



## EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PROFESSIONAL SELF-REALIZATION IN PSYCHOLOGY

## POLÍTICA EDUCACIONAL E AUTO-REALIZAÇÃO PROFISSIONAL EM PSICOLOGIA

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** This study examines the characteristics of professional self-realization among educational psychologists, exploring the value-meaning foundations of their practice. It also defines criteria to assess self-realization within the professional context.

**Objective:** To identify the factors and criteria influencing the professional self-realization of educational psychologists, emphasizing the values of passivity and realism.

**Methodology:** Techniques such as G. Kelly's repertory grid, D.A. Leontiev's life-meaning orientations method, and other diagnostic tools were applied to a sample of 53 educational psychologists in Astana, Kazakhstan. The study considered factors like age, experience, and professional values.

**Results:** Professional self-realization is linked to age, experience, and passive and realistic values. Key determinants included tolerance, willpower, and the pursuit of meaningful professional goals. Values like financial achievement and prestige contributed minimally to self-realization.

**Conclusion:** The professional self-realization of educational psychologists is shaped by specific personal and cultural values, as well as by the search for meaning in professional activities. The study provides criteria for evaluating self-realization, covering subjective, motivational, instrumental, and social aspects.

**Keywords:** Professional self-realization; Educational policy; Educational psychologist's activity; Value-meaning bases of self-realization; Self-realization criteria.





## RESUMO

**Introdução:** Este estudo investiga as características da autorrealização profissional entre psicólogos educacionais, explorando os fundamentos valorativos e de significado dessa prática. O estudo também define critérios para medir a autorrealização no contexto profissional.

**Objetivo:** Identificar os fatores e critérios que influenciam a autorrealização profissional de psicólogos educacionais, com foco nos valores de passividade e realismo.

**Metodologia:** Foram utilizadas técnicas como a grade de repertório de G. Kelly, o método de orientações de vida de D.A. Leontiev e outros instrumentos diagnósticos em uma amostra de 53 psicólogos educacionais em Astana, Cazaquistão. A pesquisa considerou fatores como idade, experiência e valores profissionais.

**Resultados:** A autorrealização profissional está associada à idade, experiência e valores passivos e realistas. Valores como tolerância e força de vontade, além da busca por objetivos significativos na profissão, foram determinantes. Valores como realização financeira e prestígio mostraram-se pouco contributivos para a autorrealização.

**Conclusão:** A autorrealização profissional de psicólogos educacionais é moldada por valores pessoais e culturais específicos, bem como pela busca de significados nas atividades profissionais. A pesquisa fornece critérios para avaliação dessa autorrealização, abrangendo aspectos subjetivos, motivacionais, instrumentais e sociais.

**Palavras-chave:** Autorrealização profissional; Política educacional; Atividade do psicólogo educacional; Bases de valor e significado da autorrealização; Critérios de autorrealização.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Works on the professional self-realization of educational psychologists show the diversity of aspects within this concept. The professional self-realization of educational psychologists is seen as a goal and a need (Katkalo, 2023); a way of life (Kryshtal, 2023); a process (Shereshkova, 2021); a transition from the potential to the actual (Nurdaniyakyzy, 2024); and a result of activity (Alahari, 2017). F. Martela and A.B. Pessi (2018) view self-realization as a result for society and the person. For society, self-realization implies the formation of socially approved patterns of personal success, whereas for the person, it implies personal growth and the development of a successful, mobile, and well-adapted personality. This shapes the issue of the criteria for professional self-realization of educational psychologists, which are not currently agreed upon among researchers. S.I. Kudinov et al. (2023) propose satisfaction as a criterion of self-realization. D. Kazantseva (2022) presents a list of self-realization criteria: organizational (goals, motives, consciousness of value orientations and career development, the level of achievements, the desire to master the necessary knowledge and skills); activity-creative (the prevailing means and ways of professional





activities, the degree of professional ethics, the nature of creative activity, the ability to solve problems creatively, the degree of realization of creative potential); subjective-personal (the level of subjective qualities and personal-professional development); professional-performance (the level of professional performance, including using professional knowledge, skills, abilities, and practical professional actions). S. Sergeyko (2021) attributes satisfaction and the productivity and price of self-realization to the criteria.

We believe that the structure of professional self-realization of educational psychologists is comprised of the criteria that act as its value-meaning bases. These include 1) the subjective-personal criterion: the specialist's age and experience working as an educational psychologist; self-assessment of professionally important qualities; 2) the value-motivational criterion: the values and motives of professional activity; 3) the instrumental-goal criterion: the goals and means of activity valuable for the specialist; 4) the social criterion: the values of social groups; 5) the meaning-forming criterion: the level of development of the value-meaning sphere; life-meaning orientations; 6) the psychological criterion: current meaning states of consciousness, consisting in the activity of temporal loci (present, past, future); the level of subjective control.

Thus, the professional self-realization of educational psychologists is represented in psychological research as the person's search for their place in the world, where the response to the challenges of the outside world is the discovery and use of potential power. Building a perspective requires the individual to draw upon biological and socio-psychological resources. In self-realization, the person achieves integrity. A new dimension develops, in the context of which the person's activity acquires supra-situational characteristics.

The analysis of scientific literature shows ideas about the process and result of human self-realization in the professional sphere. Most opinions are similar in their position on the cultural-historical determination of a specialist's self-realization in their professional activity. Several authors note that a specialist's professional self-realization rests on a value-meaning foundation. According to E.A. Gavrilova (2015), understanding the meaning of one's life is the key to normal functioning. E.J. Schilling et al. (2018) believe that values form "the life world as a space for the realization of one's present needs and opportunities" (p. 325). Values can serve various functions: 1) determine behavior (Nemolot & Vavilov, 2013); 2) act as a source of motivation for activity (Dolgova et al., 2016); 3) determine the direction of higher mental processes (Bedan et al., 2021). According to M.S. Ianitskii and A.V. Seryi (2010), value orientations connect the individual and the social environment and regulate





the behavior and goal-setting of the individual and society. According to their findings (Ilanitskii & Seryi, 2010), a conscious attitude to one's professional activity contributes to the personal and professional development of a specialist: "It should be noted that the functioning of the system of personal meanings and professional activity are mutually determined and together determine the holistic process of a professional's personal development" (p. 46). The issue of a person's self-realization in the profession is also relevant from the point of view of the features of their activity. The activity of educational psychologists is deontologically oriented, which entails several requirements of a legal, humanistic, and value-oriented nature imposed on specialists.

The following features of the profession of educational psychologists are outlined. The objective features include the humanistic orientation of professional activity; the use of helping activities by psychologists; and the integrative nature of knowledge used by educational psychologists (Ivankova et al., 2016; Nemolot & Zubova, 2013). M.S. Ilanitskii and A.V. Seryi (2010) argue that the system of activity of educational psychologists consists in ensuring the holistic socialization of schoolchildren. Several authors attribute the features of the dynamics of development of this profession to the experience of methodological crisis in psychological science (Katkalo, 2023; Mambetalina et al., 2024; Yale University, 1951). We note the continuing development of the professional culture of educational psychologists, the absence of a stable professional community, and difficulties in professional identification with the professional group. The subjective features include value-life orientations identified by M.S. Ilanitskii and A.V. Seryi (2010) as an integrative factor in the structure of professionally important qualities of school psychologists. The creative component is a leading component in the system of life-meaning orientations of an educational psychologist. This component determines the effectiveness of professional impact, in the course of which the specialist bears responsibility for the assimilation of the values of education by its subjects (Alahari, 2017). As suggested by S. Sergeyko (2021), the profession belongs to humanistic ones, the main instrument being the personality of the psychologist.

We formulated the following definition of professional self-realization of pedagogical psychologists. It is a non-specific multidimensional phenomenon of human-environment relations that consists in the realization of personal values integrated into social context (the city, professional community) based on professional activity, takes place at a certain point in the course of life and an individual mode of functioning, and is characterized by a useful result (for society) and the individual's satisfaction as a result of the realization of their





essential forces. The study explores the features of professional self-realization of educational psychologists. The study's novelty lies in the characterization of the features of the professional activity of educational psychologists and the identification of criteria for their professional self-realization. The research hypothesis states that the professional self-realization of educational psychologists is determined by the values of passivity and realism and the meaning component of professional self-realization is the purpose of life activity.

## **2 METHODS**

Our empirical study used the following techniques: G. Kelly's repertory grid technique (the version by M.S. Ianitskii and A.V. Seryi (2010)), employed to identify the level of the development of the value-meaning sphere; D. Super and D. Nevill's method for the study of values in professional activity (as modified by E.V. Nemolot and V.A. Vavilov (2013)); S. Ritchie and P. Martin's motivational profile, designed to identify the leading motives of professional activity; the Self-assessment test of personality by S.A. Budassi (as modified for the study of self-assessed professionally important qualities by E.V. Nemolot and S.I. Zubova (2013)); the Life-Meaning Orientations method by D.A. Leontiev (as reconceptualized by M.S. Ianitskii and A.V. Seryi (2010) to identify the type of current meaning state); R. Inglehart's method allowing to determine the predominant types of value orientations in society (as modified by M.S. Ianitskii and A.V. Seryi (2010)). We considered the factors of age and experience working as an educational psychologist.

The realization of values was determined using the value orientations method by M. Rokeach with the methodical technique proposed by M.S. Ianitskii and A.V. Seryi (2010) for examining the level and potential of personality development and the individual's level of self-realization. For the study, we recruited a group of educational psychologists who had realized their values in professional activity.

## **3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

To identify the features of professional self-realization of educational psychologists, we conducted a study involving 53 educational psychologists from educational institutions in Astana, Kazakhstan. The results of the diagnostics are presented in Table 1.





**Table 1.** Correlations between the indicators of professional self-realization of educational psychologists and conditioning factors

N=33										
Probability of error		Age	Exp erie nce	Self- assessme nt of professio nally important qualities	Values of professional activity		Motives of professional activity	Professionally important qualities		
					Achievem ents	Prestige		Sensitivity	Mannerliness	Self-control
Indicators of professional self-realization	p ≤ 0.1	0.174		-0.157	-0.172	-0.157	-0.157	-0.157	0.160	0.171
	p ≤ 0.05		0.191							
	p ≤ 0.01									
	Probability of error	Life-meaning orientations		Terminal values			Instrumental values			
		Goal	Result	Health	The beauty of nature and art	Financially secure life	Educatedne ss	Willpower	Tolerance	
	p ≤ 0.1				0.157	-0.163		0.160		
	p ≤ 0.05	0.242	-0.186	0.202			-0.191			
	p ≤ 0.01									0.265

Our findings give reason to conclude that the professional self-realization of educational psychologists is associated with their age and working experience and is inversely proportional to the self-assessment of professionally important qualities. Greater age and experience relate to better realization in professional activity. The professionally important qualities of politeness and self-control, which reflect the specialist's dignity and the features of their nervous system, and the personal quality of sensitivity make no contribution to the self-realization of educational psychologists in their professional practice.

The experience of such professional values as achievement, excellence, and prestige as an opportunity to be in the public eye and arouse respect, reduces the potential for professional self-realization. The motive of relationships also does not contribute to the realization of the professional values of educational psychologists. Thus, the need to form and maintain stable long-term relationships, the degree of closeness of these relationships, and their trustworthiness correlate with lower indicators of self-realization in professional activity.

The most professionally self-realized are the educational psychologists who have found meaning in the goal of their work. However, the meaningfulness of the results of life activity in the preceding period does not contribute to the realization of values in the profession.

An increase in the indicators of professional self-realization is observed in educational psychologists who assign greater importance to the values of health, nature, and art. In D.A.





Leontiev's classification (as reconceptualized by M.S. Ianitskii and A.V. Seryi (2010) designed to identify the type of current meaning state, the value-goal of health is seen as a specific vital and individual value that relates to personal life, whereas the value of the beauty of nature is attributed to passive values.

The novelty and originality of our work stems from the fact that in contrast to the studies by A. Kryshthal (2023), F. Martela and A.B. Pessi (2018), U. Alahari (2017), and S.I. Kudinov et al. (2023), we substantiated the professional self-realization of educational psychologists in the following provisions.

The professional self-realization of educational psychologists rests on the values of personal life and passive values corresponding to the mentality of Astana residents. The individual value of a financially secure life also does not contribute to the self-realization of this professional group.

Among instrumental values, the professional self-realization of the subgroup of educational psychologists is affected by tolerance and willpower. The value of willpower belongs to the class of values of professional self-realization, self-assertion, and individualism; the value of tolerance – to the values of altruism and acceptance of others. The instrumental value of educatedness, which is attributed to intellectual values, does not contribute to the self-realization of educational psychologists in their professional activity.

The values that determine the professional self-realization of educational psychologists are passivity and realism, as well as the high importance of achieving goals and relying on one's resources. This corresponds to the cultural and historical context in which the professional activity and self-realization of educational psychologists unfold.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

We investigated and substantiated the features of professional self-realization of educational psychologists. We conducted a theoretical analysis of approaches to the concept of self-realization, considered the value-meaning bases of self-realization, characterized the features of professional activity of educational psychologists in educational institutions, and established the criteria of their professional self-realization. We formulated a definition of the concept of professional self-realization. A brief analysis of the results of the empirical study devoted to the features of professional self-realization of educational psychologists was presented. The values of passivity and realism were found to be the value-meaning bases determining the professional self-realization of educational





psychologists. The purpose of our study was achieved. The novelty of the research was substantiated and consisted in characterizing the features of the professional activity of educational psychologists. The criteria of their professional self-realization were identified, including 1) the subjective-personal criterion: the specialist's age and experience working as an educational psychologist; self-assessment of professionally important qualities; 2) the value-motivational criterion: the values and motives of professional activity; 3) the instrumental-goal criterion: the goals and means of activity valuable for the specialist; 4) the social criterion: the values of social groups; 5) the meaning-forming criterion: the level of development of the value-meaning sphere; life-meaning orientations; 6) the psychological criterion: current meaning states of consciousness, consisting in the activity of temporal loci (present, past, future); the level of subjective control.

The hypothesis of the study that the professional self-realization of educational psychologists is determined by the values of passivity and realism and that the meaning component of professional self-realization consists in the purpose of life activity was confirmed.

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