88–89).

The demonstrations of authoritarianism are treated as a particular compensatory form on mentality level and they support the hierarchical principle in the organization of social interactions: political, organizational and interpersonal (Bayazitov, 2006). Particularly in Ukrainian studies the dominance of the authoritarian tendencies in professional pedagogical communications is characterized as *destructive (ruining)* and/or *restrictive (limiting) types of pedagogical interaction* (Korotaeva, 2016). Authoritarianism of destructive type is present in hard requirements, punishments, orders that cause the transfer of negative assessment of activity on the assessing personality, oppression of the personality, ruining of relationships of the participants of pedagogical interaction and leads to irreversible consequences in personal development. The pedagogue, who uses such type of pedagogical interaction, rarely advises but often orders, rarely helps but often demands, unwillingly praises but gladly punishes. The pedagogue’s opinion is a reason for children’s didactogenesis in this case (Kolominskiy, 2007). Authoritarianism of restrictive type is present in suggestions, threats, tough instructions, and strictures and is characterized by categorical, mainly biased, mean assessments, which cause the decrease of motivation for further self-development in the sphere of occupation and personal development. Authoritarian interactions in activities (learning, professional), intended (or unintended) pressure in form of permanent control can lead to the refusal from activity, elimination of contacts, chronic underperformance (Bracher, 2006; Cole and Rafe, 2018; Warren, 2014), which eventually can cause nervous disorders and emergence of didactogenesis on this basement (Ganuzin, 2017; Korotaeva, 2016; Khudyk and Telniuk, 2012), school neuroses and school phobia (Destounes, 1962), neurotic behaviour (Johnsson, Lundqvist, Mossberg and Lakartidn, 1957).

The problem of authoritarianism is quite widely highlighted in the scientific researches of Ukrainian and foreign authors, where it is considered as a complicated multilevel phenomenon, related to social, mental and biological dimension of the personality. The nature of this phenomenon emerges in certain psychological and social characteristics of personality formation and associated individual psychosomatic peculiarities. Specificity of the studies on the phenomenon of authoritarianism in professional pedagogical communications is especially interesting and necessary both from scientific and practical point of view. Particularly, in his

studies Garbuzov pays attention to the relationship between chronic psycho-emotional tension and the emergence of stomach ulcer. In other words, the child, who appears to be under the influence of pedagogue's pathogenic authoritarianism, being in the situation of prolonged emotional tension, probably risks to have serious chronic diseases, or will look for the ways to decrease the dangerous influences (e.g., miss classes) (Garbuzov, 1994). Dolgova points out that the authoritarian style in the interactions in professional pedagogical activity causes the formation of the pedagogue's burn-out syndrome. This style bases on the pedagogue's subjective precepts and that is why any argumentative and especially alternative or critical attitude is considered very sensitively. Anxiety to lose forcefulness emerges even in case of negligible opposition to the authoritarian style and counteraction to this style quite often results in long-standing conflict situations, when the pedagogue's emotional resilience decreases. Progress and discipline of education subjects trained by the authoritarian pedagogue is generally satisfactory, but socio-psychological climate is quite tense, that affects the pedagogue's own wellbeing and sometimes can lead to organic somatic changes in the organism (Dolgova, 2016). The data of certain cross-cultural studies show that the authoritarian level varies depending on the subjective assessment of the external threat (Van Hiel and De Clercq, 2009; Manzi, Roccato, Paderi, Vitrotti, and Russo, 2017). The empirical data give the evidence that authoritarianism is to the certain level a compensatory characteristic (protective mindset) to maintain Self-concept well. It is supposed that authoritarian conventionalism is interpreted as a way to save self-esteem and feeling of one's own importance in spite of low social status (Brandt and Henri, 2012; Brandt, Chambers, Crawford, Wetheral and Reyna, 2015).

Authoritarian character of professional pedagogical communications can be the source of psychological traumatisation, provoke the development of health deviations among the participants of educational process, cause the emergence of functional and chronic diseases. From this perspective, the question of psychological regulation, perception, feelings of the subject – carrier of authoritarian mind-sets – has a research and practice interest, actualizing the need in decreasing negative authoritarian influences on mind and on the health of the individual.

Thus, the aim of the present paper: substantiation of pathogenic features of authoritarian focus of pedagogical employees, which make process of professional pedagogical communications more complicated and disruptively influence the employee's occupational health.

Methodology

The study is represented by the sample with the total number of 1803 respondents (Ukraine), wherein 374 men and 1429 women aged from 20 to 57. The representativeness of the sample was established with the method of randomized selection. It was found in the data that the investigated population was characterized by the underrepresentation of the male subjects. Unequal distribution of the sample was considered to be an objective factor, given that the majority of the employees in the educational establishments are women.

The following psychological techniques were used: the technique for the diagnosis of the level of emotional burn-out (Boyko, 1996), questionnaire of professional disadaptation (Dmitriyeva & Nikiforov, 2003), health test (Ozav, 1978, cited in Nikiforov, 2011), questionnaire WAM (CAH): wellbeing, activity, mood (Doskin, Lavrentieva, Miroshnikov, and Sharai, 1973), questionnaire "Overtaking of hard life situations" (Osukhova, 2007), questionnaire of the detection of neurotic states (Yakhin & Mendelevich, 1998) and questionnaire of professional

self-attitude (Karpinskyi and Kolyshko, 2010). Constructive content of the above mentioned techniques is well-known and has to be convergent with that psychological construct, which is operationalised in the author's questionnaire "Occupational health" (Dziuba, 2015).

Psychometric approbation of the technique "Occupational health" showed high reliability and validity of the psycho-diagnostic toolkit ($p < 0.000000$ with $N = 1803$) (Dziuba, 2015, 2016). As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis conducted in the questionnaire's internal structure, four scales were determined: "Destructive communications" (28,78%, contribution to the sample variance), "Destabilizing organization of professional activity" (9,61%, contribution to the sample variance), "Destruction of professional self-affirmation" (7,86%, contribution to the sample variance), and "Demotivators of labour productivity" (6,13%, contribution to the sample variance).

Methods for empirical data processing and interpretation: quantitative and qualitative analysis (descriptive statistics, correlation and confirmatory factor analysis). Mathematical calculations, provided below, were automatized with computer-aided software package for statistical data analysis "IBM SPSS Statistics 21".

Results and Discussion

In the conducted complex study of threats to pedagogue's occupational health we observed close correlation relationships with the use of Pearson's rank correlation method between the factor "authoritarianism" and certain factors, which can be considered as potentially possible or real threats to the occupational health (the author's questionnaire "Occupational health" was used (Dziuba, 2015)).

Figure 1 shows the results of the measurement of the influence of the factor "authoritarianism" on the pedagogues' occupational health according to the technique "Occupational health" (Likert scale (SWLS) is used, theoretical mean is 4 points).

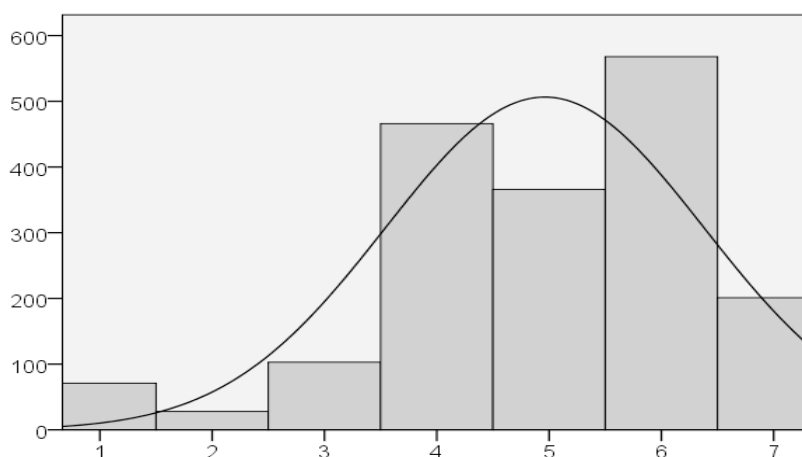


Fig. 1. Distribution of responses by the factor F23 authoritarianism (vertical – number of respondents ($N = 1803$), horizontal – authoritarianism indices)

In general the distribution of responses underlies the normal distribution, but we observe the significant bias to the right side, so the real mean is 4,96 that significantly excess the theoretical mean (almost on 1 point), with the standard deviation 1,42. It means that the

respondents assess the factor authoritarianism as the one, which negatively affects employee's occupational health.

It was also observed that *factor F23 authoritarianism (lack of tact and temperance, willingness to dominate, "authoritarian aggression", etc.)* closely positively correlates ($p \leq 0,001$) with all the factors of the author's questionnaire, which form the scale "Ruining communications" ($,603^{**}$), in particular: f25 critic, especially unjustified, communicated in rude humbling or mocking manner ($,449^{**}$); f13 mobbing (infliction of emotional distress at the working-place) ($,432^{**}$); f3 negative forms of professional communications (problem relationships with colleagues, parents, students, barriers of professional communication, unjustified aggression among staff members, internal group favouritism, gossiping, etc.) ($,468^{**}$); f15 conflicts in professional environment ($,609^{**}$); f11 intensive everyday stress ($,325^{**}$); f14 "inadequate" administration style ($,581^{**}$); f12 envy among staff members ($,220^{**}$).

The factor authoritarianism reveals close positive correlation ($p < 0,001$) with each of four scales of the questionnaire "Occupational health" (see Table 1).

Table 1. Relationship of the factor "authoritarianism" with the scales of the author's questionnaire "Occupational health"

Questionnaire scales "Occupational health"	"Ruining communications"	"Destabilizing organization of professional activity"	"Destructions of professional self-realization"	"Demotivators of labour productivity"	Index of risks of occupational health
f23 authoritarianism (lack of tact and temperance, willingness to dominate, "authoritarian aggression", etc.)	$,603^{**}$	$,596^{**}$	$,572^{**}$	$,424^{**}$	$,628^{**}$

Note. $**p \leq 0,001$; N=1803.

The presented data show that authoritarianism in pedagogical environment is enforced by the peculiarities of professional pedagogical communication. The pedagogue with the authoritarian focus of the world perception is characterized by the behaviour, which is based on the belief that using of one's own status and authority provides the sustaining of hierarchical subordination, control, security and professional stability.

The factor of authoritarianism also received positive statistically significant correlations with the indices of professional disadaptation ($,505^{**}$), in particular, "peculiarities of certain mental processes" ($,770^{*}$), "sleep cycle disruption" ($,510^{**}$), "decrease of general activity" ($,491^{**}$), and certain indicators of emotional burn-out (Boyko, 1996): "inadequate emotional selective reaction" ($,797^{**}$), "personal alienation (depersonalisation)" ($,678^{*}$), "being cornered" ($,686^{**}$), "emotional scarcity" ($,527^{**}$). At the same time there is an interesting tendency of indirect correlations of the factor with the indices of neurotic states assessment (Yakhina and Mendelevych, 1998): "anxiety" ($-,554^{**}$), "neurotic depression" ($-,430^{**}$), "asthenia" ($-,798^{**}$) along with positive statistically significant correlation with the index "vegetative

disorders" (.793*). Negative correlations more often point out that authoritarianism is not considered or/and is not admitted to be the existing problem. These results may be caused by the professional destruction "emotional deafness", when the pedagogue hears only him/herself, shows "insensibility" toward others. Consequently, observed correlation tendencies fixate the phenomenon of authoritarian focus in professional pedagogical communications, that directly or indirectly influence the pedagogue's wellbeing (-.667*) (Doskin, 1973).

It is important to consider that authoritarianism as a steady complex of the individual's perceptions affects different sides of the specialist's professional being (professional activity, business communication and career) and therefore the authoritarianism syndrome can be a serious barrier for the specialist's progressive professional growth, a factor of ruining professional communications, which influences the psychological wellbeing (statistically significant negative correlation -.667*, technique WAM, Doskin, 1973) and the health state of the employee (statistically significant positive correlations by scales "body health" (.667*) and "mental health" (.668*), (Ozav, 1978, cited in Nikiforov, 2011).

Attention should be paid to the correlation relationships of the factor with the strategies of overtaking hard life situations. Positive statistically significant correlations are observed in two strategies: "avoidance" (.881*) and "acceptance" (.565**), while the rest of the strategies: "opposing overtaking" (-.571*), "distancing" (-.351*), "self-control" (-.434**) and "search for social support" (-.548*) show the reverse correlation relationships. Consequently, with the increasing of authoritarianism the pedagogues' willingness to avoid or accept those conditions of professional reality, which will likely create the implicit obedience to the authority, power, high level of conventionalism like proneness to the acceptable professional norms and conformism like uncritical obedience to idealized professional authorities, increases. However, it is important to consider that high level of conformism does not necessarily mean full obedience. Conformal people do not necessarily demonstrate negative attitude to other group members, but they are more sensible to the threats of the intragroup favouritism. This threat, according to Feldman, causes the growth of out-group aggression (Feldman, 2003). Out-group aggression actualizes anxious feelings and can become the stimulus of both tolerance development and intolerant behaviour and neuroses. Intolerant behaviour and intolerant perceptions can emerge situationally and appear through aggression, bondage and absence of own opinion, rage, absence of social interaction skills, emotional self-regulation, pathological anxiety, etc. According to May, pathological anxiety limits a person in the actions, narrowing the area of his/her consciousness with different neurotic defending mechanisms (May, 2001). In this context the displacement of traumatic feelings increases the anxiety, causes internal contradiction leading to the instability in mental balance. In particular, the mechanism of displacement makes it harder to see the real threats and risks for occupational health. As it is stated by Shabanova, the person, who mainly displaces his/her aggression and hostility to others, can become passive and compliant, and because of this more often go under exploitation from others, that causes more aggression and hostility, which later have to be displaced (Shabanova, 2011). Besides that, in professional activity the displacement mechanism increases the feeling of helplessness, because the employee has to shorten the limits of his/her own professional independence, put internal limitations and partially or completely refuse from effective using of his/her own professional potential under the conditions of authoritarian interaction. From this perspective, the observed tendency completely explains the statistically significant relationships between authoritarianism and strategy of acceptance (.565**).

Another interesting tendency is observed with the strategy of avoidance, which is also oriented on avoiding the dangerous situation and "neutralization" of anxious feelings

in the situation of authoritarian communications. Avoiding of anxiety grounds on the chronic anticipating of negative events, trying to step aside in advance, close, secure oneself from possible disappointments, etc. Effective ways to avoid the anxiety in May's opinion are: willingness to "hook on the authoritative power"; subjection to powerful others as the opportunity to use the results of their efforts; avoiding the newness, which is considered to be potentially dangerous, because arises in the uncertain situation and is the source of risk by itself (May, 2001).

Significant correlations were observed between authoritarianism and the indicators of professional self-attitude (Karpinskiy and Kolyshko, 2010): "internal proneness to conflict" (.491**), "self-respect in the profession" (.754**). The observed tendencies show that the employee is in prolonged and frequently repeated negative emotional states. Pathological anxiety can emerge as a result of subjective internal psychological processes and conflicts, which are conditioned by the specifics and content of authoritarian communications. According to Adler, the compensatory motivation becomes a non-constructive form of the internal conflict solution and it comes along with internal struggle, aggression and tendency to manipulate others. Later this motivation is transformed into power aspirations and leads to the negative complication of the inner world in case of failure (Adler, 2015). Power aspiration obtains the irrational aspect, causes the intensification of anxiety, increases the probability of the adaptational disorders in professional sphere and is projected in the structure of the employee's professional self-attitude.

Conclusions

The influence of authoritarian communications on the personality in professional pedagogical activity is a prognostic dangerous factor: the employee becomes more vulnerable to stress, psychologically disturbed or intolerant. Under the conditions of stressful professional reality the defined constants create "chronic" psycho-traumatic atmosphere in professional communications of the employee, which can provoke the emergence of negative emotional experiences (psychogeneses). The main etiologic factor of professional psychogeneses is the frustration conflict, caused by the experience of psycho-traumatic professional situation, which violates the homeostasis of the organism and can provoke the psychogenic diseases, in particular psychotic mental disorders, among which the leading position belongs to asthenic and phobic syndromes, disorders of certain mental processes, etc. That is why the pathogenic authoritarianism in professional communications is considered to be a zone of health threats for the subjects of educational space.

Pathogenic authoritarianism in professional communications can cause several vectors of possible development of professional disorders.

The first vector is the *authoritarianism syndrome* as the only direct reason for disease. Here we face the carrier of authoritarianism. As noticed by Adorno, Altemeyer, Levinson, "authoritarian individual" is characterized by negative social precepts, trying to follow strict social stereotypes (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, and Levinson, 1964). According to Adorno, authoritarian individuals never consider that they need to be free from this syndrome (i.e. that they are "ill") (Adorno, 2001). As Podenko emphasized, "authoritarian individual, aiming to receive the most of collective responsibility, in fact overloads him/herself and appears not to be capable to carry it on without the loss in the quality of collective activity" (Podenko, 2010, p. 214). Tough, authoritarian, not able to find the compromise employee projects the situation of negative assessment, always expresses his/her dissatisfaction, complaints, shows

excessive pickiness, is becoming the potential carrier of professional conflicts. Furthermore, the specificity of professional educational environment, first of all, relates to the influence of the general psychological atmosphere on the mental state of students. Well-known child psychologist Zakharov noted, that excessive "stimulation" of children with threats, stricture, punishments (direct characteristics of authoritarianism) is the factor, which directly leads to the mental health disorders, emergence of didactogenesis and development of neuroses (Zakharov, 2006). Reaching a certain level, didactogenesis as any excessive tension causes the decrease of psychological, creative productivity and in case of frequent emergence exhausts the organism's forces, can transform in the chronic disorder with different clinical responses (neuroses, functional, psychosomatic disorders). Findings of the newest empirical studies show that in the classes, where the authoritarian, strict teacher works, the students are sick three times more and mental health disorders are observed even more often (Bogdanova, 2008).

The second vector is *the authoritarianism as a reason for emergence of constitutional or another disease*. Systemic (constitutional) diseases are the big group of pathologies, the main feature of which is the significant unwell feeling for the whole organism, not depending on the localization of the initial pathology. That is why the pedagogue's sensitivity to the demonstrations of authoritarianism as a peculiar demonstration of the internal individual vulnerability with intense actualized need in power can make evident the steady tension of communication conditions (with colleagues, students, administration), steady necessity to use hierarchically oriented forms of self-assertion, strict categorization of professional perception and self-realization. Obviously, such an individual is not only a re-translator of authoritarian style of interaction, but also suffers from it. The pedagogue's activity shows the lack of confidence, fear of communication: on the one hand, there is a domination of willingness to maintain the authority anyway, on the other hand, the pedagogue is ready to attack those, who threaten this authority, or he/she can play the role of the "victim" in order to assert the authority. All the stated points out the pedagogue's undeveloped readiness to build effective professional pedagogical communications, which can become the source of traumatization and aggravation of pedagogue's own didactopathy.

Universal pathogenicity of the authoritarian style of interaction in pedagogue's professional communications causes pressure on the professional growth and professional career of the employee, restrains the formation of professional independence, self-confidence, adequate self-esteem, initiative, these are the qualities, which provide comfortable professional development, psychological resilience and high level of individual occupational health.

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UNIVERSAL PATHOGENICITY OF AUTHORITARIAN FOCUS IN PEDAGOGUES' PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Summary

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The paper examines the specificity of authoritarian focus in pedagogues' professional communications, which can be the source of psychological traumatising, provoke the development of health deviations among the participants of educational process, causing the emergence of functional and chronic diseases. It is observed that the authoritarian focus under the conditions of stressful professional reality creates "chronic" psycho-traumatic atmosphere in professional communications of the employee and can provoke the emergence of negative emotional experiences (psychogeneses). The important aspect of the examined problem is the fact that authoritarian interactions in activities (learning, professional) can be the reason for the emergence of children's didactogenesis and development of neuroses. Pedagogue's sensibility to the demonstrations of authoritarianism points out undeveloped readiness to build effective professional pedagogical communications, which can become the source of traumatising and aggravation of pedagogue's own didactopathy. The results of the empirical study on the influence of the factor "authoritarianism" on pedagogues' occupational health using the author's technique "Occupational health" are presented. The observed correlation tendencies indicate the phenomenon of authoritarian focus in pedagogue's professional communications, that is why the authoritarianism syndrome can be a serious barrier for the progressive professional development of a specialist, the ruining factor for the professional communications, which influence the psychological wellbeing and health state of the employee. The pedagogue with the authoritarian focus of the world perception is characterized by the behaviour, which is based on the belief that using of one's own status and authority provides the sustaining of hierarchical subordination, control, security and professional stability.

The empirical data give the evidence that universal pathogenicity of the authoritarian style of interaction in pedagogue's professional communications causes pressure on the professional growth and professional career of the employee, restrains the formation of professional independence, self-confidence, adequate self-esteem, initiative, these are the qualities, which provide comfortable professional development, psychological resilience and high level of individual occupational health. With the increasing of authoritarianism the pedagogues' willingness to avoid or accept those conditions of professional reality, which will likely create the implicit obedience to the authority, power, high level of conventionalism like proneness to the acceptable professional norms and conformism like uncritical obedience to idealized professional authorities, increases. The influence of authoritarian communications on the personality in professional pedagogical activity is a prognostic dangerous factor: the employee becomes more vulnerable to stress, psychologically disturbed or intolerant.

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