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NON-COMPLEMENTARITY IN THE TRAINING OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS AND EVALUATION OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

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Abstract. The question of non-complementarity in the system of training and evaluation of the work of educational psychologists is examined. Through an analysis and comparison of various texts, ranging from legal and regulatory documents to specialized research, the author presents his view on the origins of this type of contradiction between psychological training in Russia and the system of evaluation of educational psychologists in the field of education. The results of this analysis offer insights into possible ways to solve the existing problem.

This position is based on the identified contradictions between the following elements within the training of educational psychologists and the assessment of their professional activities: 1) legal and regulatory, 2) methodological, 3) educational, and 4) personal (personal-professional). The possibilities for resolving these contradictions are described in detail:

Defining the basic characteristics of educational psychologists' activities in the Federal State Educational Standards (FSSES) and professional performance standards, as well as in the legal and methodological documents related to the work of school psychologists.

Eliminate "methodological chaos" by creating a professional and scientifically accurate understanding of the content of educational psychology and its major areas of work in education.

Legal clarification of the position and role of the psychologist in the education system and evaluation of the work of the educational psychologist.

Keywords: *non-complementarity in the system of education and assessment, practical educational psychology, ways to overcome non-complementarity, personal qualities of a proficient and effective educational psychologist*

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The experience of developing the services of practical psychology both in the world and in Russia, reflected in conference materials, monographs, and publications in specialized journals, has revealed a number of systemic difficulties in preparing and evaluating the professional activities of educational psychologists [1,6]. Clearly, a thorough understanding of this situation and finding ways to overcome the challenges is necessary. Conceptual clarity is crucial for a thorough and accurate analysis of such problems. The

methodological foundations of educational psychologists' training and the evaluation of their professional activities serve as a basis for developing requirements and professional documentation. These foundations ensure precision in selecting evaluation criteria for training programs, contributing to the professionalism and quality of the certification process, material assessment, and other related activities [1].

In this discussion, we will focus on the existing problem by examining the current content of educational psychologists' work. The basic types of educational psychologists' work and its content are defined in the Education Law (Article 42) and specified in the Federal State Educational Standards for Psychologists (FSES) and the Professional Standards for Psychologists (PS). These documents serve as important resources to address the challenges of preparing and assessing practicing educational psychologists for professional practice. For example, the Education Act (Article 42) states: "Psychological and pedagogical, medical and social support for students who have difficulties in coping with basic general education programs, development, and social adaptation." It is clear that the term "psychological and pedagogical" includes interdisciplinary content and makes it possible to go beyond the boundaries of psychology in the training and assessment of specialists.

The professional standard for the specialization "Educational Psychologist" outlines the most important goals of educational psychologists, such as

1. Psycho-pedagogical support within educational institutions, including general, vocational, and supplementary education;
2. Psycho-pedagogical support to people with health impairments who face challenges in coping with basic general education programs.

The use of dual terms such as "psycho-pedagogical support" and "psycho-pedagogical help" can distort the specific nature of the psychologist's work. A similar standard simply states "psychologist in the social field" without using double terminology. The substantive distinction between the work of psychologists in these fields remains unclear, which raises the question of the need for dual terminology.

It is worth noting that the original categorization of professional educational psychologists as "educational psychologists" in Russia in the late 1980s was motivated by the need to establish their status as educational professionals. This allowed the professionals to secure all the rights and privileges associated with this category of employees of educational institutions.

Over time, however, this special title often tempted administrators and employers to emphasize the "educational" part of the title. They assigned psychologists the functions of teachers, educators, methodologists, and organizers, thus giving them tasks that went beyond the scope of their actual role, especially in the narrow sense of traditional pedagogical work.

Since the introduction of the professional standard "educational psychologist (psychologist in education)," the ambiguity about the role of the psychologist has been clarified by adding "psychologist in education" in parentheses. Thus, the use of the term "psycho-pedagogical" may be justified if

the authors wish to emphasize the concept of “collaboration” and “interaction” between teacher and psychologist and draw attention to the challenges of this interdisciplinary field of work. In other cases, such terminology lacks a solid foundation.

For those inclined to consolidate a variety of non-educational professions, from speech therapists to attorneys and from special educators to economists, historical examples serve as cautionary illustrations. I have served on certification committees responsible for evaluating the performance of young professionals who had completed dual degree programs, such as “English Language and social studies teachers.” In most cases, these specialists had inadequate skills in both areas.

Some may remember the establishment of centers for psychological care in the Russian education system. These centers were officially called “medical-psycho-pedagogical” or “psychological-pedagogical and medical-social assistance centers.” Following this logic of amalgamation, the optimization of administration can be continued, exaggeratedly speaking, to the formation of a gigantic educational organization called the “Humanitarian Aid Service in the Russian Education System.” This hypothetical example illustrates the current shift from the core tasks of practical psychology to the tasks that require psychologists to collaborate with their colleagues.

If we pursue the concept of amalgamation, the question arises as to whether it makes sense to retain psychology departments. There is a plea to train “broad-based specialists” for various tasks.

The “Concept for the development of the psychological service in the education system of the Russian Federation until 2025” admits that “...a unified approach to defining the goals, content, working methods of the service, the position and status of psychologists within the education system is lacking”. The fundamental question remains: What prevented the introduction of such an approach in the first place? Was it the professional failure of those who had to solve this problem or the incompetence of those who drafted such a text?

Recently, there has been increased discussion about possible amendments to the “Law on Education” of the Russian Federation, especially with regard to Article 42. Amendments are a natural reaction to changing times and new challenges. However, the nature of the proposed changes is a cause for concern. Do they intend to undermine the core principles of practical psychology? While changes may be necessary, they should not seek to diminish the essential content of practical psychology with terminology that has multiple meanings.

It is clear that action by those officially entrusted with the authority to initiate such changes is long overdue. For example, it is imperative to:

- Document any changes to the subject content of contemporary psychology.
- Formally describe the specific nature of the content within the broader field of practical psychology. This should include a description of the specifics of each area of application.

However, there is no evidence of progress in this direction. An analysis of the content on the websites of the professional associations that unite

psychologists shows that this topic is not a priority. It is not addressed in the forums where such issues are discussed nor in the resolutions of these organizations or their presidia. However, looking at the publications in professional journals dealing with issues of practical psychology, this topic is becoming more relevant and important every year.

The existing inconsistency in the roles assigned to educational psychologists can be attributed to a historical blending of various educational issues. These professionals have often been tasked with dealing with a variety of education issues, such as drug addiction, suicide, social orphanhood, and dealing with delinquent behavior. Although educational psychologists play a role in these areas, it is important to recognize that these tasks fall within the broader interdisciplinary scope of their work, especially in terms of collaboration with other specialists and organizations.

The main role of an educational psychologist is to provide direct professional support to pupils and students experiencing psychological problems in the educational environment. Their expertise is understanding the psychological principles underlying individual development at different stages, environments, and activities. Their main role is, therefore, to ensure the psychological well-being of individuals or groups in the educational context.

It is important to clarify that educational psychologists are not clinical, legal, or speech and language therapists.

Managers are responsible for creating the best possible environment for specialists to work efficiently, while specialists have the right to determine the nature and scope of their work themselves. This is stated in the Russian Federal Law On Education (Article 47, paragraph 3).

Nowadays, many universities offer education in psychology within faculties called exclusively "Psychology." This means specialized education revolves around subject-specific psychological knowledge and special skills for future professionals. As graduates of such faculties, students typically understand the roles they are expected to perform, recognize the boundaries within which they can apply their professional skills in their work environment, and adapt to meet the quality standards for their professional roles.

In the workplace, these principles are formalized in job descriptions for field-specific requirements. Significantly, they shape the type of experiential knowledge developed during professional practice and facilitate the self-actualization of professionals.

As a result of my involvement in the expert evaluations, I have identified an increasing number of weaknesses in the professional practice of educational psychologists. These problems are primarily due to the inconsistency of elements within the professional development system for these specialists. This system includes education, skills enhancement, retraining, and evaluation of psychological support services' effectiveness, qualifications, and quality.

An analysis of recent publications and materials from various professional competitions, competency tests, and similar sources has allowed me to categorize the causes of gaps in the preparation and evaluation of school psychologists into several broad categories:

I. “Normative-legal factors.” This category includes problems such as unclear descriptions, ambiguous terms and definitions, lack of key concepts, characteristic features of activities, and inconsistencies in the content of various documents that form the normative framework for this profession.

II. “Methodological aspects”: imprecise attempts to characterize the essence of practical educational psychology, its uniqueness, and its associated challenges.

III. “Educational aspects”: This category includes the quality of educational programs for vocational training, retraining, and continuing education, as well as the specific training of professionals to become licensed education psychologists. It also includes considerations of the material, technical and methodological support of the learning process, the degree of organization of educational activities, and the existence of scientifically based criteria for the objective evaluation of results (willingness to work as a practical psychologist).

IV. “Personal factors”: This category is about the mismatch between the professionally significant characteristics and the level of development of professional and personal skills of professionals. These skills are necessary for successful work and for fulfilling training requirements as an educational psychologist.

Let us discuss each category in detail.

I. Normative-legal factors

Numerous problems associated with the first category of causation are well documented [2–4]. The constant revisions and refinements of the Federal State Educational Standards (FSES) and Occupational Standards (OS), the absence of certain OS in the field of practical psychology, and the amendment of the recently adopted OS, as well as the conceptual inconsistency between the foundations of the FSES, speak for themselves.

In order to examine this topic more thoroughly, we should focus on the work of educational psychologists.

1. The Law on Education (Article 42) defines in general terms that psychological and pedagogical support includes the following:

- 1) psychological and pedagogical counseling of students, their parents (legal representatives), and pedagogical staff;
- 2) remedial and correctional work with students;
- 3) a range of rehabilitation measures;
- 4) assistance to students in career guidance, obtaining a profession, and social adaptation.

2. According to the “Law on Education in the Russian Federation” (see Article 2), the FSES is “a set of mandatory requirements for education at a certain level and/or for a profession, specialty or field of study approved by the federal executive body responsible for the development of state policy and legal regulations in the field of education.” On this basis, we can consider each FSES for higher education as a document that clearly defines what mandatory requirements apply to education in certain specialties and fields of study.

Higher education institutions establish these requirements in accordance with the federal law or the decree of the President of the Russian Federation.

3. Among the legal documents that clearly define the professional activities of an educational psychologist are the following:

– The federal document still in force, “Regulations for the Service of Practical Psychology in the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation” (Appendix to Order No. 636 of October 22, 1999).

In Moscow, there is a document entitled “Regulations for the Service of Practical Psychology in the Department of Education in Moscow.”

Several regions, such as Yaroslavl Oblast, Samara Oblast, Novosibirsk Oblast, Rostov Oblast, and others, have issued regional regulations.

The “Standard for the professional activity of an educational psychologist.”

However, these documents lack conceptual and substantive coherence regarding the type of activity carried out by psychologists. By way of illustration, let us compare these key documents (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Activities of an educational psychologist as defined in legal documents
(comparative table)*

Regulation on the service of practical Psychology in the system of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation	Regulation on the service of practical Psychology in the system of the Department of Education in Moscow	Professional standard “Educational psychologist (psychologist in the field of education)”
<p>The main areas of activity include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promotion of psychological knowledge ● Psychological counseling ● Preventive psychological services ● Psychological diagnostics Psychological correction 	<p>The main areas of activity include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preventive psychological services ● Promotion of psychological knowledge ● Psychodiagnostics ● Developmental and psycho-corrective work ● Psychological counseling ● Psychological rehabilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work tasks ● Psychological-pedagogical and methodological support in the implementation of basic and additional educational programs ● Psychological assessment (evaluation) of the comfort and safety of the educational environment in educational institutions ● Psychological counseling of participants in the educational process ● Corrective and developmental work with children and students, including recreational and rehabilitative activities ● Psychological diagnosis of children and students ● Promotion of psychological knowledge of those involved in the educational process ● Preventive psychological services

The table shows a lack of consistency in terminology and the number of categories. In the textbooks used to train future educational psychologists, the following areas are often emphasized:

- Promotion of psychological knowledge
- Preventive psychological services
- Psychodiagnostics
- Psychological correction
- Psychological counseling

Drafters of regulatory frameworks, internal or otherwise, cannot overlook this issue. If the existing framework is outdated and no longer reflects current realities, researchers and administrators should address this issue by developing new documents to define and standardize the essential directions and types of activities for psychologists. The Department of Justice should then approve these documents.

The same contradictions are found in the study of professional standards in psychology, including educational psychology. The names, numbers, and, of course, the content and functions differ in these standards.

Of course, a federal document cannot accommodate the nuances in each region. Therefore, each region develops its own local document to adapt to regional circumstances while remaining consistent with the federal structure. However, the core content must remain consistent.

Even a basic comparison of the most recent Federal State Educational Standards (FSSES) reveals differences in the definition of psychologists' major directions and functions. The difference becomes apparent when comparing the parts describing professionals' activities in different fields (Table 2).

It is clear that although each field of application of psychology has specific tasks and types of work, there should be a number of basic directions and types of work that practical psychologists can perform in various areas. A comparison of these texts with most textbooks of educational psychology, the "Regulations for the Service of Practical Psychology in the System of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation" and the "Concept for the Development of the Psychological Service in the Education System of the Russian Federation until 2025" shows that there is a lack of consensus between the authors and standards regarding the main directions and types of work activities in the field of practical psychology. In particular, there are significant differences in how they define and specify these essential areas. For example, "preventive psychological services" are listed as one of the main activities in the "Regulation on the Service of Practical Psychology in the System of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation." However, they are completely absent in the federal state educational standards for "psychological and pedagogical training."

Table 2

*Activities of the educational psychologist according to FSES
(comparative table)*

FSES Psychology	FSES Psycho-pedagogical education	FSES Pedagogy and psychology of deviant behavior
<p>As part of the Master's degree program, graduates can prepare for the following professional activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research ● Educational and preventive psychological services ● Pastoral care ● Expert and diagnostician ● Correction and development ● Rehabilitation ● Supervision ● Pedagogical ● Organizational and administrative (management) 	<p>As part of the Bachelor's degree program, graduates can prepare for the following professional activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pedagogical ● Project activities ● Methodical ● Organizational and administrative ● Cultural and pedagogical ● Supportive 	<p>The professional activities of graduates of the specialist program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dealing with complex issues in the field of psycho-pedagogical work with deviant behavior in children, adolescents, and adults, as well as the prevention of deviant behavior, ● Support for children and young people at risk. ● Implementation of corrective and rehabilitative measures for persons with deviant behavior, including children, adolescents, and adults ● Psycho-pedagogical expertise and analysis. ● Psycho-pedagogical support of social work to protect the rights and legitimate interests of children and adolescents, the social improvement of the family, and the prevention of child neglect, homelessness, and deviant behavior in children and adolescents. ● Prevention of juvenile delinquency within the education system. ● Social protection of the population, collaboration with law enforcement agencies and organizations working with individuals, including children, youth, and adults with behavioral problems. ● Psycho-pedagogical education. <p>Professional occupations for graduates who have completed the Specialists Degree programs are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pedagogy (socio-educational) ● Diagnostic and corrective ● Law enforcement ● Expert witness and counseling ● Scientific research ● Organizational and administrative ● Pedagogical

Furthermore, if we focus on what is written in the “Concept for the Development of the Psychological Service in the Education System of the Russian Federation until 2025”, we can note omissions in the text of the FSES. Primarily, it discusses “project planning” and “psychological expertise.”

II. Methodological Aspects

Numerous studies have dealt with the questions of this category. (Vasilyuk F.E., 1996, 2003; Dubrovina I.V., 2004, 2011, 2012, 2014; Zabrodin Y.M., 1980, 1990, 2013, 2018; Karitsky I.N., 2002, 2014; Mazilov V.A., 2015; Pakhalyan V.E., 2018, 2019, 2020; Yurevich A.V. 1999, 2001, 2005; and others). However, these questions are still relevant, and we are still in the same situation [1, 5].

As for practical educational psychology, the authors of the “Concept for the Development of Psychological Service in the Educational System of the Russian Federation until 2025” have recently tried to overcome the problems of the methodological aspect. Unfortunately, this attempt was not successful. Alas, the text of this document is eclectic, shows methodological confusion, and blurs the specific subject of the work of practical psychologists. It does not represent a new, professionally correct understanding of the content of practical educational psychology, nor does it clarify the primary types of work carried out by educational psychologists.

This concept is not a legal document but has the status of a conceptual and methodological guide. It reflects the policy of the competent ministry in the field of psychological support and thus serves as an unofficial guide for those who provide educational and psychological support. Unfortunately, the text contained in this concept is methodologically inconsistent and contains contradictions on fundamental issues, which only exacerbates the “methodological chaos” in the field of practical psychology [5]. This situation has led to an increasing number of cases in which experts in professional practice identify methodological ambiguities in the professional thinking of a specialist aiming for a certain qualification category. The result is methodological inconsistencies and inadequacies in professional activity.

A clearer and professionally correct understanding of the specifics of practical educational psychology can be derived from a recently published collective work recommended by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation [6].

III. Educational Aspects

It is clear that the causes of this category can be traced back to the “methodological chaos” both in the field of practical psychology and its various branches of training. The lack of a clear methodological position is reflected in the FSES and in the content of the specific programs for the preparation (retraining, advanced training) of professionals. It is no secret that in such a situation, each learner is free to use any methodology and understanding of practical psychology as a whole, as well as its specific, specialized content and its application in the field of education. It is unlikely that anyone would deny that the educational outcomes of future practical psychologists are significantly influenced by parameters such as the following:

- The quality of learning conditions (organizational, material-technical conditions, methodological support) for professional training/retraining/competency development.

- The educational level of the students.
- The correctness of the criteria for the evaluation of preparation/retraining/competence development.

The following characteristics can be tentatively identified as reference points and criteria for evaluating the quality/level in this category (Table 3):

Table 3

Activities of educational psychologists according to FSES (comparative table)

Influence parameters	Forms of representation	Levels/quality
Organizational	Compliance with standards/requirements for the educational organization	Complete compliance/incomplete compliance/non-compliance
Material and technical resources	Compliance with the standards/requirements for the provision of material and technical resources for the educational process	Complete compliance/incomplete compliance/non-compliance
Methodological	Compliance with standards/requirements for information and methodological support for the educational process	Complete compliance/incomplete compliance/non-compliance. Methodological support/inability to perform professional activities for each type of work (absenteeism, insufficient scope, etc.).
Professional training of students	Special education, professional development of teaching specialists	Only special education/special education + advanced training/special education + advanced training + professional experience as a practical psychologist/special education + advanced training + professional experience as a practical psychologist + documents reflecting professional achievements in the field of practical psychology
Criteria for the assessment of training outcomes	Compliance with standards/requirements for educational outcomes/professional development in the subject area	Level of professional preparation for work in practical psychology (qualification): The degree of mastery of specialized information and its application/use at work. The degree of mastery of modern tools and the quality of all aspects of the professional activity of a practical psychologist that meet the requirements of a particular qualification category. The presence/absence of non-specific (redundant) skills and abilities for educational psychologists

IV. Personal Factors

• The causes in this category are manifold but are essentially a consequence of the “methodological chaos” in practical psychology. In most textbooks and publications of experienced specialists in the field of practical psychology (A.F. Bondarenko, M.A. Goncharov, V.V. Kolpachnikov, R. Kochyunas, A.V. Makhnach, V.Yu. Menovschikov, R.E. Boyatzis, D. Goleman, K. Rhee, C. Cherniss, K. Schneider, and others) it is pointed out that the personality of a professional is a main factor for effective work [7–8]. However, it is unlikely that you will find a set of rules in which this parameter is used as a criterion for evaluating future professionals. Therefore, the causes in this category are generally due to the following:

- Insufficient focus on personality-driven career counseling.
- Underestimation of the criteria referred to in the professional literature as “personal and professional qualities” in the selection of future professionals.
- Lack of systematic training to differentiate future professionals based on their personality traits and the skills required by a practical psychologist.
- Insufficient inclusion or presentation of specific educational and professional activities aimed at developing the professional and personal skills of professionals according to the specific requirements of the different areas of practical psychology during the training process.
- Limited professional self-development experiences in different areas of work during educational and professional practice, a disproportionate representation of these areas of work.

Conclusion

To summarize, the main reasons for the lack of complementarity in the training and evaluation of educational psychologists’ activities lie in the inadequacies and contradictions of fundamental aspects of professional practice, such as the legal framework, the methodology of practical psychology, the higher education system and, in particular, the training of educational psychologists. The insufficient consideration of the specific role and importance of personal qualities also influences these problems.

All this allows us to identify the main ways to overcome these challenges:

- Overcome the “normative chaos” by defining and specifying the basic directions and types of activities for educational psychologists and incorporating them into all Federal State Educational Standards (FSES) and regulatory agency documents that govern the content of educational psychologists’ work.
- Overcome the “methodological chaos” in understanding the essence of practical Psychology by presenting a new, expertly grounded approach to the content of general practical Psychology and the major types of work done by educational psychologists.
- Establish the normative place and role of a personality within this specialization, highlight the professionally important qualities of educational psychologists, and establish them as one of the selection criteria for training in

the field of psychological support, as well as in the assessment of professional qualifications of practitioners.

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АКОМПЛЕМЕНТАРНОСТЬ В СИСТЕМЕ ПОДГОТОВКИ И ОЦЕНКИ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ ПРАКТИЧЕСКОГО ПСИХОЛОГА ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

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Аннотация. Рассматривается проблема акомплементарности в системе подготовки и оценки деятельности практического психолога образования. С помощью анализа и сравнения текстов различных публикаций (от юридических и нормативных документов до текста специальных исследований) автор показывает свое видение истоков такого рода «десинхронизации» системы подготовки и оценки деятельности практического психолога образования. Полученный в результате проведенного анализа результат позволяет выделить пути возможного преодоления существующей проблемы. В качестве оснований такого положения дел в системе подготовки и оценки деятельности практического психолога образования выделяются следующие несоответствия/не комплементарные отношения между элементами: 1) нормативно-правовые; 2) методологические; 3) образовательные; 4) личностные (личностно-профессиональные). Подробно описаны способы их преодоления: определение базовых характеристик деятельности специалистов-психологов во ФГОС и стандартах профессиональной деятельности, в нормативных и методических ведомственных документах по деятельности педагога-психолога; выход из «методологического хаоса» в понимании сути практической психологии, создание профессионального и научно-корректного понимания содержания как самой практической психологии в сфере образования, так и основных видов работ практического психолога образования; нормативное закрепление места и роли личности психолога в подготовке и оценки деятельности практического психолога образования.

Ключевые слова: *акомплементарность, системе подготовки и оценки деятельности, практическая психология в сфере образования; пути преодоления акомплементарности; личностные качества практического психолога образования*

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