



Psychological Characteristics Forming Professional Identity In Future Educators

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Abstract

This article analyzes the psychological characteristics that affect the formation of professional identity in future teachers from a theoretical and practical perspective. Professional identity is interpreted as a process of understanding a person's chosen profession, accepting himself as a representative of this profession, mastering professional values, forming a stable motivation for pedagogical activity, and assessing his professional capabilities. The study highlights the interrelationship of psychological factors such as professional motivation, self-awareness, reflection, professional values, empathy, communicative skills, self-confidence, responsibility, pedagogical competence, and emotional stability. It also shows the potential of pedagogical practice, mentoring, reflective activity, and psychological support in the development of professional identity in the process of higher pedagogical education.

Keywords: Professional identity, professional self-esteem, future teacher, professional motivation, reflection, self-awareness, professional values, pedagogical competence, empathy, communicative skills, emotional stability, professional development.

Abstract

This article analyzes the psychological characteristics that influence the formation of professional identity among future teachers. Professional identity is considered as a process of understanding the chosen profession, accepting oneself as a representative of the profession, mastering professional values, developing stable motivation for pedagogical activity, and assessing one's professional abilities. The article examines the interrelationship of professional motivation, self-awareness, reflection, professional values, empathy, communication skills, self-confidence, responsibility, pedagogical competence, and emotional stability. The possibilities of pedagogical practice, mentoring,



reflective activity, and psychological support in the development of professional identity within higher pedagogical education are also discussed.

Keywords: professional identity, professional self, future teacher, professional motivation, reflection, self-awareness, professional values, pedagogical competence, empathy, communication skills, emotional stability, professional development.

Аннотация

This article analyzes the psychological characteristics that influence the development of the professional identity of future teachers. Professional identity is viewed as the process of understanding a chosen profession, accepting oneself as a representative of that profession, assimilating professional values, developing a sustainable motivation for teaching, and assessing one's own professional capabilities. The article explores the interrelationships between professional motivation, self-awareness, reflection, professional values, empathy, communication skills, self-confidence, responsibility, pedagogical competence, and emotional stability. Particular attention is paid to the opportunities for teaching practice, mentoring, reflective activity, and psychological support in the development of future teachers' professional identity.

Key words: professional identity, professional self-determination, future teacher, professional motivation, reflection, self-awareness, professional values, pedagogical competence, empathy, communication skills, emotional stability.

Kirish

In today's education system, the requirements for a teacher are not limited to having in-depth knowledge of a particular subject. A modern teacher must have the ability to understand the personality of the student, effectively organize the educational process, make flexible decisions in various pedagogical situations, use innovative technologies and constantly improve his professional activities. Therefore, the formation of a professional identity of a future teacher in the process of preparing him for professional activity is one of the important psychological and pedagogical tasks.

Professional identity is a complex psychological process associated with a person's conscious search for answers to questions such as "Who am I?", "What profession am I choosing?", "How compatible is this profession with my personal values?", "What kind of teacher do I want to be?". In this case, choosing a



profession is not enough; it is important for a person to feel that he or she belongs to this professional group and to align the content of pedagogical activity with his or her personal life goals.

Recent research also interprets professional identification in students as a process closely related to motivation, reflection, professional values, competence, and personal development.

The psychological essence of the concept of professional identity

The concept of identity in psychology is explained by the process of an individual's association with a certain social and professional group, the understanding and stabilization of his or her "I" image. In E. Erikson's concept, identity is considered a psychosocial phenomenon related to the individual's understanding of his or her own identity and determining his or her place in society.

Professional identity is a form of this general identity related to a specific professional activity. The professional identity of a future teacher is his/her:

attitude towards the teaching profession;

professional motives;

pedagogical values;

understanding of one's professional capabilities;

preparedness for pedagogical activity;

formation of a professional self-image;

be able to analyze one's own activities

is manifested through.

Therefore, it is not enough to understand professional identity as a set of professional knowledge or skills alone. It is a personal-professional phenomenon that is formed as a result of the mutual integration of knowledge, values, motivation, self-awareness, and real pedagogical experience.

The main psychological characteristics that shape professional identity in future educators

Professional motivation

Professional motivation is a set of internal and external factors that motivate a future teacher to choose a profession and develop consistently in this activity. Approaching the teaching profession solely based on material or external benefits can limit the deep formation of professional identity.

Intrinsic professional motivation is associated with an understanding of the social significance of pedagogical activity, interest in working with children, the



desire to impart knowledge and contribute to personal development. Research indicates that motivation and professional competencies are important factors in the understanding of the professional identity of future teachers.

Self-awareness

An important psychological basis of professional identity is self-awareness. A future teacher should know his strengths and areas that need development, and be able to understand his abilities suitable for pedagogical activity.

Through self-awareness, the student forms his or her own professional self-image. For example, questions such as "What kind of teacher am I?", "What is my pedagogical style?", "How do I relate to students?" serve to develop professional reflection.

Reflection

Reflection is the ability of a person to analyze their own activities, actions, decisions, and results. Reflection is of particular importance for a teacher, because a teacher regularly evaluates his or her pedagogical activities.

As the future teacher's reflexive abilities develop, he or she will be able to more objectively analyze the successes and shortcomings of his or her work, draw conclusions from pedagogical situations, and improve his or her future work. Modern research also notes that reflection is one of the important mechanisms for forming professional identity.

Professional values

The content of a teacher's professional identity is also determined by his or her professional values. Values such as humanity, justice, responsibility, respect for the student's personality, the pursuit of knowledge, honesty, and pedagogical ethics shape the professional position of a future teacher.

Professional values also influence a person's decisions in pedagogical activities. Therefore, it is important to convey not only professional knowledge, but also the moral and social content of the profession in the process of higher education.

Empathy

In pedagogical activity, empathy is the ability to understand the emotional state of another person and respond appropriately to it. Understanding the individual psychological characteristics of students, noticing their difficulties, and ensuring an individual approach in the educational process are associated with empathic ability.



A future educator with developed empathy seeks to relate to the student not only as a giver and receiver of knowledge, but also as a person with unique needs and capabilities.

Communicative skills

The professional activity of a teacher is carried out in a process of constant communication. Therefore, communicative competence is one of the important components of professional identity.

The ability of a future educator to clearly express their opinion, actively listen, ask questions, constructively resolve conflict situations, and communicate with people of different ages strengthens their professional self-image.

Self-confidence

Self-confidence is one of the important indicators of psychological readiness for pedagogical activity. A future teacher must have a realistic assessment of his knowledge and capabilities.

Both excessive self-confidence and persistent underestimation of one's own capabilities can have a negative impact on professional development. Optimal self-confidence, on the other hand, helps to take on new pedagogical tasks, show initiative, and gain professional experience.

Emotional stability

Pedagogical activity is associated with various situations, individual characteristics of students, communication with parents, and professional responsibility. Therefore, emotional stability plays an important role in the professional preparation of a future teacher.

Emotional stability is determined by a person's ability to manage their emotions in difficult situations, objectively assess the situation, and act in accordance with the pedagogical goal.

The role of pedagogical practice in the formation of professional identity

Professional identity is not formed only through theoretical training. The student's acquaintance with real pedagogical activity and testing it in practice has a great impact on the development of the professional "I" image.

During the pedagogical practice, the student:

- tests his/her pedagogical abilities in practice;
- acquires experience of real communication with students;
- understands the practical importance of theoretical knowledge;
- identifies its strengths and weaknesses;
- reconsiders his attitude towards professional activities.



It has been noted that socio-pedagogical practice develops pedagogical and psychological qualities in students, such as attentiveness, empathy, social activity, and the ability to justify one's own opinion, and creates the basis for the formation of professional identity.

Mentoring and psychological support

Mentoring by experienced educators is also important in developing professional identity in future educators. A mentor can observe the student's pedagogical work, provide feedback, help analyze professional challenges, and help determine the direction of professional development.

Research published in 2026 identified the learning environment, pedagogical communication, psychological support, and mentoring as important conditions for professional identification.

From this point of view, it is advisable to develop a system based on the cooperation of "student - mentor - psychologist - practice leader" in higher pedagogical education.

Psychological model of professional identity development

The professional identity of a future teacher can be conditionally expressed in the following sequence:

Professional interest → professional motivation → self-awareness → mastery of professional values → pedagogical experience → reflection → professional "I" concept → stable professional identity.

This process is not linear. The student may revise his initial ideas about the profession during pedagogical practice or real work. Therefore, professional identity should be considered as a dynamic, evolving psychological structure.

Practical directions for forming professional identity

The following psychological and pedagogical opportunities can be used to develop the professional identity of future teachers in higher education institutions:

- training aimed at identifying and developing professional motivation;
- Reflective exercises on the topic "I am a future teacher";
- psychological analysis of pedagogical situations and cases;
- keeping a reflective diary after pedagogical practice;
- develop a mentoring system;
- trainings that develop pedagogical communication and empathy;
- use of self-assessment methods of professional abilities;
- involving students in innovative pedagogical activities;



— discuss issues of professional values and pedagogical ethics.

This approach ensures that the student not only develops professional knowledge, but also understands himself as a teacher.

Conclusion

The formation of professional identity in future teachers is a complex and multi-component psychological process, the content of which is formed based on the interaction of professional motivation, self-awareness, reflection, professional values, empathy, communicative skills, self-confidence, responsibility, emotional stability, and pedagogical competence.

The development of professional identity allows the future teacher to understand himself as a subject of future professional activity. In this, pedagogical practice acquires special importance, creating conditions for connecting theoretical knowledge with real pedagogical experience, analyzing one's own activities, and assessing professional opportunities.

Also, the psychological comfort of the educational environment, mentoring, reflexive activities, and systematic psychological support are important factors in the formation of professional identity. In modern research, professional identity is also seen as an integration of motivation, reflection, values, and professional competence.

Thus, the main goal in the process of training a future teacher is not only to prepare a "professional specialist", but also to form a pedagogical personality who understands the content and social significance of his professional activity, is able to reflexively evaluate his work, has professional values, and is ready for continuous development.

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