

## Empirical Research of Professional Creativity of the Head of Educational Institution

### Емпіричне дослідження професійної творчості керівника закладу освіти

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#### ABSTRACT

*The aim of our research is to show the concepts of “professional creativity” and “creativity in the process of professional activity”; to organize the experimental research and to analyze its results; to describe the processes cause a creative reinterpretation of stereotypes – meaning-making – and changes in the entire life process – life-making; to show the results of empirical researches of professional creativity of the head of educational institutions.*

*Methods of the research.* The following theoretical methods of the research were used to solve the tasks formulated in the article: a categorical method,

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*structural and functional methods, the methods of the analysis, systematization, modeling and generalization. The experimental method was the method of organizing empirical research.*

**The results of the research.** *We proved, that if there was no personal meaning in the process of professional activity, for the sake of which professional activity would be carried out, and only the objective orientation of this activity was expressed. Then such activity would not take the form of creative activity, it would not reflect the actual spiritual search on oneself that is meaningful for a person. The internal objective determinants, the objective orientation of the process of professional activity allows the manager to find his/her own personal meaning, and only when the manager clearly understands why he/she will carry out creative activity, its goals and values will be determined. Only in the case when the process of professional creativity acquires a personally significant meaning for the manager, only then this activity can be considered in a creative aspect, in the paradigm of the manager's acquisition of personal meanings and the formation of his/her creative individuality.*

*Thus, the professional creativity of a manager is understood by us as a conscious, purposeful, active process of the unique activity of its kind, aimed at finding a new, independent, innovative and original way of managing the activities of subordinates with the aim of highly effective creative resolution of managerial tasks and problems.*

**Conclusions.** *The results of professional creativity are: a new understanding of the subject of activity – the creation of new ideas, programs, concepts, projects, paradigms, aimed at obtaining fundamentally new results, which make it possible to involve a wider social community in creative cooperation; the emergence of new ways of carrying out professional activities, hitherto unknown technologies, activity algorithms, etc. Professional creativity of the manager is accompanied by constant personal development – the need for new, original, non-standard and unique ideas.*

**Key words:** *professional creativity, a creative reinterpretation of stereotypes, meaning-making, changes in the entire life process, life-making, constant personal development, non-standard and unique ideas.*

## Introduction

In any professional group, there is always a leader who is officially appointed or elected by the team based on his/her abilities, capabilities and personality traits. Empirical researches

(Astle, & Scerif, 2011; Ivashkevych Ed., 2016) testify to the fact that the knowledge, abilities and skills, as well as the abilities of the manager, as a rule, are evaluated by people much higher than the corresponding qualities of other members of the team. Thus, a person who is able to facilitate the resolution of certain significant situations, problems, tasks and situations can become the head of a group (a team) (Guilford, 1980). In the structure of the leader's personality, the most important individual characteristics, moral and ethical values inherent in this or that social group are amplified for this group of respondents (Derwing, Munro, Thomson, & Rossiter, 2009).

In the research (Kosmitzki, & John, 1993) different types of managers are distinguished depending on the nature of the professional activity performed, in particular, its universal and situational types. The scientists (Selman, 1980) also characterize managers depending on the content of their professional activity (inspirer, executor, business, emotional) and leadership style (authoritarian, democratic, etc.). In turn, scientists (Onufriieva, 2017) emphasize that the manager's relationships with subordinates, the psychological climate of the team, the results of the manager's activity largely depend on the management style implemented by the manager. The author (Onufriieva, 2017) singles out the following management styles: authoritarian, democratic, liberal-anarchic, inconsistent and situational ones.

Depending on the focus of the manager's personality on the interests of his/her professional activity or on concern for relationships with other people, scientists (Drobot, 2013) proposed the so-called "Management Matrix", in the structure of which five types of managers were distinguished: a pessimist (who pays a little attention to his/her activity and other people), a dictator (he/she pays maximum attention to his/her profession and a completely insignificant amount to the team), a liberal (who pays maximum attention to people, and minimum – to his/her professional activity), a manipulator (he/she pays moderate attention to professional activities in general and to each individual team

in particular) and organizer (he/she is characterized by a considerable orientation towards the implementation of productive activities, which is accompanied by considerable combination with trust and respect for all people without exception).

According to the specifics of intellectual activity in the scientific literature, *the following types of managers* are distinguished: conservative-intuitive; conservative-analytical; innovative-intuitive and innovative-analytical (Flavell, 1995). It is quite obvious that the *Innovative and Analytical Style of Management* is considered by us as the most effective ones (Mykhalchuk, & Onufrieva, 2020). A manager with this management style is characterized by energy and innovation, sensitivity to new ideas and perceived information, generation of a large number of ideas, readiness to take into account the opinion of others, the ability to logically analyze the realism and perspective of a certain idea, quick decision-making and practical implementation of new actions for the individual, tolerance for failures, the ability to globally perceive certain situations and different types of the activities with people (Schwarz, & Bilsky, 1987).

The conceptions of the formation of *professional creativity* of the head of the educational institution (Collins, & Amabile, 1999) allow us to characterize the latter as professional self-sufficiency, a creative, innovative, professional position, the original transformative nature of the subject's activity, which creates a fundamentally new product or the object that is not a mechanical repetition, copying of already existing ones (Івашкевич Ед., 2015). When carrying out professional creativity, the manager is always aware of the purpose of his/her activity, responsibility for the work assigned to him/her, the importance of internal control over the results of creative professional activity (Amabile, Conti, Lazenby, & Herron, 1996).

So, **the aim of our research** is to show the concepts of "professional creativity" and "creativity in the process of professional activity"; to organize the experimental research and to analyze its results; to describe the processes cause a creative re-

interpretation of stereotypes – meaning-making – and changes in the entire life process – life-making; to show the results of empirical research of professional creativity of heads of educational institutions.

### Methods of the research

The following theoretical methods of the research were used to solve the tasks formulated in the article: a categorical method, structural and functional methods, the methods of the analysis, systematization, modeling and generalization. The experimental method was the method of organizing empirical research.

### The results of the research

We consider the concepts of “professional creativity” and “creativity in the process of professional activity” as somewhat identical, based on the research (Cilibrasi, Stojanovik, Riddell, & Saddy, 2019). We consider it appropriate to note that *professional creativity* always emphasizes *the process of performing creative activity, however, creativity in professional activity*, in turn, can actualize our attention both to the process of professional creativity and to its result (de Bot, 1992). The approaches of scientists (Agrawal, 2020; Barnes, 2009) are important for our research, to the problem of professional creativity of the manager as the specialist’s transition to the level of his/her professional skills, when the individual is able to offer new, non-standard and original professional solutions. Therefore, the purpose of professional creativity in the research (Brédart, 1991) includes needs to find something new, unique in the professional activity, which emphasize a high level of personal development of the manager as a professional.

Scientists (Crookes, 1989; Fredericktown, 1984) determined that the highest level of the organization of professional creativity was the existence of the value-meaning level of the implementation of professional activity. The latter provides a great opportunity to correlate the manager’s professional and creative activities with life intentions, senses and meanings (Guilford,

1982). Extrapolating this approach to the process of professional creativity, it should be noted that it can be implemented only if the professional activity is personally significant for the manager (Hunt, 1983). After all, as it was noted by scientists (Кривопишина, 2013; Моляко, 1989), the presence of only one, purely professional interest, which includes the entire orientation of the individual in its structure, which has no reference, points either in the worldview or in the field of true love for life in all its richness of manifestations, and it will necessarily deprive a person of inner freedom and kill his/her personal spirit (Моляко, & Музыка, 2006). All these factors, the scientist points out, greatly inhibit professional creativity of a manager.

The dependence of professional creativity on intellectual and moral maturity constitutes the basic, unique level of connection between the individual and the moral and value component of the manager's life. The latter appears as a system of real values, which were laid as the basis of professional creativity in the researches of scientists (Barron, & Harrington, 1981). The author singles out three main blocks of values: values of professional and creative development; a block of intellectual development values; values of moral self-determination, which are explained by the intelligence of the individual, his/her philosophical wisdom. Then, thanks to the professional creativity, cognitions, thinking, etc., the individual's worldview becomes more and more ethically meaningful.

In the modern practice of managing educational institutions, there is quite a contradiction in the relationships between normatively defined and truly creative in the professional activity of the manager. To determine the content of this ratio, scientists (Flossdorf, 1981) use the analysis of the results of the conducted empirical research by the method of binary oppositions based on the analysis of the interpretation of the polar characteristics of the concepts "reproductive – productive". As a result of the conducted empirical studies of managerial activity, the scientist (Flossdorf, 1981) states: a) it is impossible to separate the norm

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from creativity, since creativity is not a separate aspect of the professional activity, but it has the most essential and necessary characteristics; b) the norms of professional creativity are necessary for managers at the same time and they are the most important interaction actualized by the moral and value sense of the professional activity; c) a comparison of the norm with the objective needs of the society is a dominant way of changing the professional activity of the manager, a way of explicating creativity by him/her.

We believe that the professional orientation of the manager's personality can be considered one of the dominant features of his/her professional creativity. Professional orientation, in turn, includes the goals that a specialist sets for himself/herself, the aspirations that are inherent to him/her, the motives that guide him/her in his/her own activities. The condition for the implementation of professional creativity is a selective positive attitude of the manager towards his/her professional activity, and the condition for its deployment is the process of the professional activity, which is actualized by personal content, when the subject of the activity is clearly aware of what he/she is acting for, having defined goals and values in order to find new, non-standard, rational solutions, creative problem, tasks with the aim of explaining them in practice. Therefore, the creative professional activity of the manager is characterized by novelty, originality, non-standard and uniqueness in the implementation of bioenergetic, intellectual, emotional, physical human forces, which in 0.75;  $\rho < 0.01$ ), using active and optimistic attitudes on aggregates facilitating the creation of a socially significant result, which is necessary for the development of the society.

In order to determine certain basic characteristics of the professional creativity of the head of the educational institution, we conducted a pilot study that lasted during 2017–2018. This study contained four stages. At the first stage of the experiment (January 2017 – April 2017), 48 heads of secondary educational institutions (Rivne and Rivne Districts, Kyiv, Odesa and Ka-

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mianets-Podilskyi) participated. At this stage of the research, we used the author's Methods: "Methodology for assessing the ability of managers to be creative" and "Methodology for assessing the divergent thinking of managers of higher educational institutions" (Набочук, 2021; Михальчук, Набочук, & Івашкевич, 2021). It has been proven that in the process of mastering by a specialist knowledge about the methods of carrying out professional activities, acquiring the skills and abilities to carry out the latter, the development of the manager's personality takes place in the direction of his/her preparation for creativity. A high level of professional knowledge, abilities and skills allows the manager to clearly define significant moral values and meanings in the conditions of modern society ( $r=0.69$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), not only to make operational and effective management decisions ( $r=0.72$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), but also to influence the decision-making of the entire teaching staff, the ability "to lead" ( $r=0.76$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), occupying leadership positions ( $r=0.70$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), having formed "a working team" of like-minded people ( $r=0.78$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), who, realizing their creative abilities in their professional paradigm of the activities, achieve the set innovative goals, receiving from this not only material, but, above all, moral satisfaction.

It was determined that a sufficiently high level of in-depth professional knowledge is ensured by the activation of the manager's cognitive needs ( $r=0.73$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), a creative approach to solving problematic tasks and situations, which does not allow the manager to limit himself/herself to only stereotypical approaches in solving management tasks ( $r=0.78$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), as well as such tasks that increase the manager's competence ( $r=0.68$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), activate the process of his/her self-actualization ( $r=0.63$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ). Thus, the more knowledge a manager acquires, the more diverse his/her approaches to solving managerial tasks and problems will be, which, in turn, mobilizes the intellect for the process of transforming new information, inventing creative, innovative ways of modelling a creative product.



As a result of the 1st stage of our pilot study, it was determined that the manager's psychological readiness for professional creativity is determined by significant correlations between professional knowledge and professional skills and the abilities of a manager ( $r=0.77$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), clearly formed and explained striving for professional mastery due to the resources of creative potential ( $r=0.70$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), motivation to achieve independently formulated professional goals ( $r=0.71$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), the ability to solve problem situations creatively ( $r=0.76$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), revealing if it is necessary the ability to take risks ( $r=0.77$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), explaining a unique creative approach to the organization of professional activity ( $r=\text{non-standard solution problem situations, tasks that are arisen}$  ( $r=0.74$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ )).

It was also found that an external factor that contributes to the professional creativity of the manager is the trust and support of the teaching staff ( $r=0.72$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), his/her active participation in innovative educational processes ( $r=0.75$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ). In the process of explication of professional creativity, changes, that are clearly understood by the manager, are implemented at the initiative of either the manager or the team, and they facilitate changes in the professional consciousness of the individual. These processes cause *a creative reinterpretation of stereotypes – meaning-making* – and *changes in the entire life process – life-making*, etc.

The process of creative performance of a specific task or problem by a manager is characterized by the presence of both productive and reproductive elements that are dialectically and dynamically interrelated and exert mutual influence on each other. Moreover, the importance of each of these factors depends on many factors (including the content of each individual task) and the conditions of creative search implementation.

The 1<sup>st</sup> stage of the pilot study conducted by us also allows us to assert that the productivity of the professional activity of the head of the educational institution is ensured by communicative skills of the individual (the ability to influence, convince,

assure, debate, listen), which allow us restructuring the activities of team members to achieve their professional goals, while maintaining good relations between employees.

The manager's communicative skills are manifested in the process of the establishment of harmonious relationships both with subordinates and with their supervisors. The ability to form a team of like-minded people, in which positive opportunities for creativity and the formation of their Creative Self are created for everyone for all participants of the educational space, is supported by the fact that the realization of the creative potential of subordinates is a personal value for the manager ( $r=0.58$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ). Under such conditions, there is a great opportunity for clear planning of joint activities and control over its course ( $r=0.45$ ;  $\rho<0.05$ ), according to collective decision-making mechanisms ( $r=0.64$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ). At the same time, the realization of a creative potential of subordinates is positively correlated with the psychological factors of the manager's provision of a Creative Approach to the implementation of professional activities of managers ( $r=0.47$ ;  $\rho<0.05$ ), with the method of positive resolution of conflict situations ( $r=0.48$ ;  $\rho<0.05$ ), a factor of motivational involvement of heads of educational institutions in order to achieve pre-planned results of creative activity ( $r=0.56$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ), a mechanism for creating psychological comfort in the team ( $r=0.48$ ;  $\rho<0.05$ ), playing the role of Mentor for Subordinates ( $r=0.67$ ;  $\rho<0.01$ ). The empirical results having been obtained in the research allow us to conclude that professional creativity appears as a mechanism of personal development of the manager, the creation of personal innovations that are particularly significant in terms of the formation of moral and valuable personal values and meanings.

Therefore, *the professional activity of the head of the educational institution* becomes a sphere of the development of his/her ability to professional creativity, if:

– it will be consciously aimed at finding an independent and original way of managing the participants of the educational

space, and it will optimally combine traditions and innovations, normative and creative ones, transforming the subjectively meaningful experience of the manager and his/her personal resources and potentials;

– this professional activity will be carried out in an individual way of its organization, allowing to go beyond existing professional situations, standards and benchmarks if it is necessary. Professional creativity creates great opportunities for the manager's unique attitude to the main business of his/her life, helps to constantly find new and unique personal resources, to try to use them in a new, non-standard and original way in order to solve increasingly complex tasks, problems and situations, and at the same time achieve, in this way, a higher level of personal development;

– generates the innovative orientation in mastering new effective algorithms and methods of performing professional activities by rethinking, re-transforming professional experience at the innovative and creative level, which ensures the search for a new Model of Creativity by design, independent and original way of managing the professional activities of subordinates with the aim of highly effective creative solution of managerial problems, tasks and situations under conditions of maximum use of resources of creative potential. The latter, in turn, actualizes the formation of the Creative Self of a manager, which acquires its true psychological content precisely from its structural components;

– carries out the plan with the support of colleagues, creatively transforming significant subjective experience and personal resources (concentrated in the Creative Self of the individual) to find original innovative forms and methods, which are adequate for each objective situation. The latter ensures the formation of new creative and unique products through the manager's realization of necessary professional goals through the adoption of new educational, value-meaning senses for the implementation of necessary creative independent transformations;

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– allows managers to realize creative relationships between traditions and innovations, to manage other professionals (subordinates, colleagues) harmoniously, organizing the process of their professional creativity, which is ensured by a combination of two main principles: hierarchical (subordination) and collegial (coordination), as well as the need for their optimal coordination, transition and general transformations.

The professional creativity of a manager is always a subjectively significant process, as it is determined by his/her personal attitude to the activity, the level of the formation of the manager's creative self, the type of the behavior in the professional environment, the ratio of normative and creative aspects in gaining the professional skills and forming the personality of a specialist. The dynamics of the professional creativity requires a great creative capacity from the manager, which is manifested under the conditions of explication of certain methods of regulation and correction of the implementation of professional activity, associated with critical periods accompanied by a great increase in mental tension of the manager's personality, refusal to use previously formed types of activity, instructions for ineffective wasting time and efforts of a specialist. This violates the gradualness and uniformity of the transition of the psyche of the process of professional creativity from one level of explication to another one, makes the process of becoming professional creativity to a greater extent jump-like.

Restoration of the structural components of professional creativity, depending on the requirements of the professional situation, often actualizes the manager's desire for self-regulation (self-control, self-correction, self-compensation), forms of a fully conscious desire to eliminate contradictions in one's development, ensure personal harmony, etc.

*The goal of the manager's professional creativity* is to search for new valuable and meaningful frames in the activity: new ways, methods and forms of its implementation, new levels of the manager's professional development as a creative mana-

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ger. *The degree of novelty of a professionally creative act* is reflected due to the actualization of the following criteria: 1) those ones that did not exist in management practice until that time; 2) those ones, which are new for a specific manager, but that already exist in management practice; 3) those ones that exist in the form of improved old ways, forms and methods of the professional activity. The successful implementation of innovative ways of implementing creative activity is carried out by the manager thanks to the active use of anticipation processes as the ability of the individual (in the broadest sense) to act and make certain decisions with a certain temporal and spatial prediction regarding expected events and results of the professional activity, including intellectual one.

Therefore, *the professional creativity of the head of an educational institution* is evaluated by us as a process of understanding and acceptance by the head educational values as new ones for him/her in order to carry out the necessary personal independent transformations, which are unique not only from the point of view of explication of the process of professional creativity, but also are perceived as recognition of its results by the world community. *Professional creativity* is also considered by us as a process of personal self-development, aimed at deepening the spiritual culture of the manager, which can only ensure his/her full-fledged professional activity, when there is the understanding of education as a state function of creating new products, creating new meanings, as a transformation of social reality, etc. The presence of the author's program for the implementation of professional actions, abilities and skills allows the manager to reveal himself/herself in this context as a person who is able to respond to the challenges of modern times with full responsibility, is able to ensure the creative modernization of the entire educational system. The adoption of this position by the head of educational institutions will allow to change the professional practice and approaches to the definition and implementation of professional creativity as a whole.

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If there is no personal meaning in the process of professional activity, for the sake of which professional activity will be carried out, and only the objective orientation of this activity is expressed, then such activity will not take the form of creative activity, it will not reflect the actual spiritual search on oneself that is meaningful for a person. The internal objective determinants, the objective orientation of the process of professional activity allows the manager to find his/her own personal meaning, and only when the manager clearly understands why he/she will carry out creative activity, its goals and values will be determined. Only in the case when the process of professional creativity acquires a personally significant meaning for the manager, only then this activity can be considered in a creative aspect, in the paradigm of the manager's acquisition of personal meanings and the formation of his/her creative individuality.

Thus, *the professional creativity of a manager* is understood by us as a conscious, purposeful, active process of the unique activity of its kind, aimed at finding a new, independent, innovative and original way of managing the activities of subordinates with the aim of highly effective creative resolution of managerial tasks and problems.

Full-fledged professional creativity will make us possible to carry out and implement creative actions with the support of the society (pedagogical, students' and parents' community), under the conditions of establishing subject-subject relationships between all team members. The latter will allow us to change the position of the manager in relation to the team and to carry out professional activities in general on the basis of self-governance and self-organization.

## Conclusions

*The results of professional creativity* are: a new understanding of the subject of activity – the creation of new ideas, programs, concepts, projects, paradigms, aimed at obtaining fundamentally new results, which make it possible to involve a wider social community in creative cooperation; *the emergence of new*

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*ways of carrying out professional activities, hitherto unknown technologies, activity algorithms, etc. Professional creativity of the manager is accompanied by constant personal development – the need for new, original, non-standard and unique ideas.*

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**Набочук Олександр. Емпіричне дослідження професійної творчості керівника закладу освіти.**

**Метою статті** є розкриття поняття «професійної творчості» та «творчості у процесі професійної діяльності» на теоретичному рівні; організація експериментального дослідження та аналіз його результатів; опис процесів, що спричиняють творче переосмислення стереотипів – смислотворення – та зміни всього життєвого процесу – життєтворення; висвітлення результатів емпіричних досліджень професійної творчості керівника закладу освіти.

**Методи дослідження.** Для розв'язання поставлених у роботі завдань використовувалися такі теоретичні методи дослідження: категоріальний, структурно-функціональний, аналіз, систематизація, моделювання, узагальнення. Експериментальним методом є метод організації емпіричного дослідження.

**Результати дослідження.** Доведено, якщо у професійній діяльності відсутнім є особистісний смисл, заради якого здійснюватиметься професійна діяльність, і вираженою буде лише предметна спрямованість цієї діяльності, то така діяльність не набуде форм творчої діяльності, вона не відображуватиме власне духовний пошук і значущу для людини роботу над собою. Внутрішні предметні детермінанти, об'єктна спрямованість професійної діяльності дозволяє керівникові знаходити власне свій особистісний сенс, і тільки тоді, коли керівник чітко усвідомлюватиме, заради чого він буде здійснювати творчу діяльність, визначеними стануть її цілі і цінності. Тільки у випадку, коли процес професійної творчості набуватиме для керівника особистісно значущого сенсу, цю діяльність можна розглядати в творчому аспекті, в парадигмі набуття керівником особистісних сенсів і становлення своєї творчої індивідуальності.

Отже, професійна творчість керівника визначається як усвідомлений, цілеспрямований, активний процес унікальної у своєму роді діяльності, спрямованої на пошук нового за задумом, самостійного, інноваційного й оригінального способу управління діяльністю підлеглих з метою високоефективного творчого розв'язання управлінських завдань, проблем та задач.

**Висновки.** Доведено, що результатами професійної творчості є: нове розуміння предмету діяльності – створення нових ідей, програм, концепцій, проєктів, парадигм, зорієнтованих на отримання принципово нових результатів, які дозволяють залучити до творчої співпраці значно ширше суспільне співтовариство; виникнення нових способів здійснення професійної діяльності, невідомих до цього часу технологій, алгоритмів діяльності тощо. Професійна творчість керівника супроводжується постійним особистісним розвитком – потребою в нових, оригінальних, нестандартних та унікальних ідеях.

**Ключові слова:** професійна творчість, творче переосмислення стереотипів, смислотворення, зміни всього життєвого процесу, життєтворення, постійний розвиток особистості, нестандартні та унікальні ідеї.

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