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PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY TRAINING AS A MEANS OF FUTURE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The paper aims to check the efficiency of the developed training aimed at the formation of professional identity of university students majoring in primary education. The professional identity formation is a complex process, which is why the purpose of the research is to examine the dynamics of the development of professional identity. The study involved 162 students majoring in Primary Education of Melitopol Bohdan Khmelnytskyi State Pedagogical University. The respondents were randomly selected in total 60 surveyed and were divided into control and experimental groups 30 persons each. The main research tool to examine professional identity of the respondents was Professional Identity Status Scale developed by A. Azbel and A. Hretsova. This technique helps to identify the "level" (uncertain, imposed, moratorium or mature professional identity) of professional self-determination. According to the initial assessment, almost half of future primary school teachers have mature professional identity but almost the same number of the students are characterized by the "moratorium" professional identity. A significant number of students have an imposed and uncertain professional identity. This fact proves the necessity of psychological support for the formation of the professional identity of future primary school teachers. The introduction of the training program resulted in an increase of the levels of key factors in the development of the professional identity of future primary school teachers.

Keywords: professional identity, training, professional self-realization, interactive methods, competence, pedagogical innovations.

Introduction

Under conditions of reforming education of Ukraine, the requirements for the personality of a modern teacher are significantly increased. This is evidenced by the following regulatory documents: The National Strategy for the Development of Education in Ukraine for 2012-2021, National Strategy for Human Rights, the Concept of the New Ukrainian School (2017), the Provision on the General Education Institution dated 27, August, 2010 and the Law of Ukraine "On Education" (2017), in which the Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine L. Hrynevych puts special requirements for teachers (Hrynevych, 2017).

These changes require, at the stage of professional training, to shape the personality of future teachers, develop their professional qualities, creative potential and professional self-realization, especially considering the fact of Ukraine's integration to European educational space, where high requirements are put on the educational staff of all fields.

That is why the development of teacher's professional identity, which is closely connected with the issues of professional self-determination and personal development, is especially valuable in the personality structure. For a future teacher, the formation of professional identity is an extremely important factor in his or her successful career, professional growth and development.

The development of New Ukrainian school teacher's personality requires the development of certain psychological and pedagogical technologies, mechanisms, methods, techniques, measures that take into account the requirements of higher education to train specialists in this field.

The review of foreign and domestic studies by T. Berezina (Berezyna, 2008), N. Maksymchuk (Maksymchuk,1998), L. Schneider (Shnejder, 2004) shows that nowadays one applies various training programs in the process of university students training (professional communication training, trainings aimed at the development of expression, creativity, reflection, sensitivity, empathy, social perception, communication skills, professional psychological and pedagogical training). However, despite the variety of theoretical developments and practical achievements in the field of using active teaching methods, the issue of analyzing their influence on the formation of the future teachers' professional identity, which is not sufficiently highlighted in modern psychology and pedagogical

science, is still considered to be relevant due to reforms and changes in all spheres of life.

Aim and Tasks

The paper aims to check the efficiency of the developed training aimed at the formation of professional identity of university students majoring in primary education.

According to the research objective, the following tasks are distinguished:

1) to review scientific literature on the issue of future teachers' professional identity formation.

2) to substantiate the training program of formation of the professional identity of future teachers in the educational process.

3) to assess the maturity of the respondents' professional identity before and after implementing the designed training.

Research Methods

The basis of teacher's professional development is his/her professional identity, which is a result of the individual's awareness of one's own identity with a profession and community, knowledge of the limits of one's own professional competence and confidence in its efficiency, as well as considering oneself to be an expert (Berezyna, 2008).

The period of studying at a university is a very important stage in the process of the formation of future teachers' professional identity, as an expert-to-be acquires the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities, gets acquainted with colleagues and gains their experience, enriching his/her ideas about the chosen specialty (Berezyna, 2008; Zhyrun, 2009; Maksymchuk, 1998; Orlov, 2005; Shnejder, 2004).

Sample

The study involved 162 students majoring in Primary Education of Melitopol Bohdan Khmelnytskyi State Pedagogical University. The respondents were randomly selected in total 60 surveyed and were divided into control and experimental groups 30 persons each.

The main research tool to examine professional identity of the respondents was Professional Identity Status Scale developed by A. Azbel and A. Hretsova. This technique helps to identify at which "step" (uncertain, imposed, moratorium or formed professional identity) students are in the process of their professional self-determination (Raihorodskyi, 2000).

The essence of the designed training

A number of authors emphasize that the development of students' professional identity can be carried out during the educational process when applying psychosocial trainings (Berezyna, 2008; Zhyrun, 2009; Orlov, 2005; Shnejder, 2004). With this in mind, we have designed a training focused on the development of future primary school teachers' professional identity.

Its tasks are as follows: to form a holistic system of knowledge about the peculiarities of the professional identity, to develop students' self-concept, sociability, motivation for achievements, teaching and communicative skills, and professional motivation and focus. Taking into account

the specifics of training as a form of education organization, we included in each class the following structural components: the formation of the team's working capacity; exchange of experience regarding homework performance; the content stage (professional identity formation); summing up the sessions; homework. The basis of the training program was the principles and exercises proposed in the works of the suitable direction of domestic and foreign psychologists-researchers and practitioners.

In the training, the following methods and techniques of active psychosocial work were used: group discussions, role-playing games, analysis of pedagogical situations, exercises on self-knowledge and self-evaluation, warm-up activities.

The training program consists of two parts and includes diagnostic and practical units.

At the diagnostic stage, we examined the respondents' professional identity.

The practical part of the training included 12 lessons for 3-3.5 hours each. The content unit of the practical part involved lessons aimed at improving those structural components and factors of the development of professional identity, which can be changed in a relatively short period of time.

To this end, the training program included tasks for correction and development of self-esteem, the development of self-concept, positive self-attitude, development of empathy, trust, professional motivation, priority values, volitional self-regulation, reflection, self-control, teaching and communicative skills.

For the development of the structural component of the "self-concept" personal maturity we applied a set of exercises for the development of self-esteem and positive self-attitude.

With special interest, the exercise "Paradoxes" (Schneider, 2004) was perceived by the students. It is aimed at formation of a positive attitude towards oneself, revealing philosophical humor in relation to oneself. The participants of the training recorded their negative traits (about 5-7) and called the positive side of each of the named negative trait, and then they were told to the participants. As a result, the students tries to answer the question "How are my disadvantages can be valuable for other people?"

We would also like to emphasize the students' interest in the exercise aimed at correcting self-esteem and reconciling the "self-image" which is called "Self-Image Projection" (Schneider, 2004). In this exercise, students anonymously composed two short personal descriptions. One of the descriptions was the most truthful description of how the participant sees oneself, that is, "self-image". The second description reflects the way he/she is perceived by other people (classmates) in his/her opinion. The first self-reports were collected in a box. Then each record was read aloud, and the group members tried to guess the author. After that the author called himself/herself and read his/her second description, and also listened to the opinion of other members of the group.

To develop psychological bonds (closeness) with other people as a structural component of personal maturity, we worked on the formation of empathy and trust in the students.

Among the exercises proposed by us to the students for the development of empathy, special interest was caused by "Focus on the neighbor" (Schneider, 2004). Each participant had to focus on his/her neighbor (classmate) to the right keeping in mind all his/her actions, words and emotions during the lesson, as well as his/her own feelings and attitudes to this person. Then one had to consider which of the descriptions of nature, weather, seasons corresponded to the notions of this person. Then all in turn presented their descriptions to one another. The descriptions given by the students were very different but in the process of discussion everyone noted their accuracy and precision.

The training also involved such exercises as "Empathy" to form the participants' empathic abilities (Schneider, 2004). By performing this exercise, all participants in the circle listen to one of the members who says an emotionally colored phrase. Then each student alternately calls a feeling or a few feelings that, in their opinion, is experienced by a speaker. The group discusses the results.

Another important phenomenon that determines the ability for psychological bonds (closeness) with other people as a structural component of the personal maturity of future teachers, is trust. In this respect, we included the following exercises into the training: The Falling (Bolshakov, 1994), The Leader and the Blind, The Dilemma of the Prisoner, Establishing Trust (Schneider, 2004).

The participants of the training concluded that the problem of trust in relationships with other people is extremely relevant for any teacher, especially in work with children, as well as with parents and colleagues.

So, for the development of the students' motivation for professional development, a discussion was held on the topic "I study because ...". In this discussion, all the participants were divided into two groups. The task of one group was to argue the advantages of internal motives of professional training and persuade opponents, the task of the second group - to try to justify the advantages of external motives.

The "Motives of Life" exercise (Zhyrun, 2009) helped the students to understand the motives of their own lives. They were asked to write one or two motives for their future and present life. After that, they were suggested to answer the question "What opportunities do these motives give?", "How important are they for you?", "What can be achieved with such motives?".

Besides, the training also covered the development of value orientations as an indicator of the motivational-value component of the professional identity of future teachers.

In order to find out the ideas about the basic, in their opinion, values of the teacher, the participants were offered to complete the sentence "The main values for the teacher should be as follows: ..." (Maksymchuk, 1998).

In order increase the level of awareness of the expressed information, techniques of active listening were used in the form of verbatim or almost verbatim repetition of the phrase by the student sitting to the left from its author.

Then the students analyzed the relationship of their values with the values of the teacher.

The participants also appreciated the exercises for the development of volitional self-regulation, for instance, the "Emotional Current" exercise (Schneider, 2004) allowed them to learn how to manage their own emotions and develop self-control.

Lively discussion was held on the subject: "My Volitional Qualities" (Zhyrun, 2009), which helped the participants to examine the level of their volitional qualities, as well as to identify their weak and strong features.

We singled out exercises on the formation of teaching and communicative skills in solving professional situations into a separate unit. They affect the development of cognitive and practical components of professional identity, as well as the development of professional focus of future teachers.

In order to examine pedagogical skills, ability to penetrate into the inner world of the student, the ability to react quickly in problem situations the participants were asked to address specific teaching situations. Here are some examples: "A 10th grade female student completely ignores one of the subjects at school. She is intelligent, capable, independent, attends lessons but does absolutely nothing at classes, just reads books and magazines. Besides, she demonstrates disrespect for a teacher and frankly tells him/her about it".

The participants of the training were offered to predict further actions of the teacher, the student and her parents in these situations. After the descriptions presented by the students, their discussion, assessment of the correctness of various actions took place.

Performing the next exercise, "Professional Abilities" (Schneider, 2004) the students had to write down professional qualities by degree of their expressiveness in an ideal teacher and themselves (to identify the structure of self-ideal, self-real and their comparison). After that, each student (optionally) named 5 most mature professional abilities in oneself and 5 least mature professional qualities. Then there was a discussion: what of the listed professional qualities a teacher needs and how to develop them, which are the least developed. In conclusion, each student could make any other participant a "gift" - to give the professionally important quality, which, in his/her opinion, was least mature in the classmate.

The final lesson was aimed at summing up the training results. The students spoke about their own participation in the training, how their goals were realized, what they understood during the work of the training group, what they learned. For this purpose, "Packing a Suitcase" exercise (Bytianova, 1995), "Letter from the Past" (Shtepa, 2005),

"Gifts" (Schneider, 2004), etc. were used. Besides, the students wrote self-reports about their participation in the training, and the gained experience.

Research Results

According to the initial results using Professional Identity Status Scale, 44.4% of the respondents have mature professional identity. These students have already passed the crisis and formed a certain system of basic goals, values. The results of the study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Respondents' Professional Identity Status (in%)

Mature professional identity	44.4
Imposed professional identity	3.7
Moratorium	42.6
Uncertain professional identity	9.3

42.6% of the students have the professional identity in a state of "moratorium" which is due to the fact that they have been experiencing crisis of professional identity, actively trying to overcome it, in various ways. They are busy with the search for information useful for resolving it.

Accordingly, the status of imposed professional identity is peculiar for 3.7% of the respondents. In this case, the occupational choice was made by others (parents, acquaintances and friends).

Uncertain professional identity is peculiar for 9.3% of the students, who are characterized by a lack of professional and personal orientation. Individuals with such a status of professional identity tend to "go with the flow".

The results are indicative of the inadequate maturity and unbalance of the professional identity development of the future primary school teachers. As professional identity ensures effective professional development and self-fulfillment of a specialist, the necessity to implement appropriate measures for its development was obvious, which gave us reasons to design the above described training. It was implemented into the curriculum of the experimental group, while the educational process in the control one remained without any changes.

After having conducted the training, we reassessed the professional identity status of the respondents using the same tool in both groups (see Table 2).

Table 2.

Results of the Reassessment of the Respondents' Professional Identity Status

Profes-sional Identity Status	Experimental group						Control group					
	Before experiment		After experiment		Difference		Before experiment		After experiment		Difference	
	quantity	%	quantity	%	quantity	%	quantity	%	quantity	%	quantity	%
Mature	10	33.3	16	53.3	6	20	11	36.6	13	43.3	2	6.7
Moratorium	17	56.7	14	46.7	3	-10	12	40	10	33.3	-2	-6.7
Uncertain	1	3.3	0	0	-1	-3.3	2	6.7	4	13.3	2	6.6
Imposed	2	6.7	0	0	-2	-6.7	5	16.7	3	10	-2	-6.7

Among the experimental group respondents, 53.3% have mature professional identity after the training, whereas at the beginning of the experiment their number was 33.3%; 46.7% - with the state of the moratorium of professional identity, while, before the experiment, their number was 56.7%. That is, after the implementation of the training into the educational process, the number of the students with this status of professional identity decreased, and there were no more students with uncertain and imposed professional identity (before the training, there were 3.3% and 6.7% of the respondents with this kinds of status, respectively).

As one can see, at the end of the experiment, a number of the students with mature professional identity increased due to the decrease of the number of those with a moratorium status, indefinite and imposed professional identity (by 20%).

Among the control group respondents, there were slight changes in the status of professional identity, too. In particular, the number of students with moratorium status and imposed professional identity slightly decreased (by 6.7% each group) and the number of the students with mature and uncertain professional identity slightly increased (by 6.7% and 6.6%, respectively).

In order to examine the significance of the changes that occurred in the experimental and control groups, we used Wilcoxon signed-rank test.

It should be noted that the differences in the indicators of the status of professional identity of future teachers of the experimental group before and after the experiment are statistically significant (t = 13.50) at a high level of statistical significance p = 0.05. The control group also had positive changes in the indicators of the status of professional identity (t = 5.50, at p = 0.05), but these changes are not so pronounced as in the experimental group.

Conclusions

Summarizing the results of our research, it has been found that the professional identity of future primary school teachers is a complex integration phenomenon, which combines the idea of one's place in a professional group and, accordingly, in the society, and the attitude to one's own profession.

At the moment of studying at a university, almost half of future primary school teachers have mature professional identity but almost the same number of the students are characterized by professional identity "moratorium". A significant number of students have an imposed and uncertain professional identity. This fact proves the necessity of psychological support for the formation of the professional identity of future primary school teachers.

An effective means of students' professional identity development is a psychosocial training that allows to improve the structural components and mechanisms of the development of professional identity that can be improved in a relatively short time and are professionally significant for the personality of future teachers. "Training of future primary school teachers' professional identity development" is aimed at forming a system of knowledge about the features of professional identity, the development of the self-concept, psychological closeness to other people, motivation for achievements, teaching and communicative skills and professional focus.

The introduction of the training program resulted in an increase of the levels of key factors in the development of the professional identity of future primary school teachers.

The research does not cover all aspects of the issue of future primary school teachers' professional identity development. Further study is planned to address the issue of linking the professional identity of future teachers with other personal characteristics.

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ТРЕНІНГ РОЗВИТКУ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ІДЕНТИЧНОСТІ ЯК ЗАСІБ ПРОФЕСІЙНОГО СТАНОВЛЕННЯ МАЙБУТНІХ УЧИТЕЛІВ ПОЧАТКОВИХ КЛАСІВ

Мета статті – представити тренінг з розвитку професійної ідентичності майбутніх учителів початкових класів та виявити динаміку розвитку професійної ідентичності після його запровадження у навчальний процес. Для реалізації мети використано комплекс сучасних загальнонаукових методів: теоретичні методи – аналіз, синтез, узагальнення, зіставлення літературних джерел, законодавчої й нормативно-правової бази з проблем професійної ідентичності; емпіричні методи – спостереження, бесіди, анкетування, стандартизовані опитувальники та психодіагностичні методики вивчення особистості, аналіз результатів навчальної діяльності, документації, психолого-педагогічний експеримент (констатувальний та формувальний етапи), методи активного соціально-психологічного навчання (соціально-психологічний тренінг, навчально-рольові ігри тощо), методи статистичної обробки даних. Професійна ідентичність майбутніх вчителів початкових класів – складний інтеграційний феномен, що поєднує уявлення людини про своє місце у професійній групі та відповідно у суспільстві і ставлення до своєї професійної приналежності. За результатами дослідження, майже половина майбутніх учителів початкових класів мають статус сформованої професійної ідентичності, однак майже така ж кількість майбутніх педагогів характеризується наявністю у них стану мораторію професійної ідентичності. Значна кількість студентів має нав'язану та невизначену професійну ідентичність. Цей факт свідчить про необхідність психологічного супроводу становлення професійної ідентичності студентів-майбутніх вчителів початкових класів. Ефективним засобом розвитку професійної ідентичності майбутніх учителів є соціально-психологічний тренінг, який дозволяє удосконалити ті структурні компоненти та механізми розвитку професійної ідентичності, що об'єктивно піддаються формуванню за відносно короткий час та є професійно значущими для особистості майбутніх учителів. «Тренінг розвитку професійної ідентичності майбутніх учителів початкових класів» спрямований на формування цілісної системи знань про особливості професійної ідентичності, розвитку Я-концепції, психологічної близькості з іншими людьми, мотивації досягнення, а також розвиток педагогічних, комунікативних здібностей та формування професійно-педагогічної спрямованості. Зіставлення результатів дослідження на початку й наприкінці дослідно-експериментальної роботи дало змогу зафіксувати кількісні та якісні зміни щодо сформованості у майбутніх вчителів початкових класів професійної ідентичності. Отже, результатом упровадження тренінгової програми стало підвищення рівнів основних чинників розвитку професійної ідентичності майбутніх вчителів початкових класів.

Ключові слова: професійна ідентичність, тренінг, професійна самореалізація, інтерактивні методи, компетентність, педагогічні інновації.

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