

mgr Natalia Twardosz

University of the National Education Commission, Krakow

PhD dissertation abstract

Social and professional adaptation of novice teachers

Thesis under the supervision of dr hab. Joanna Łukasik, prof. at University of Agriculture in
Krakow

Auxiliary supervisor: dr Anna Kwaterna

Keywords: social and professional adaptation, teacher, professional development

The current dissertation covers the overall process of social and professional adaptation experienced by novice teachers during the first three years of their career. This period coincides with the stage of early adulthood. The thesis consists of a theoretical and an empirical part, including an introduction, discussion and conclusions from the study, followed by a final summary.

The theoretical part comprises two chapters dedicated to discussing selected concepts and theories regarding the social and professional adaptation of beginning teachers. A teacher's adaptation period involves emotional experiences, the development of professional expertise and methods, and the initial formation of professional identity. Therefore, selected concepts of factors contributing to the process of teachers' professional adaptation and relevant to the problem addressed in this thesis are characterized. These include: the culture and climate of the institution, Jim Butler's concept of professional development, professional identification, social competence as a personal condition, phases of teacher development and role conflict emerging as a result of professional tasks, as well as professional preparation versus increasing social expectations. All the aspects mentioned contribute to the creative realisation of the professional role of the teacher. Given that the study focused on early-career teachers who had just completed their higher education, the characteristics and specifics of pre-school teaching are also examined, along with potential difficulties in professional development. The dissertation further addresses personal

determinants of beginning teachers, including factors such as professional motivation, reasons for choosing the profession, and personal development.

The subject of this dissertation is the phenomenon of social and professional adaptation among early-career teachers, and the aim of the study was to explore, describe, and explain this phenomenon. A quantitative research paradigm (positivist) was employed, utilizing the diagnostic survey method. In the methodological chapter, the adopted research procedure is presented and the primary research tools used in the project are discussed.

The fourth chapter presents results analysis accompanied by an interpretation of the results of own research. The study results are presented, utilizing the standardized tool, the Social Competence Questionnaire by Anna Matczak, along with findings from the author's social and professional adaptation questionnaire.

The discussion and final conclusions verify the study in relation to the established hypotheses. This section provides a synthetic description of the research findings, alongside relevant studies that closely align with or elucidate these results.

The paper is closed with a final conclusion, which attempts to answer the formulated research problems. Synthesized answers, along with the verification of hypotheses, enabled formulation of recommendations for the further education of young professional educators, including personal development and the strengthening of personal attributes in candidates for the profession. Further, theoretical and empirical implications for three relevant areas, including further research, professional training and in-service training, were presented. These implications propose new methods to support teachers at the beginning of their careers, potentially addressing the issue of early career attrition and providing systemic support across emotional, psychological, social, and socio-economic dimensions.