

## **Professional Identity as a Factor Affecting Governesses' Levels of Adaptation to their Duties**

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### **Abstract**

This article presents the results of an empiric study into professional identity among governesses and their levels of adaptation to the specific conditions of their duties, with particular focus on the relationship between these two factors: i.e. how governesses' professional identity affects both the components of their work and their activity as a whole.

**Keywords:** *Professional Identity; Governesses'; Levels of Adaptation*

### **Introduction**

The profession of governess has a long history in Russia, even continuing in Soviet times, and demand for governesses is now particularly high, especially in large cities. Home educators of younger children are classed as self-employed individuals and their role is based on the Russian Law on Education, which is now being supplemented by other regulations such as the professional standards for nannies approved in 2018 by the Russian Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

Although many studies have been made public, numerous issues relating to the development of this type of education still require exploration. To do so we must first define one of the key elements of one-on-one education and find a way of quantifying governesses' performance.

A classical understanding of the structure of any activity incorporates three elements: motivation, means and outcome. Of the issues associated with motivation, the least studied in relation to the educational professions is that of educators' professional identity and governesses' professional identity has barely been explored at all. There is a clear need for empirical research into the link between governesses' professional identity and their performance.

N.E. Kasatkina has previously set out a methodological approach to studying professional identity, albeit in relation to different educational activities. She identified the following components of professional identity: professional sense of purpose, planning for a professional future, attraction to a professional future [1].

Performance in any activity is measured against success parameters referring to the product of that activity. In the case of education this product is the positive psychological changes experienced by the pupil. The success of any educational activity, including that of governesses, must be assessed based on measurement of these changes, but A.N. Nikolaev believes that the benefits for the educator

himself must also be incorporated by measuring the degree of satisfaction derived by the educator [2]. Nikolaev has previously argued persuasively that these two indicators - the success of an activity and the actor's level of satisfaction with it - are the key characteristics of successful adaptation to that activity, allowing levels of adaptation to be measured [3].

**Methodology**

Professional sense of purpose and planning for a professional future have been measured using the method set out in N.E. Kasatkina's 'Methodology for research into professional sense of purpose' [Ibid]. Governesses' attraction to a professional future has been assessed using an adjusted version of M.R. Ginzburg's 'Emotional attitudes to the future' [See 1]. The professional identity value assigned consists of the sum of the figures associated with professional sense of purpose and professional planning.

The methodology used to measure governesses' levels of adaptation to their professional duties is based on an adjusted version of a questionnaire developed by A.E. Pevzner [4]. Levels of adaptation are determined by two factors: performance (identified by reference to the aims and results of their activity) and the level of satisfaction derived from the activity. An assessment of the stressfulness of the activity was also incorporated (as a factor affecting satisfaction).

**Results**

Professional identity	—	s	v %
Professional sense of purpose	4.76	1.00	21.0
Planning for a professional future	4.93	1.05	21.3
Assessment of professional future	5.35	1.09	22.1
Overall professional identity	5.01	0.73	14.6

**Table 1:** Average values and coefficients of variation for governesses' professional identity (n = 46).

Levels of professional identity among governesses are average - 5.01 out of a possible 10. The three figures associated with governesses' professional identity are similar, with their STEN values falling within a corridor of 0.59. Governesses have a relatively optimistic view of their future, with an average STEN score of 5.35. This high score is likely to be due to the high demand for specialists in one-to-one education. Given the stringent requirements that apply to governesses one might have expected levels of professional sense of purpose to be high, yet the STEN score recorded is only average (4.76). The coefficient of variation for governesses' professional identity is 14.6%, but for its individual components the figure is rather high at 21 - 22%. Given this high level of variation in professional identity, a differentiated approach may be required during training of one-on-one education specialists in order to raise the individual component values for individuals with low scores in these areas.

The interconnection between the components of identity is rather weak. There is, however, a clear link between planning for a professional future and having a vision of it (r = 0.50; p ≤ 0.001), since confidence in future employment as a governess forms a basis for future planning.

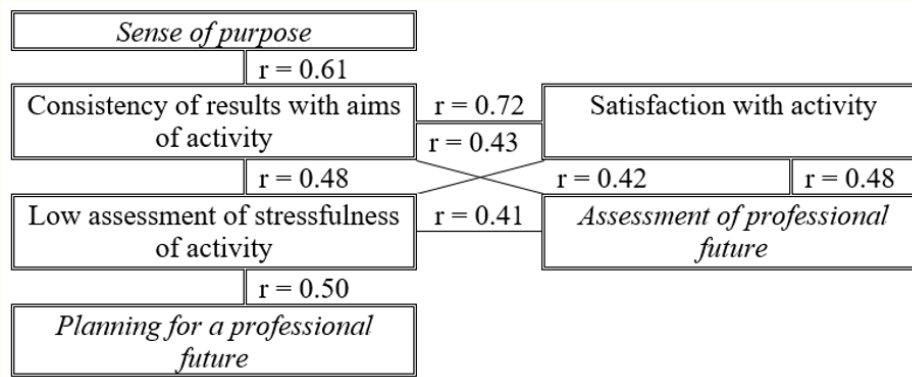
As expected, the professional identity value is closely connected to its components, since each of these figures feeds into the overall value. These connections can be ranked as follows: planning for a professional future as a governess (r = 0.79; p ≤ 0.001); attractiveness of that future (r = 0.75; p ≤ 0.001); sense of purpose (r = 0.54; p ≤ 0.001).

All the figures associated with adaptation to professional duties are above average.

Adaptation figures	—	s	v %
Consistency of results with aims of activity	6.24	1.31	20.1
Assessment of stressfulness of activity	5.43	0.88	16.2
Satisfaction with activity	6.24	0.84	13.5

**Table 2:** Average values and coefficients of variation for governesses' levels of adaptation to their professional duties (n = 46).

The values of the two main factors indicating levels of adaptation to the specific features of the activity are both high (STEN scores of 6.24), indicating high levels of performance and satisfaction. The coefficient of variation for performance is relatively high (v = 20.1%), while for the other indicators it is moderate (v = 16.2% and 13.5%). The two criteria indicating levels of adaptation are correlated (r = 0.72; p ≤ 0.001). The correlations between elements of professional identity and adaptation indicators are shown below.



**Diagram 1:** Connections between professional identity and adaptation among governesses (n = 46; p ≤ 0.01 if r = 0.37; p ≤ 0.001 if r = 0.48).

Note: Double lines denote 99.9% confidence, single lines 99%.

Overall, professional identity is linked to all three adaptation figures with 99.9% confidence. A correlation pleiade was observed with a rather high significance value (p ≤ 0.01). This pleiade cannot be deemed to be associated with a complex of symptoms, since two of the main requirements are absent - insufficient number of connections (8 out of 14 possible connections; connections to the integrated professional identity value were disregarded) and insufficient significance value of 3 connections. If the lines showing connections where p ≤ 0.01 are removed from the diagram, the pleiade will take the form of two interconnected chains.

From the number of high-confidence connections and their average density, the following nuclei of the pleiade can be identified:

- a) Consistency of results with aims of activity - 4 connections, rcp. = 0.56;
- b) Satisfaction with activity - 3 connections, rcp. = 0.54;
- c) Assessment of stressfulness of activity - 4 connections, rcp. = 0.45.

This pleiade can be classed as relating to motivation and adaptation, since the figures from the two groups are closely interlinked - all 3 professional identity indicators and the professional identity value itself are linked to adaptation indicators. The most closely linked pairs are as follows:

- Performance - sense of purpose ( $p \leq 0,001$ ) and high assessment of anticipated professional future ( $p \leq 0,01$ );
- Satisfaction (linked to performance) - attractiveness of professional future ( $p \leq 0.01$ );
- All 3 values relating to activity (adaptation) - overall professional identity ( $p \leq 0.001$  for all 3 links).

There is no need to calculate a regression coefficient, since it is clear that professional sense of purpose influences performance; satisfaction influences the attractiveness of one's professional future; and professional identity as a whole and all adaptation indicators influence one another.

Thus, the research has demonstrated as follows:

1. Levels of professional identity among governesses are below average, and only their assessment of their professional future is above the average level. A medium to high level of variation in this identity can be observed. Their levels of planning for their professional future are linked to how highly they assess that future. There is a weak interlinkage between the other indicators associated with professional identity.
2. Indicators associated with governesses' levels of adaptation to the specific conditions of their professional activity (performance and satisfaction) are above average. However, some one-on-one educators do not achieve high levels of performance. All the indicators associated with adaptation are interlinked.
3. The integrated value attached to professional identity is linked to all three adaptation indicators. A correlation pleiade relating to motivation and adaptation can be observed, incorporating all the indicators of identity and adaptation. The most closely interlinked are performance - sense of purpose; performance - high assessment of anticipated professional future; and satisfaction - assessment of professional future.

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