

**ISCKMC 2020****International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY OF FUTURE  
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS**

Olga Uruzbekovna Gogitsaeva (a)\*, Svetlana Dzahotovna Gurieva (c),  
Valery Konstantinovich Kochisov (b), Soslan Valeryevich Kochisov (d)

\*Corresponding author

(a) North Ossetian University after K.L. Khetagurov, 44, Vatutina str., Vladikavkaz, Russia, gogitsaeva@yandex.ru

(b) St. Petersburg State University, 7-9, University embankment, St. Petersburg, 199034, Russia,  
gurievasv@gmail.com

(c) North Ossetian University after K.L. Khetagurov, 44, Vatutina str., Vladikavkaz, Russia, kotisov@yandex.ru

(d) National Research University, 20 Myasnitskaya str., Moscow, Russia, kotisov97@yandex.ru

**Abstract**

The article discusses the problem of developing professional identity among future educational psychologists. Numerous studies of domestic and foreign authors illustrate a variety of theoretical concepts and approaches to the study of the professional identity of educational psychologists. However, there is no single, holistic, consistent concept of professional identity. This has instigated us to study the concept and the problem of professional identity of educational psychologists on the basis of psychological and pedagogical research, to analyze the process of developing the professional identity of educational psychologists in scientific literature. The conducted empirical research was aimed to test the assumptions that, firstly, the professional identity of undergraduates is determined by the specifics of target attitudes, value orientations, interests and motivations, and secondly, the professional identity of 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> year graduates is individual, random and uneven in its development. Thirdly, the components of professional identity differ substantially in first- and second-year graduates. The results of the longitudinal study generally confirm the suggested hypotheses. Professional identity is determined by the specifics of target attitudes, value-motivational orientations and motivations. The leading ones are job stability, service to mankind and management. The data obtained reflect the need of adolescence for social and personal security, a willingness to take responsibility and integrate the efforts of other people. The obtained research findings can be used in the activities of educational psychologists of the faculty in organizing support for professional identity development.

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*Keywords:* Professional identity, graduate students, pedagogical process, training



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## 1. Introduction

Currently, good educational background or mastering certain technologies is not enough while it is required to be successful and competitive in the modern labor market.

In this regard, an educational psychologist responsible for the upbringing, training and development of the younger generation is a core of social order for competitive specialists.

Many authors note the crisis of Russian society identity as a whole, and the student audience as well.

Higher education is highly relevant in modern socio-economic conditions. University students make up a significant part of the student audience.

The process of developing a competitive personality depends on many factors and the most significant one is tertiary education, which purposefully and effectively develops the professional identity of a competitive specialist.

In our study, we consider professional identity to be an important factor in developing an educational psychologist's competitiveness at the stage of graduate instruction.

The professional identity development is an integral part of the developing professional's personality, professional development, confirming the conscious choice of professional activity as a way of self-realization.

The relevance of the research is stipulated by the following: the government and social order for the training of a competitive educational psychologist in a two-tier education system, the introduction of a professional standard for an educational psychologist development, the creation of the National System of Independent Assessment and Certification of Qualifications; the need for a new understanding of the concept of competitiveness of an educational psychologist through the prism of the professional identity development; the need to popularize master's education as a level of the higher education system that effectively influences the development of the professional identity of a competitive educational psychologist.

## 2. Problem Statement

The problem of the professional identity of educational psychologists, especially educational psychologists of preschool educational institutions, is of particular interest since modern society dictates new requirements for the personality of an educational psychologist.

In Western psychology, the problem of identity was considered by such scientists as A. Adler, W. James, D. Parfit, Z. Freud, J. Habermas, M. Heidegger, K. Horney, K. Jung, E. Erickson; in the domestic one by V.V. Abramenkova, M.M. Bakhtin, I.S. Kon, V.S. Mukhina, L.M. Popov.

Russian psychologists refer to the notions of identity as a study of self-awareness and self-attitude and consider it as one of the aspects of the "I problem" (B.G. Ananiev, L.I. Bozhovich, L.S. Vygotsky, I.S. Kon, A.N. Leontiev, M.I. Lisina, V.S. Merlin, V.S. Mukhina, L.D. Oleinik, L.S. Rubinshtein). Recently in Russian psychology there has been an intensive study of professional identity by such scientists as E.P. Ermolaeva, D.I. Zavalishena, N.L. Ivanova, E.V. Konevoy, L.B. Schneider and others.

Nowadays, many scientists have studied the phenomenology of the activity and personality of an educational psychologist, their pedagogical skills as well as the problem of their professional identity

quite deeply (Yu.P. Azarov, N.V. Antonova, E.N. Volkova, V.F. Gonobolin, A.A. Derkach, M.M. Kashapov, E.A. Klimov, A.G. Kovalev, N.V. Kuzmina, N.D. Levitov, A.V. Lesik, A.K. Markova, L.M. Mitina, M.M. Pavlyuk, K.K. Platonov, E.V. Piskunova, Yu.P. Povarenkov, A.A. Rean, N.L. Regush, M.A. Rensh, V A. Slastenin, G.S. Sukhobskaya, I.V. Strakhov, A.I. Shcherbakov, E.A. Yablokova).

Numerous studies of domestic and foreign authors illustrate a variety of theoretical concepts and approaches to studying the professional identity of educational psychologists. However, there is no single integral consistent concept of professional identity. That is why we were interested in the problem of professional identity of educational psychologists of a preschool educational institution.

### 3. Research Questions

The object of research is professional identity.

The subject of research is the development of graduates' professional identity.

Research objectives:

1. To study the problem of professional identity of an educational psychologist in psychological and pedagogical research.

2. Analyze the process of developing the professional identity of educational psychologists in the process of studying at a university.

The sample was compiled by a group of 1<sup>st</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> year graduates of North Ossetian State University after K.L. Khetagurov, specializing in “Psychology of Education”. The number of graduates was 31, the age was 22–25 years.

The problem of identity is one of the key issues in the modern world. Based on psychological and pedagogical works, we consider professional identity to be both social and personal at the same time, the most important support in the life of a modern specialist in the context of modernizing national education and helping to maintain a competitive position in the labor market.

One of the factors influencing the level of developing the professional identity of a competitive educational psychologist is the educational process at the masters' training stage of a pedagogical university. In this regard, it is fundamentally important to identify which pedagogical conditions play a key role for the development of the professional identity of a competitive educational psychologist and their harmonious profession starting.

Following the changes, modern pedagogical universities design and implement educational process with regards to the adopted regulatory framework, improving the quality of teachers' training, ensuring their competitiveness in employment.

The main emphasis in designing the general professional educational process at higher pedagogical institutions is placed on a technological modular system for constructing the process itself, making it practice-oriented, aimed not only at studying theory but also specific types of pedagogical activity, the formation of a certain labor action (labor function), which meets the requirements of the Federal State Educational Standard of Higher Education and the Professional Standard of an educational psychologist. It should be noted that such an approach contributes to the development of an individual

educational trajectory of teacher training with regards to their own professional characteristics, the employer needs and the personal characteristics of mastering professional activities.

“Identity” (from the French “identigue”) means exactly corresponding, identical. In modern science, the concept of identity is interpreted in different ways.

Identity is a multidimensional psychological phenomenon that expresses the internal processes of a personality in the context of such concepts as “identification”, “self-awareness”, “I-concept”, and “self-determination”. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Z. Freud was the first to use the term “identity” in his writings to denote the earliest manifestation of an emotional connection with another person.

Domestic psychologists Vygotsky L.S., Stolin V.V., Rubinshtein L.S., Bozhovich L.I., Mukhina V.S., Kon I.S., Schneider L.B. investigated identity as one of the aspects of “I” within the concepts of self-attitude and self-awareness. Foreign psychologists who studied the problem of identity include A. Adler, J. Habermas, W. James, M. Heidegger, K. Horney, K. Jung, E. Erickson (Arinushkina, 2004; Bobylev, 2015; Borisova & Gurieva, 2014; Gogitsaeva, 2010; Gulis, 2017).

In various sciences, sociology, cultural studies, personality psychology, social psychology, history, the problem of identity is considered in the following ways: as a personality trait, a process of a person’s professional development (professional self-determination, professional self-esteem).

According to E. Erickson, the concept of “identity” can be considered in three different aspects, specifically, as a conscious feeling of a person, solidarity with the ideals of the group and the desire not to unconsciously interrupt life experience (as cited in Schneider, 2007).

J. Marcia, relying on the works of E. Erickson, defined identity as the structure of the inner man, which includes abilities, needs and beliefs, supposing that the indicator of identity formation is the identification of a person in the field of profession, politics and religion (as cited in Kurdenko, 2016).

The scientist singled out the following identity statuses: indefinite, imposed, moratorium, formed. Herewith, an indefinite identity means the absence of identity, in other words, a person does not search for and does not choose a solution. The status of an imposed identity means that a person is not engaged in looking for a place in the world and the decision is made not independently but under external influence. In the “moratorium” status, a person is actively looking for a solution to the problem; the decision itself has not yet been made. Within the framework of this status, a person creates personal identity and is at the stage of its construction (Buyakas, 2000).

On the contrary, the developed identity is characterized by making a decision in the process of its independent search. Such people have their own plans for the future (Kochisov et al., 2015).

In his research on the problem of personality identity, a foreign psychologist A. Waterman, tells about identity development, draws attention to the religious sphere, in which he sees the acceptance and reassessment of moral and religious beliefs, the professional sphere in terms of choosing a professional path, the political sphere expressed in the development of political views. The author considers goals, values, beliefs as elements of identity, arguing that the identification process is not linear due to changing requirements for life, which entail changes in the content of identity elements meaning its destruction at a certain stage of life (as cited in Mesnikovich & Zhuravleva, 2019).

We found the correlation of the concept of identity with such terms such as “identification”, “self-consciousness”, “I-concept”, “self-determination” in the theoretical analysis of psychological works of this direction.

Let us pay attention to the definition of self-concept, which is defined by most researchers as an integral image of one’s own self, a set of attitudes aimed at oneself. The main components of the attitude are as follows: cognitive, where the I-image is a person’s idea of themselves, emotional-evaluative, in which self-esteem is an affective assessment of a representative, the behavioral component.

In defining the concept of professional identity, Krasnikova (2013) assumes that

*...it is a product of long-term personal and professional development, which develops only at sufficiently high levels of mastering the profession and acts as a stable coordination of the main elements of the professional process, specifically, the coordination of real and ideal professional ideas of an individual about themselves. (p. 168)*

The essence of professional identity according to Schneider (2007)

*... consists in the independent and responsible construction of one’s professional future and presupposes a high readiness of the semantic and regulatory foundations of behavior, in a situation of uncertainty with regards to the professional future, in order to exercise personal self-determination, integrate into the professional community and form an idea of oneself as a specialist. (p. 102)*

Many authors include the characterization of the subject “... choosing and implementing a method of professional interaction with the outside world and gaining a sense of self-esteem through the performance of this activity” in the definition of professional identity” (Egorova & Dmitrieva, 2019, p. 56).

Our theoretical analysis of foreign and domestic psychological literature showed the wide use of the concept of identity, but also the fact that there is no unity in the interpretation of this phenomenon.

E. Ginsberg was one of the first scientists to study the problem of professional development. In his opinion, a person can consciously make a professional choice within ten years going through certain stages, as well, the author considers this process irrevocable, having a logical conclusion in the conditions of a compromise between internal (psychological characteristics of a person) and external (position on the labor market, the prestige of the profession) factors.

The concept of professional identity follows from the content of the concept of identity and has an important meaning that determines the comfortable existence of a person in the relevant field of activity.

In modern conditions, most researchers note a crisis of professional identity. For this reason, the study of the problem of professional identity is relevant and necessary as an aspect important for the optimal existence of a person in a certain field of activity. The most significant works in this area belong to E. P. Ermolaeva, L. B. Schneider, Yu. P. Povarenkov, N. L. Ivanova, M. M. Abdullaeva et al., demonstrating that a person is capable of developing personal identity in the professional sphere (as cited in Antsyferova, 2000).

According to Igtisamova (2012), “the allocation of professional identity is a natural process of sequential differentiation of the concept of “identity”, since this process is based on the specifics of its elements” (p. 37). The author considers professional identity to be “a systemic, level, dynamic phenomenon, closely related to other elements of the professional development of an individual being professional self-determination, professional self-esteem and professional deformation” (Igtisamova, 2012, p. 37).

It becomes obvious that in this concept it is important for a person to acknowledge that he or she is a “teacher”, and not the experience level in this profession.

In the process of theoretical analysis of identity, we discovered that domestic and foreign psychologists divided this phenomenon into two types being social and personal identity. At the same time, both types are considered as separate concepts and in interrelation with each other as well.

E. Erickson was the first to introduce into the field of psychology the concept of personal identity as an internal self-identity of a person, which is developed throughout a person’s life.

Along with personal identity, researchers J. Mead, J. Turner, G. Tadjfel consider the concept of social identity as a result of comparing a person with a specific community, nationality, race, professional group. At the same time, they consider that the process of forming personal identity occurs through the equality of moral, physical and intellectual qualities of an individual (as cited in Ivanova & Koneva, 2003).

The identity structure of I.S. Kon is rather interesting in our opinion. The researcher divides identity into psychophysiological (interconnection of mental and physiological processes within a person), social identity (a set of properties that defines a person as social, belonging to a certain society, group), personal identity (interconnection of goals, motives, meaningful life orientations of a person) (as cited in Ivanova & Koneva, 2003).

Regarding professional identity, as a subspecies of social or personal identity, we also found differences in the views of researchers in various concepts.

Thus, for example, Ivanova and Koneva (2003) in their works examines “...belonging of professional identity to a type of social identity taking into account its relationship with a group membership.” At the same time, the author draws attention to the personal component present in professional identity in the form of a system of values that helps to perceive group membership (p. 71).

Following the views of Ivanova and Koneva (2003) classifies professional identity as a subspecies of social identity, noting its relationship with self-determination in a professional group, acceptance of group membership in it. The scientists consider the process of forming a professional identity to be a process of identifying connections inside and outside the profession and their differences from each other, with professional behavior, with a general information basis of activity. In the structure of professional identity, it is shown a cognitive, motivational and value component.

Thus, we have revealed a wide variety of views on the connection of professional identity with social or personal identity. Having analyzed various approaches to the characterization of professional identity, we came to our own opinion that professional identity cannot only represent belonging to a certain professional community or only an attitude towards oneself as a professional and is an integration of two concepts.

In the process of studying the theoretical foundations devoted to the problem of professional identity, we drew attention to the approaches of scientists to the structure of the phenomenon under consideration. Thus, we have identified two positions being the closest to our understanding.

Based on psychological and pedagogical scientific works, which claim that values are largely determined by motives in the structure of personality, we consider appropriate in this concept to combine motivational and value components into one and present them as a single motivational and value component, where the motivational component is the needs, interests, attitudes, beliefs, satisfaction with the chosen profession, and the value component is the acceptance of the values of the professional community.

At the same time, we believe that the general idea of such a complex phenomenon as professional identity cannot be presented without the adoption of a behavioral component in its structure as it forms the willingness to act professionally, in accordance with the self-image, self-esteem, a recognized level of professionalism, representing the educational psychologist' self-efficacy, which can be confirmed by labor behavior in the framework of professional activity.

Having analyzed the existing approaches to the problem of professional identity, we came to our own interpretation of this concept as a multidimensional and integrative psychological phenomenon that is formed in the process of identifying oneself with a certain profession community, accompanied by a person's idea of himself or herself as a professional in a certain professional field being a combination of cognitive, motivational-value, behavioral components in its structure.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to develop a theoretical model of developing the professional identity of an educational psychologist with regards to the identified psychological and pedagogical conditions and experimentally prove that the educational process in the course of graduate instruction affects the development of the professional identity of an educational psychologist thereby increasing his or her competitiveness in the labour market.

#### **5. Research Methods**

Research methods:

1. Theoretical methods: theoretical analysis of scientific sources on the problem of developing the professional identity of a competitive educational psychologist;
2. Empirical methods: ascertaining, forming and control stages of the experiment;
3. Research methods: L.B. Schneider's methodology for determining the professional identity development; the technique of S.A. Budassi "Personality Self-Assessment Test".

#### **6. Findings**

Having analyzed the works of domestic and foreign scientists on the problem of the professional identity development, we came to the conclusion that in the modern scientific psychological and

pedagogical space there is no single opinion and a single approach to the concept, essence, structure, process of professional identity development.

At the same time, we found a close relationship between professional identity and the concepts of professional development, self-esteem, self-determination, professionalism, characteristic of a competitive specialist development. In other words, a modern educational psychologist must be aware of his or her place in the professional environment, in the process of constant development, introspection, reflection in order to survive in the constantly changing socio-economic conditions.

Competition being one of the key conditions for survival in the harsh conditions of the labor market forces a person to constantly improve and develop both personally and professionally.

In our work we consider professional training, which gives a qualitative change in the personal and professional development of an educational psychologist as one of the conditions for the professional identity development.

One of the indicators of the level of a person's professional development, as was said above, is professional identity.

In this regard, we thought of the possibility to develop the professional identity of an educational psychologist in the process of taking an MA course. Following the example of training specialists according to masters program in North Ossetian University after K.L. Khetagurov, we have identified the main approaches and features of master's education, contributing to the development of the professional identity of a competitive educational psychologist.

Having analyzed the structure of the concept of professional identity, statuses, levels of its development, proposed by modern science as well as having studied the content of the educational process at the stage of graduate training from the inside, we have identified our own conditions that ensure an effective process of professional identity development.

Among the conditions necessary for solving the problem of developing the professional identity of a competitive educational psychologist at the stage of graduate training, the following was identified: assessment of the professional identity of a competitive educational psychologist on the basis of cognitive, motivational-value and behavioral components; external conditions associated with the transformations in the field of education, the associated high requirements imposed by the state, society and employers on today's teacher (Adoption of the Federal State Educational Standard, the Professional Standard of a Teacher-Psychologist, the creation of a National System for Assessment and Certification of Qualifications, the State Program of the Russian Federation "Development of Education for 2013–2020", "The Concept of Long-Term Socio-Economic Development of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2020", State Project "Innovative Russia – 2020"); internal conditions determined by the approaches, technologies, methods and forms of organizing the educational process at the stage of graduate training, focused on developing the professional identity of a competitive educational psychologist.



## 7. Conclusion

During the study, two assessments were made at the end of the first and in the beginning of the second semester. Using the above methods, a questionnaire survey and testing of sample graduates were conducted for the specifics of the professional identity dynamics.

The results of the study by the method of Schneider (2007), regardless of the course of study, show an uneven distribution of professional identity types among the graduates. Therefore, it is possible to assume that respondents during the first and second years of study are at different stages of identity development.

Many graduates have a pseudo-positive level, they either experience a crisis of identity, or cannot fruitfully resolve it, and only a fifth of them have achieved a positive identity.

Based on the results obtained, we can talk about a decrease in the level of developed identity in second-year graduates and a transition to a premature and pseudo-positive stage. This can be explained by the fact that in the first year a graduate is just beginning to try on new social and professional roles, the created ideal image of the profession is compared with the real one. In the second year, graduates master professional modules, the volume of knowledge increases, and a more accurate view of the future profession is formed. At the same time, many graduates do not fully understand the level of qualifications provided by the university, creating illusory hopes for a high salary level immediately after graduation, rapid career advancement, and exciting content of professional activity. Analyzing the average indicators according to the Career anchors concept, it should be noted that the service orientation reflects the desire to work with people, helping humanity. This career orientation is explained by the specifics of the sample because graduates study at the Department of Educational Psychology. In general, the results obtained indicate that the issues of periods, factors and conditions for developing professional identity have been insufficiently studied. There is no unity in the interpretation of the concept itself, the main trends in the dynamics of identity, which form the components of professional identity being value-semantic, temporal and functional.

Our research has confirmed that professional identity changes non-linearly in the learning process and is individual and probabilistic by nature.

It has also been revealed that there are differences in the value-motivational sphere of graduates of the first and second years of study. First-year graduates are characterized by the predominance of the motivational and professional component of activity, which by the end of the second year of study is transformed into a value-professional component.

We came to the conclusion that the guarantee of a successful development of professional identity is directly related to the comprehension of the personal professional plan. The analysis of the general level of professional identity development indicates the need to develop and conduct special organizational psychological and pedagogical work aimed to increase the level of professional identity components development.

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