

## RESEARCH OF THE EMPATHIC COMPONENT OF THE PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY OF FUTURE SPECIALISTS IN PHYSICAL THERAPY, ERGOTHERAPY

### ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ЕМПАТІЙНОГО КОМПОНЕНТА ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ІДЕНТИЧНОСТІ МАЙБУТНІХ ФАХІВЦІВ З ФІЗИЧНОЇ ТЕРАПІЇ, ЕРГОТЕРАПІЇ

*The purpose of this study is to research and diagnose the empathic component of the professional identity of future specialists in physical therapy and ergotherapy. Empathy can occur if there is a general positive attitude towards other people. Prerequisites for the formation of empathy are the development of emotional identification, the quality of perception of emotional conflict (personal reflection), the stability of altruistic forms of behavior. The effectiveness of the professional activities of a physical therapist and ergotherapist is directly dependent on the level of formation of his ability to understand. Understanding for a physical therapist and ergotherapist is one of the important ways to get information about a person. The importance of studying the characteristics of empathy of physical therapists and ergotherapists is justified by the statement that empathy is a professionally important quality that acts as a preventive factor or as a prerequisite for the reduction of personal achievements as a component of professional deformations. In order to study the level of empathy among future specialists in physical therapy and ergotherapy, we conducted a diagnostic study of the level of formation of the empathic component of professional identity, in which students of the II and III courses of the Department of Physical Therapy, Ergotherapy took part. It was established that pedagogical technologies for the development of the empathic component of professional identity of future specialists in physical therapy and ergotherapy can be applied, which will significantly prepare the student for future professional activities. Effective methods of forming the empathic component of the professional identity of future specialists in physical therapy, ergotherapy are role-playing games that recreate the atmosphere of the "physical therapist-patient" conversation, and perform exercises.*

**Key words:** empathy, future specialist, professional identity, vocational training, physical therapy, ergotherapy.

Метою статті є дослідження й діагностика емпатійного компонента професійної ідентичності майбутніх фахівців з фізичної терапії, ерготерапії. Емпатія може формуватися за умови загальної позитивної установки на інших людей. Передумовами для формування емпатії є розвиненість емоційної ідентифікації, якість сприйняття емоційного конфлікту (особистісна рефлексія), стабільність альтруїстичних форм поведінки. Ефективність професійної діяльності фізичного терапевта й ерготерапевта прямо залежить від рівня сформованості в нього здатності до розуміння. Розуміння для фізичного терапевта й ерготерапевта є одним із важливих способів отримання інформації про людину. Важливість вивчення особливостей емпатії фізичних терапевтів та ерготерапевтів обґрунтовується положенням, що емпатія – це професійно важлива якість, яка є фактором запобігання виникненню або передумовою виникнення редукції особистих досягнень як складника професійних деформацій. З метою вивчення рівня емпатії в майбутніх фахівців з фізичної терапії, ерготерапії нами проведено дослідження діагностики рівня сформованості емпатійного компонента професійної ідентичності, у якому взяли участь студенти II і III курсів кафедри фізичної терапії, ерготерапії. Установлено, що можна застосовувати педагогічні технології розвитку емпатійного компонента професійної ідентичності майбутніх фахівців з фізичної терапії, ерготерапії, що значно підготує студента до майбутньої професійної діяльності. Ефективним методом формування емпатійного компонента професійної ідентичності майбутніх фахівців з фізичної терапії, ерготерапії є рольові ігри, які відтворюють обстановку бесіди «фізичний терапевт-пацієнт», виконання вправ.

**Ключові слова:** емпатія, майбутній фахівець, професійна ідентичність, професійна підготовка, фізична терапія, ерготерапія.

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**Problem statement in general form and its relation to important scientific or practical tasks.** The problem of studying empathy is always relevant for pedagogical research. The problem of research and development of the empathic component of the professional identity of future specialists in physical therapy and ergotherapy is especially important. The professional activities of physical therapists and ergotherapists make special demands on the person: the ability to be sincere in the relationship with the patient, to understand the patient's emotional state, to correctly reflect and convey the feelings experienced at the moment. Without practical mastery of such a psychic reality as empathy, it is impossible to achieve effectiveness in professional activity.

Professional identity in its concept is closely interrelated with concepts such as professional

development, professionalism, professional self-esteem, professional self-determination, and is one of the main criteria for becoming a professional in a competitive environment. In other words, in order to exist in dynamic socio-economic conditions, a modern professional must be capable of continuous development and analysis, an awareness of his place in the professional environment. The formation of a professional identity is the most important task that a professional faces in the period of his/her professional development.

Theoretical analysis of different concepts and approaches to the study of this concept allows us to define the concept of "identity" as a multidimensional and integrative psychological phenomenon, which is the result of an active process of self-representation

associated with the continuous process of development of human personality throughout his life. At the same time, it should be noted that this process is not a linear process and can have the opposite effect, returning to a lower level. In doing so, a person makes a series of interrelated choices, taking on their personal goals, values, beliefs.

A person's professional choice is a lengthy process that involves a series of interrelated decisions and stages, spanning over ten years. The process of choosing a profession is irreversible, which ends in a compromise between external and internal factors. By external factors we mean the prestige of the profession, the situation in the labor market, internal – individual psychological characteristics of the individual [4].

#### **Analysis of recent research and publications.**

In modern research, scientists indicate that empathy is a condition for establishing close contact and genuine dialogic communication, a factor that is increasingly contributing to emotional integration, the restoration of broken ties with others, a necessary condition for any creativity.

Empathy can occur if there is a general positive attitude towards other people. Prerequisites for the formation of empathy are the development of emotional identification, the quality of perception of emotional conflict (personal reflection), the stability of altruistic forms of behavior [1, p. 10]. The manifestation of empathy is closely related to a certain level of development of a person's moral consciousness. In pedagogical empathy, the active principle prevails, the focus on emotional support. The effect can be achieved when the teacher demonstrates empathic behavior [3].

**Emphasizing previously unresolved parts of the common problem.** In the modern scientific literature there is no information about the study of the empathic component of the professional identity of future specialists in physical therapy, ergotherapy.

**Formulation of the article's goals (tasks statement).** The purpose of this study is to research and diagnose the empathic component of the professional identity of future specialists in physical therapy and ergotherapy.

**Presentation of the basic research material.** The empathy component involves considering the relationship between teachers and students as subject-subjective and equitable, taking into account the intellectual-emotional interaction of the subjects of communication, the perception of others' feelings, the inclusion of the dominant mentalities and worldviews, the system of personality [7].

Educators consider empathy from the following points of view:

- as a specific emotional form of knowledge, the object of which is a person;
- as a special ability of the subject to perceive the emotional experiences of another person, which

allows in interpersonal interaction to understand each other, to coordinate positions and to choose appropriate means of self and mutual regulation;

– as penetration into the emotional inner world of another person, the ability of an individual to empathize with emotions that arise in another individual during communication;

– a complex concept containing the following components:

a) a dynamic, procedural and phase psychic process aimed at modeling and analyzing the inner world of the feelings of another person;

b) mental response in response to the stimulus;

c) a personality trait that reveals itself in the ability to give a mediated emotional response to the experience of the subject of contact (involves reflection of the inner states, thoughts and feelings of the subject of empathy itself;

d) as an individual psychological trait that characterizes a person's capacity for empathy and compassion and is an important component in balancing interpersonal relationships, makes behavior socially conditioned.

Empathy is formed and developed in the process of human interaction, helps to raise the development of human individuality to a level that involves the activity of all parties of communication, interpenetration into the world of feelings of each other, the desire for compassion, ie puts the positions of participants in accordance with the psychological laws of the subject-subject interaction.

Empathy is divided as follows:

– emotional – relies on mechanisms of projection and imitation of motor and affective reactions of another;

– cognitive – based on intellectual processes (comparisons, analogies, etc.);

– predicative – manifests in the ability to anticipate the negative reactions of communication partners in specific situations.

Thus, empathy is defined as an integral part of the professional identity of the future specialist in physical rehabilitation, is an element of holistic systemic pedagogical action, and these aspects of pedagogical empathy are related, stimulate the formation of the image of professional "I" and the development of professional identity.

The theoretical principles of the humanistic direction are based on the processes of perception and categorization of the surrounding world, where perceptual images are the most important determinants of the actions of how a person sees and interprets events, defines them and responds to them. Recognition of the level of experience as the leader is most expressed in the client-centered approach of C. Rogers, who defined empathy as "awareness of the feelings and emotions of other people, the ability to feel the emotions and moods of others, understand

their point of view and show an active interest in their concerns, openness in interaction, the ability to penetrate into the inner world of another person". It is the emphasis on the relevance of experience that forms the basis of the psychologist's empathic attitude to the objects of his activity.

Thus, in the writings of foreign psychologists, empathy is considered as a specific method and form of social perception.

Psychologists ambiguously interpret the concept of empathy, defining it as an ability, or as a process, or as a state, while associating empathy with various mental processes and psychological characteristics of a person.

In the dictionary of psychology, empathy (from the Greek. *Empatheia* – empathy) is understood as non-rational cognition by a person of the inner world of other people (empathy); responsiveness to the experiences and emotions of another, a kind of social (moral) emotions. It is noted that the ability to empathy is a prerequisite for the development of such a professional quality as insight in a practical psychologist (consultant, psychotherapist) [2].

A. Bodalev points out that empathy "appears as a very complex psychological formation in which cognitive and emotional processes turn out to be intimate dependencies" [1, p. 250]. S. Rubinstein considers empathy as an integral part of a person's love for a person. In true empathic relations, he contrasts the phenomenon of "expanded egoism" [6, p. 416]. D. Elkonin believes that a person's ability to emotionally respond to the experiences of another is one of the conditions for the development of social decentration. Based on this, D. Elkonin emphasized the influence of empathy on the formation and emotional decentration of the child in the process of overcoming "cognitive egocentrism" [9].

B. Teplov, dealing with the problems of the psychology of individual differences, singled out the ability to empathize with the sign and function of the "living imagination", which makes a truly sensitive attitude towards others possible. For full empathy with perceived positive or negative emotions, the scientist believes, it is necessary to mentally take the place of another, "transfer" to his position [8, p. 256–270].

Thus, psychologists understood the concept of empathy as experiencing an emotional state in which another is; activity to reconstruct the feelings of another person with the help of imagination; Reflections on how a person would behave in the place of another (assuming the role).

The effectiveness of the professional activities of a physical therapist and ergotherapist is directly dependent on the level of formation of his ability to understand. Understanding for a physical therapist and ergotherapist is one of the important ways to get information about a person.

The importance of studying the characteristics of empathy of physical therapists and ergotherapists

is justified by the statement that empathy is a professionally important quality that acts as a preventive factor or as a prerequisite for the reduction of personal achievements as a component of professional deformations.

In order to study the level of empathy among future specialists in physical therapy, ergotherapy, we conducted a study in which students of the II and III courses of the Department of Physical Therapy, Ergotherapy took part. Based on the purpose of the study, the following methods were selected: "Diagnosis of the level of empathy" (V. Boyko) [5, p. 385].

We conducted a comparative analysis of the level of empathy in students of II and III courses. Diagnostic results of the level of formation of the empathic component of professional identity of future specialists in physical therapy, ergotherapy according to the method of V. Boyko are presented in table 1.

Table 1

**Diagnostic results of the level of formation of the empathic component of professional identity of future specialists in physical therapy, ergotherapy**

Type of empathy	Student category	
	II course	III course
1. The rational channel of empathy	12%	10%
2. The emotional channel of empathy	15%	24%
3. The intuitive channel of empathy	19%	8%
4. Attitudes promoting or inhibiting empathy	27%	32%
5. Penetrating ability in empathy	14%	13%
6. Identification	13%	13%

Using this technique, we were able to analyze the level of empathy on each of 6 separate scales: a rational channel of empathy, an emotional channel of empathy, an intuitive channel of empathy, settings that promote empathy, penetrating ability in empathy, identification in empathy. According to the results of calculating the values of each of the scales, we found out that for students of the II and III courses, in the structure of empathy, such a parameter as settings that promote empathy or prevent it, which, accordingly, will facilitate or impede the action of empathic channels, is significant. The effectiveness of empathy will decrease if a person tries to avoid personal contacts, considers inappropriate curiosity for another person, convinces himself to calmly relate to the feelings and problems of others.

Such parameters as a rational channel of empathy, characterized by a focus of attention, perception and thinking of an empathizing on the essence of another person (state, problems, behavior), as well as an intuitive channel of empathy, that is, a person's ability to see the behavior of partners, act in the absence of

objective information, were not significant. about them, relying on experience stored in the subconscious.

**Conclusions.** Thus, without revealing an obvious sensitive period in the development of empathy, it is possible to apply pedagogical technologies for the development of the empathic component of the professional identity of future specialists in physical therapy, ergotherapy, which will significantly prepare the student for future professional activities. Effective methods of forming the empathic component of the professional identity of future specialists in physical therapy, ergotherapy are role-playing games that recreate the atmosphere of the “physical therapist-patient” conversation, and perform exercises. It is useful, for example, to use “feedback sheets” in which each student could express their opinion and personal attitude to the course being studied, the past lesson, and the assignment completed. It is important to create such a psychological climate in the classroom, in which feelings and opinions can be freely expressed, it is easy to communicate and to reveal and understand oneself and others, to accept one's and others' feelings. Based on the fact that empathy is an important quality in the profession of a physical therapist, the methods, games and exercises used in working with students will contribute to the expansion and awareness of the emotional and sensory experience of a person, stimulate the development of the mechanism of empathy.

Further research should be devoted to the issues of pedagogical methods for increasing the level of empathy among future specialists in physical therapy and ergotherapy.

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