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Professionalization of Public Service of Ukraine: Specifics of the Process in the Context of Global Challenges and Modern Social Changes

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Abstract

The State is an institution that should be considered as a complex multilevel system, whose managerial effectiveness depends to a large extent on the professional training of its human resources. The purpose of this article is to investigate and reveal the specificities of the process of professionalization of the public service in the context of global challenges and modern social changes. In the study, the essence and understanding of the concept of professionalization was considered, which made it possible to distinguish such approaches as: scientific, normative and legal, professional and educational. The main functions of professionalization of the public service are defined. It is noted that the public service professionalization system has a relationship with the environment, so it maintains the balance and order of its internal

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environment and resists chaos. Professionalization is studied as a process in the conditions of global challenges and modern social changes. It is concluded that, considering the professionalization of public service as a process in the conditions of global challenges and modern social changes, it is necessary to take into account the opinions and positions of professionals to achieve the best results in this field.

Keywords: public service; public administration; professionalization; human resource management; digitalization.

Profesionalización del servicio público de Ucrania: detalles del proceso en el contexto de los desafíos globales y los cambios sociales modernos

Resumen

El Estado es una institución que debe ser considerada como un sistema complejo de múltiples niveles, cuya eficacia de gestión depende en buena medida de la formación profesional de su recurso humano. El propósito de este artículo es investigar y revelar las especificidades del proceso de profesionalización del servicio público en el contexto de los desafíos globales y los cambios sociales modernos. En el estudio, se consideró la esencia y la comprensión del concepto de profesionalización, lo que permitió distinguir enfoques como: científico, normativo y legal, profesional y educativo. Se definen las principales funciones de profesionalización del servicio público. Se advierte que el sistema de profesionalización del servicio público tiene una relación con el entorno, por lo que mantiene el equilibrio y orden de su entorno interno y resiste el caos. Se estudia la profesionalización como proceso en las condiciones de los desafíos globales y de los cambios sociales modernos. Se concluye que, al considerar la profesionalización del servicio público como un proceso en las condiciones de los desafíos globales y los cambios sociales modernos, es necesario tener en cuenta las opiniones y posiciones de los profesionales para lograr los mejores resultados en este campo.

Palabras clave: servicio público; administración pública; profesionalización; gestión de recursos humanos; digitalización.

Introduction

Each state is an institution that should be considered as a complex multi-level system, the effectiveness of management of which depends on professional training. In order to achieve a high level of efficiency and effectiveness of management activities, it is necessary to rely on deep knowledge and skills, to have modern methodology and management tools, to use innovative tools. In the modern conditions of global challenges and modern social changes, it is necessary to introduce the latest technologies, in particular, digital tools of mass communication. The most important tasks of public service employees include the priority of citizens' rights and freedoms, transparency of public authorities.

An important aspect in this context is the training of personnel, their professionalization aimed at obtaining highly professional, highly qualified employees and effective, sustainable and high-quality functioning of public authorities. Currently, the professionalization of the public service requires modernization, which consists in the ability to implement management functions competently and with a high level of responsibility, to increase the degree of professionalism of public service employees and to promote the activation of innovative and digital processes in the state.

The process of creation and practical implementation of state policy has a significant dependence on the level of efficiency of the public service, on its formation by qualified and knowledgeable employees, who are a strategic resource of a competitive country. In the conditions of global challenges and modern social changes, public service managers need to be able to quickly make management decisions aimed at solving urgent issues and problems in various areas of the population's life, providing them with high-quality and operational services, maintaining a high level of efficiency of the public service system.

The purpose of this article is to research and reveal the specifics of the process of professionalization of the public service in the context of global challenges and modern social changes.

The theoretical and methodological basis of this article is the thorough theories of management, social and social sciences, as well as general scientific and special research methods. During the writing of this study, such scientific methods as analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, abstraction and generalization were applied to clarify the essence and interpretation of the concept of professionalization, professionalization of public service, and consideration of professionalization as a specific process in the conditions of global challenges and modern social changes, as well as its implementation of its stages.

Also within the scope of this article, the author used a systematic approach to present the professionalization of the public service as an open dissipative system and to characterize it and its components. In addition, a graphic method was used to visually present approaches to understanding the professionalization of public service, presenting it as an open system and as a process in the context of global challenges and modern social changes.

1. Literature Review

Many scientific publications are devoted to various aspects of public administration and public service. The issue of professionalization of the public service is gaining special relevance. The article (Sandu, 2021) uses the idea of professionalization of the state function in order to present the situation of young people who are in the system and want to develop a career in this field. The authors considered the peculiarities of employment in a public position, the obstacles faced by young people. Scholars (Bergsgard and Nøddland, 2020) investigate the use of open tenders in public procurement of social services in Norway to determine whether this implies standardization, professionalisation and/or innovation among civil sector providers and whether this differs between social welfare areas.

The practical significance of the article (Bochove and Oldenhof, 2020) lies in the study of the interaction between non-elite subjects of social assistance, who carry out institutional work aimed at the implementation of three strategies: classic professionalization of volunteer coordinators, protoprofessionalization of volunteers, and improved professionalization of social assistance practitioners. In conclusion, it is noted that the potential negative consequences of these professionalization strategies are the emptying of paid social work and the exclusion of vulnerable volunteers. The research paper (Simon, 2017) analyzes the history of the state employment policy and targeted state policy aimed at the professionalization of non-profit organizations.

The scientists (Cornell and Svensson, 2022) explore the spread of meritocratic practices as a potential case of policy transfer through a careful analysis of professionalism in the British civil service. Scholars argue that British reformers were inspired by meritocratic practices in India under British rule. The authors (Hartley and Ahmad, 2021) argue that the practice of professional public service has existed for centuries, and the recognition of the separation between politics and governance has provided a basis for theorizing a politically neutral and professional public service. Scholars examine this trend as a consequence of efforts to professionalize the civil service.

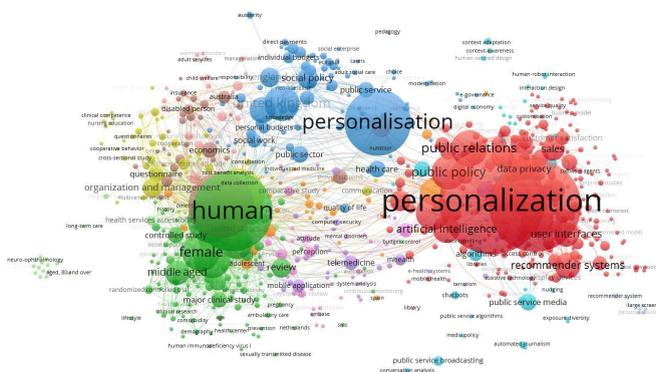
Scholars (Rodríguez-Acosta, 2021) have demonstrated Paraguay's high degree of government centralization and authoritarianism throughout much of the twentieth century. Within the scope of the article, changes in the professionalism of the public service are considered. The scientists' article (Brown, 2021) examines the phenomenon of being called to professional public service in Canada.

The authors tried to highlight the dynamics of the call and the steps that professional public services can take to best mobilize those who respond to it. The authors (Tangsgaard, 2021) prove that these risky situations make the behavior of professionals on the frontline especially important. Research results prove the importance of organizational culture and professionalism of public officials for risk perception and behavior in risky situations.

According to the authors (Szczygielski, 2021), professional services are trusted goods provided by professionals. Scholars demonstrate that partial government support can promote professionalism in service delivery. The authors of the articles (Popelo *et al.*, 2021; Derhaliuk *et al.*, 2021; Nikiforov *et al.*, 2022) considered the functions of state management of regional development in the conditions of digital transformation of the economy, as well as the state policy of transformation of the potential-creating space and conceptual principles of regulation of state policy for the development of public-private partnership.

The analysis of the key areas of scientific publications by authors from all over the world, which are based on the professionalization of public service, is presented in Fig. 1.

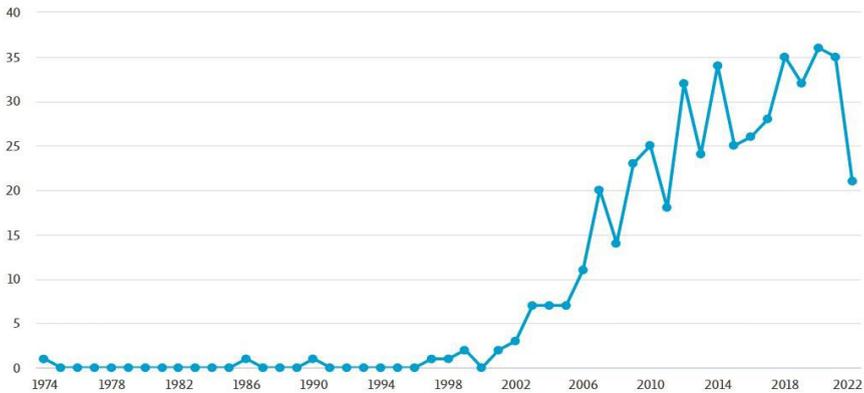
Figure No. 1. Graphic map of keywords in publications, in which titles the word “professionalization and public service” is met



Source: compiled by the author based on the analysis of the Scopus database and using the tools of the VOSviewer program.

An article in the field of professionalization, according to Scopus, was first published in 1974. Considering the dynamics of the number of articles devoted to professionalization, including public service, over the past 10 years, it should be noted that it was as follows: 2022 – 21 articles, 2021 – 35 articles, 2020 – 36 articles, 2019 – 32 articles, 2018 year - 35 articles, 2017 - 28 articles, 2016 - 26 articles, 2015 - 25 articles, 2014 - 34 articles, 2013 - 24 articles (Fig. 2).

Figure No. 2. Dynamics of the number of articles in which titles the word “professionalization and public service” is met.

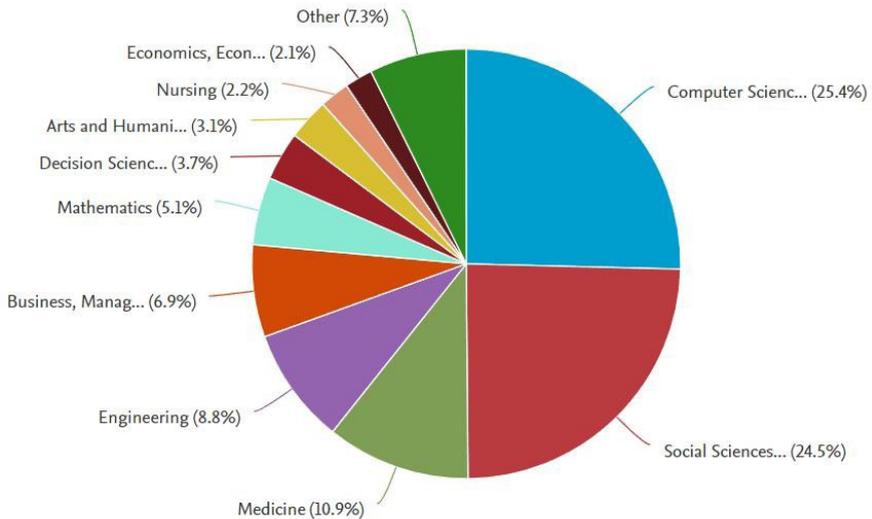


Source: compiled by the author based on the analysis of the Scopus database and using the tools of the VOSviewer program.

Analyzing the activity of scientists, the world centers of scientific research in the field of professionalization and public service, based on the results of the analysis of publications in the Scopus database, are: United Kingdom, United States, Italy, Australia, China, Germany, Greece, Spain, Netherlands, France, Denmark, Canada and other.

If we consider publication activity by fields of knowledge, the following dynamics of the number of articles by the keywords (professionalization) and (public service) should be noted: computer science (194), social sciences (187), medicine (83), engineering (67), business, management and accounting (53), mathematics (39), decision sciences (28), arts and humanities (24), nursing (17), economics, econometrics and finance (16), psychology (11) and other (Fig. 3).

Figure No. 3. Dynamics of the number of articles in which titles the word “professionalization and public service” is met



Source: compiled by the author based on the analysis of the Scopus database and using the tools of the VOSviewer program.

Despite the existing publications, the issue of professionalization of the public service of Ukraine, namely the specifics of the process in the conditions of global challenges and modern social changes, is an extremely relevant area of research and requires further study and analysis.

2. Results

The current state of the economic and social system of our country determines the priority of tasks and functions performed by the state. In this regard, the questions related to the formation of significant management potential of managers who could responsibly and competently implement their functions and duties are quite relevant, that is, in the global context, this concerns work for the benefit of the native country, society and citizens. Professionalization of public service workers is not only a reliable pillar for the sustainable development of public authorities, but also a direction for the effective completion of reforms in terms of decentralization and improvement of the ability to implement effective management.

One of the ways that significantly influence the process of reforms and the implementation of state functions is the formation of a professional staff of public service bodies. In this way, it is necessary to talk about the comprehensive professionalization of the public service, as well as the strengthening of already existing and practically applied managerial approaches to the management of human resources of public service bodies, since the presence of effective managers who are responsible for their decisions at the state level is of great importance. Therefore, the issue of public administration is of significant importance and requires further research in the context of global challenges and modern social changes and the next stage of the decentralization process.

The main goal of professionalization is to increase the quality of public services, establish leading management principles, professionalism, use the latest personnel technologies, and materially and financially support the work of public service employees.

The consequence of professionalization is the possibility of achieving the highest level of efficiency in making managerial decisions and providing public services, taking into account the importance of its implementation at all managerial levels, starting with managers and ending with executors. Therefore, professionalization is based on the combination of a specialist, his professional activity and includes the acquisition of the latest specialized knowledge, skills, etc.

Professionalization should also be considered as a certain process, the result of which is the formation of an employee both objective - possession of the necessary knowledge, skills, competences, qualities, and subjective - motivational aspect, readiness to perform professional duties and functions. Professionalization is a consequence of such a process, a criterion for the effectiveness and success of its implementation, a qualitative difference between an employee who is a connoisseur and a specialist in his field.

Therefore, professionalism should be considered as a qualitative side of the consequence of obtaining knowledge, skills, and experience, which makes it available and potential for everyone to obtain. Based on this, professionalization is the process of emergence, formation and further development of professionalism.

Studying the phenomenon of professionalization, it is necessary to point out that professionalism has a positive effect on the practical implementation of social and public changes, acquiring specificity and contributing to the development of society as a whole, and its components in particular.

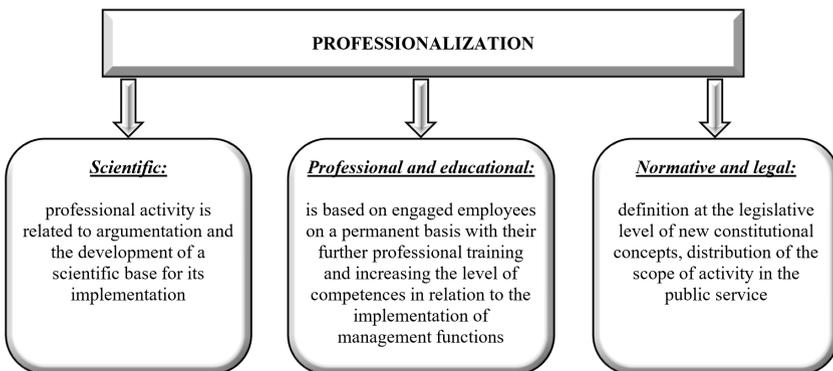
In addition, professionalism can be interpreted as the process of implementing the function of planning in relation to the necessary knowledge, skills, as well as adaptation to the working, professional environment. The professionalization of the public service, which acquires

a certain specificity in the conditions of global challenges and modern social changes, can be considered both in a broad context (the formation and development of the professional self-awareness of the employee; his professional knowledge, skills, abilities, professionalism) and in a narrow sense (the employee's mastery of professional rules, norms, values, gaining experience and skills necessary for effective professional activity, i.e. formation of professional socialization of the employee).

Today, the professionalization of the public service in Ukraine is carried out on the basis of a combination of permanent professional education, such as training and retraining, internships, advanced training, self-training and education, and gaining practical experience directly at the workplace in the performance of professional duties.

Thus, based on the above information, it should be noted that professionalization has a complex nature, and therefore, its study should be carried out from the point of view of different levels (Fig. 4).

Figure. No. 4. Approaches to understanding the professionalization of public service in the context of global challenges and modern social changes



Source: systematized by the authors.

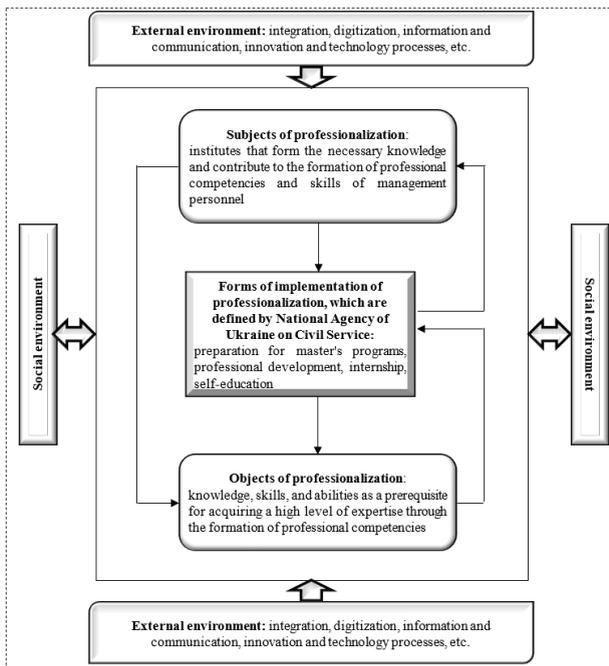
In our opinion, it is necessary to consider professionalization as an open system, and therefore has an active interaction with the environment, global challenges and changes of today (Fig. 5). Currently, the following functions of professionalization can be distinguished:

- adaptation to changes, requirements and challenges of the surrounding environment;

- formation of conditions and use of opportunities to achieve the goal in the process of implementing management functions;
- ensuring the unity and orderliness of the internal environment through the organization of the system of public authorities;
- promoting the values and interests of the public administration system, the development of professional ethics, morality and culture.

The study of professionalization as a system requires the selection of its components and connections between them, as well as with other systems, taking into account their mutual influence. The most effective for studying professionalization as a system will be the application of a systemic approach, which will allow, firstly, to single out and characterize its elements, such as subject, object, etc., secondly, to find out the components of the external environment and outline their influence on the system of professionalization (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5. Professionalization of public service in the conditions of global challenges and modern social changes.



Source: compiled by the authors.

Determining the impact of the surrounding environment, one cannot bypass those global challenges that are becoming extremely relevant today. Thus, digitalization processes have a significant impact on the professionalization of the public service through the acquisition, on the one hand, of new digital skills and abilities among employees, and on the other hand, they provide wider and more operational access to various educational information, educational platforms and programs, which makes it possible to implement e-learning and engaging in self-education.

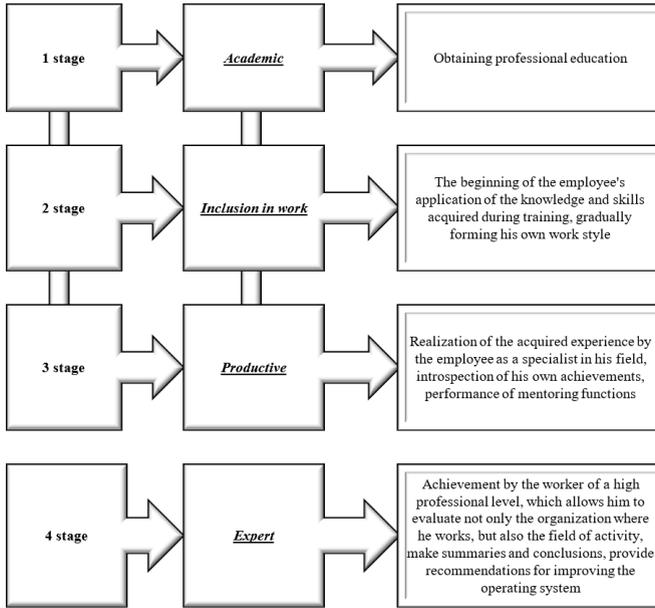
Therefore, the professionalization of an employee as a process should be considered as permanent self-improvement, self-improvement, constant efforts and work on oneself, taking into account the social changes that are taking place. From this position, professionalization is associated with socio-cultural aspects that acquire new meaning, essence, meanings.

There is a combination of external motivation and internal human efforts. Applying a systemic approach to the professionalization system makes it possible to consider it as one that is in constant exchange of information, certain resources, etc. with the socio-cultural environment. Such an exchange enables the specified system to achieve equilibrium, maintain balance and order. The professionalization of the public service is capable of evolution and orderliness, protecting itself from disorder and chaos and the negative influence of the surrounding environment.

The essence of the concept of «professionalism» is to understand it as a high skill, with the help of which you can achieve high results in a certain type of activity. The main characteristics of a professional employee of the public service include rationality based on the scientific base, knowledge and methods of practical activity.

Professionalization can also be presented as a process that takes place over time and a number of its stages can be distinguished (Fig. 6).

Fig. 6. Professionalization as a process in the conditions of global challenges and modern social changes.



Source: systematized by the authors.

In the domestic practice of public service, it is not always found as shown in Fig. 6 sequence of implementation of the indicated stages. A significant number of public service workers, especially those occupying high and political positions, combine the first two stages. In some cases, the first stage is a component of professional development if, as a result of holding an elected position, a person had to rapidly change the type of professional activity.

If we consider the professionalization of civil service as a process in the conditions of global challenges and modern social changes, it is necessary to understand not only its problems from a theoretical and methodological point of view, but also to take into account the experience, knowledge and position of practitioners who are directly engaged in the specified activity, fully immersed in it, and therefore, have their own vision on the mentioned issue and ways of its development.

Conclusion

Professionalization of the public service is an indispensable condition for the effective functioning and development of a competitive country in the world and the formation of trust in society and citizens in public authorities in the conditions of global challenges and modern social changes. The process of professionalization is mobile and dynamic, the result of which is the preparation of employees of public authorities for professional work, based on the application of the necessary knowledge, skills, competencies, and skills.

Thus, the scientific approach to understanding professionalization is dominated by the activity approach, which focuses on the formation of the employee as a professional in his field, an experienced person who perfectly possesses and uses his skills and knowledge during the performance of his professional duties. The dynamism of the professionalization process lies in the fact that it stretches over time and is divided into a number of stages, each of which involves either fixing or changing a certain achieved professional level.

The emergence of professionalism begins with the process of forming an employee as a professional and reflects on the competence and authority of a person, as well as on the effectiveness of his activities, able to share his experience with colleagues and solve non-standard, non-trivial tasks and problems in the work area. The formation of an employee as a professional is a process that is related to his own skills, experience, abilities and interests, as well as stimulation and working conditions. There is a dependence of professionalization on the level of education and experience of the worker, on his personal interest in professional activity, etc. Professionalization of the public service of Ukraine is a priority task in the conditions of global challenges and modern social changes.

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