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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24195/2414-4665-2018-5-2>**Nataliia Shelenkova,***PhD (Candidate of Psychological Sciences), associate professor, Department of Psychology, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, 28, Sadova Str., Uman, Ukraine,***Maryna Mishchenko,***PhD (Candidate of Psychological Sciences), associate professor, Department of Psychology, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, 28, Sadova Str., Uman, Ukraine,*

## THE STUDY OF FUTURE PSYCHOLOGISTS' PERSONAL POTENTIAL IN THE PROCESS OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

*The paper presents the study of the existing level of development of future psychologists' individual psychological features that make up their personal potential in the process of professional development. The content characteristics of personal potential in relation to professional training have been demonstrated. Effective formation of personal potential of a specialist can be provided in the process of his/her studying at the higher educational institution, being implemented comprehensively in the following areas: cognitive, motivational, operational, reflexive, and spiritual. It has been found that the impact of future psychologists' individual psychological features on the process of their professional development forms the system of interdependent conditions and factors that increase the level of professional development. This system includes activity-related component (the unity of the subject and the content, common character of the activities performed by students in the process of training); motivational component (the unity of goal and motivational orientation of a future psychologist); communication component (the kind of communication between future psychologists); personality-related component (common value orientations, senses and personal consonance between psychology students); spiritual component (future psychologists' abilities to distinguish and choose intrinsic moral values, such as goodness, love, beauty, sincerity, freedom, responsibility and subject their actions, which form spiritual and psychological unity with other people in communication and work, to them). The comprehensive diagnostic assessment of future psychologists' individual psychological characteristics was carried out with the use of the following techniques: J. Holland's theory of personality types, diagnostics of achievement motivation modified by M. Magomed-Eminov (aimed at defining future psychologists' professional potential); life purpose test by O. Leontiev; O. Potomkina's modified technique aimed at determining socio-psychological attitudes of a personality used for finding future psychologists' values and senses; updated variant of the error inventory by A. Freeman – R. Dewolf (for estimating psychology students' communication skills); M. Noskov's technique; inventory "Evaluation of Spirituality Level" developed by O. Horbachov (aimed at estimating psychology students' spirituality). The results of psychodiagnostic tests have made it possible to obtain and systemize experimental data characterizing the diversity of psychology students' motivational, communicative, value orientation, professional, personal, and moral characteristics, which together form each student's personal potential. The results obtained can be applied for the preparing of a special program aimed at the development of future psychologists' individual psychological features that are responsible for their professional development.*

**Keywords:** *personal potential, individual psychological features, future psychologists, professional potential, axiological potential, communicative potential, reflexive potential, spiritual potential, psychology students.*

### Introduction

One of the factors affecting the process of professional development involves individual psychological features of a future psychologist, which make up his/her personal potential. Personal potential is a set of individual psychological features that give a person the opportunity to make decisions and regulate his/her behavior taking into account and assessing the situation, but basing primarily on his/her internal beliefs and criteria. At the same time, we consider individual psychological features of a person as a diversity of the manifestations of the human psyche in various spheres, in particular, cognitive, motivational, axiological, communicative, reflexive, moral, etc., the system of which forms the basis of one's professional development and provides the appropriate level

of achievements in professional training and further work. Individual psychological features form a certain architectonics which creates future specialist's personal potential and has its own structure, each constituent of which can be regarded as a separate potential (subpotential). Personal potential needs to be developed and unleashed. Therefore, the process of development should become an integral part of the work or study, the way of thinking and, more importantly, the way of specialist's behavior; encourage creativity, initiative, the search for innovative ideas and their implementation.

Personal potential of a specialist can be effectively formed during study at the higher educational institution in case it is comprehensively developed in the following spheres: cognitive, motivational, operation, reflexive,

spiritual. The program of future specialist training should be developed in accordance with them.

#### **Aim and Tasks**

The aim of the paper is to present the results of the empirical study aimed at identifying the development level of future psychologists' individual psychological features that make up their personal potential.

The tasks of the study:

- 1) to explain the content characteristics of personal potential in relation to training future specialists;
- 2) to perform comprehensive diagnostic assessment of future psychologists' individual psychological features that make up their personal potential.

#### **Research Methods**

The study was carried out at Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University. The principal empirical data were obtained after working with 60 students (2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> years of studying) majoring in psychology (qualification – “Practical Psychologist”) by using cross-section method. The sample was formed in such a way that it includes equal number of students from each year of study (15 students of each), who study principal profession-related subjects. Thus, the study participants were 18-22 years old; gender aspect was not taken into account.

The following techniques were applied in the experimental part of the study:

- J. Holland's theory of personality types (6 types of a personality and professional environment) was used to study individual psychological features of professional advantages and the degree of conformity of personality's professional type to the job of a psychologist (personality assessment is presented as indicators divided into levels);

- Diagnostics of achievement motivation modified by M. Magomed-Eminov. The inventory is used for defining two generalized stable motives of a personality: striving for success and avoiding failure. According to the testing results, the following scale was developed: 140-210 points correspond to the high level of achievement motivation; 70-139 points – the medium level; 30-69 points – the low level.

- The characteristics of future psychologists' life purpose orientations were studied using the life purpose test (LPT), which is an adapted variant of “Purpose in Life” test by D. Krambo and L. Makholyk. We studied the interrelations between the overall index of life awareness as well as the indicators according to the following scales: mission in life and awareness of it, emotional saturation of life and interest in it, subjective evaluation of life productiveness and satisfaction with self-fulfillment with the achievement motivation level and real attitude to studying at the higher educational institution. Based on the standards established by the authors of the test, we have divided the indicators into the following levels: 120-140 points – the high level; 72-119 points – the medium level; 20-71 points – the low level of life purpose orientations' development.

- To study the peculiarities of psychology students' socio-psychological attitudes, O. Potomkina's modified diagnostic technique was used. It consists of the texts that make it

possible to study the attitudes “egoism-altruism”, “process-result”, “freedom-authority”, “work-money”. Standardization of the indicators characterizing socio-psychological attitudes has made it possible to formulate the following ranking: 10-8 points – the high level; 7-4 points – the medium level; 1-3 points – the low level of socio-psychological attitudes' development.

- To estimate the students' intellectual distortions and communication difficulties we used the updated variant of the error inventory by A. Freeman – R. Dewolf. It enabled us to research 7 typical intellectual distortions that may appear in one's behavior and communication and lead to some difficulties in interaction and communication with people. Having conducted self-assessment using the “Error Inventory”, the surveyed can get from 0 to 20 points according to each of the 7 types of cognitive difficulties and errors. Standardization of the testing results has made it possible to discover the following level indicators demonstrating certain behavior peculiar to each type of cognitive distortions: the high level – 16-20, the medium level – 8-15, the low level – 0-7 points.

- The self-confidence test modified by A. Parafiiian presents 20 situations with the description of different variants of the study participant's behavior. Depending on the choice made, there is a certain number of points to the benefit of confident behavior. The following level-based scale was proposed: 12-32 points – the low level of self-confidence; 33-60 – the medium level; 65 and more – the high level of self-confidence.

- The inventory “Evaluation of Spirituality Level” developed by O. Horbachov was aimed at finding the study participants who are able for unleashing their spiritual potential in their behavior, studying, and communication (the assessment is performed using level indicators).

We used the following methods of statistical data processing: contrast of means, analysis of variance, correlation analysis (Student t-test, Pearson correlation coefficient, Spearman correlation analysis).

#### **Results and Discussion**

Consideration of a personality from the standpoint of its major substructures as potentials began with the work of M. Kagan (M. Kagan, 1974) in domestic psychology. Developing a system approach to a personality and his/her activities, sharing S. Rubinshtein's opinion that “a personality is formed and proves him/herself in a certain occupation” (S. Rubinshtein, 1989), M. Kagan proposed to consider a personality as a personalized activity. In his opinion, the structure of a personality is based on the specific structure of human activity and is characterized by five potentials: gnoseological, creative, axiological, communicative, and artistic.

The dynamic approach to studying a personality was applied by L. Antsyferova (L. Antsyferova, 1991): in her opinion, a personality is characterized by the things he/she knows, what is essential to him/her, what he/she creates, with whom communicates, and what

artistic needs he/she fills rather than by his/her character, temperament, physical qualities, etc.

The studies of personality’s communicative potential are much more significant. The concept of potential is rather frequently used in this case. V. Ryzhov proposed and experimentally substantiated the psychological structure of personality’s communicative potential (V. Ryzhov, 1995). The impact of communication on a personality as an integral formation has been thoroughly studied and substantiated in domestic psychology. According to B. Ananiev’s ideas about the whole ontogeny, the unity and interrelations between all the stages of human development, it is sure that communication is one of the leading factors of human development throughout the whole life of a man (B. Ananiev, 1968).

A brief review of the research works devoted to investigating various sides of a personality, which reflect one’s individual psychological features, confirms the fact that all the sides of a personality described by these categories are interrelated, and distinguishing some of them is not indicative of their layered arrangement in the integral structure of a personality. For example, the most significant aspect in the analysis of gnoseological potential is studying one’s creativity. When studying one’s communicative potential, it is particularly important to study gnostic components of communication, communicative creativity; creative and value-related characteristics of a personality are analyzed in all spheres of human activities. In our opinion, this refers to the integral personal potential, and as for the professional sphere where a personality is able to fulfill his/her potential – to personal professional potential of a person. The development of personal potential in university students as future specialists was considered in the works of A. Belousova (A. Belousova, 2015).

Let us present a detailed consideration of certain potentials (subpotentials) that form the basis for professional personal development of a personality and provide a proper level of achievements in professional training and work:

1. Professional potential includes one’s system of knowledge, abilities and skills along with beliefs and worldview. Psychological basis and the mechanism forming this substructure is intelligence and mental capabilities of a personality.

2. Axiological potential includes senses, values and value orientations, goals and socio-psychological attitudes of a personality. The most important aspect in this substructure is life purpose orientations of a personality, which are reflected in general life awareness, understanding one’s mission in life, emotional saturation of life, satisfaction with its results, ability to manage one’s life.

3. Communicative potential is the system of features, abilities and capabilities of a personality that provide his/her successful communication, understanding and mutual understanding with other people, the command of languages, ability for mastering different languages along with communicative qualities of a personality, certain communicative abilities and skills.

4. Reflexive potential is the ability of a person to reconsider the content of his/her consciousness, which is possible due to self-analysis and self-assessment of conditions, process and results of one’s activities. It is the conscious work of a person targeted at reconsideration of his/her own actions, internal feelings, states, emotional experiences (self-cognition, self-understanding and self-regulation) along with the understanding of other people’s actions.

5. Spiritual potential consists of senses and life purpose orientations, views of life and moral attitudes of a person in the system of universal moral standards, person’s understanding and admission of his/her responsibility, freedom and transcendence.

The reason for choosing certain diagnostic techniques is that they provide the opportunity of precise assessment of the level of development of students-psychologists’ main individual psychological features that make up their personal potential. The chosen psychodiagnostic tools used for studying individual psychological features of psychology students’ personalities make it possible to investigate professional, axiological, communicative, and spiritual potentials.

Let us present the main findings of the psychodiagnostic research and begin with the results of diagnostic assessment of future psychologists’ professional potential. Table 1 shows the results obtained using J. Holland’s technique and achievement motivation test.

Table 1.

**Results of Diagnostic Assessment of Future Psychologists’ Professional Potential (N=60, %)**

The indicators under assessment	The level demonstrated		
	High	Medium	Low
Conformity of a personality type to the profession	12	23	65
Homogeneity of advantages	46	54	-
Differentiation of advantages	19	14	67
Achievement motivation	18	46	36

The presented indicators characterize homogeneity, differentiation and conformity of a personality type to the peculiarities of the job of a psychologist. The data

are presented as percentage, the indicators are allocated into levels. These data demonstrate the prevalence of students with low differentiation and rather high level of

homogeneity, which means that professional advantages are underdeveloped. Accordingly, there is a prevalence of students with medium and low levels of achievement motivation.

In order to study the interrelation of professional advantages with the indicators of motivation, it is reasonable to present the data depending on the type of personal advantages. Table 2 shows the indicators of achievement motivation and those obtained after J. Holland’s test for two opposite groups of the study

participants: those who strive for success (the higher 27%) and those who avoid failures (the lower 27% of the sample). The comparison of the indicators of personal homogeneity and differentiation is expressed as percentage and divided into levels. The contrast of mean values for both groups has shown significant differences in the structure of professional advantages and achievement motivation level ( $p \leq 0.01$ ).

Table 2.

**The Interrelation Between Achievement Motivation and Professional Advantages of Psychology Students (N=60, %)**

Achievement motivation	Personal homogeneity indicator			Personal differentiation indicator		
	H	M	L	H	M	L
Those who strive for success (75)	52	30	18	64	24	12
Those who avoid failures (25)	20	35	45	15	45	40

Note: H – high level, M – medium level, L – low level

The data obtained demonstrate that in case of the high level of personal homogeneity according to J. Holland’s test and proper conformity of the main career orientations of psychology students to their personality types, particularly in case of the high level of personality differentiation, there is the high level of achievement motivation and the students tend to belong to the group of those who strive for success. The data presented in the table 2 demonstrate that most of the students with the high level of inhomogeneity and poor differentiation of advantages are characterized by the low level of achievement motivation and belong to the group of those who avoid failures.

According to the results obtained, it can be concluded that professionalization of motives, conscious

choice of the field of study made with consideration for dominating professional advantages and based on person’s knowledge and ideas about his/her personal type of advantages can affect the level of achievement motivation in the process of professional development of future psychologists. As a rule, strong and dominating focus on achieving success is formed under the impact of these factors.

As for the results obtained after diagnostic assessment of future psychologists’ axiological potential, they show primarily the level of attitudes’ formation. Table 3 demonstrates the above-mentioned results expressed as percentage and divided into levels.

Table 3.

**Results of Diagnostic Assessment of Psychology Students’ Axiological Potential (N=60, %)**

The indicators under assessment	The levels demonstrated		
	High	Medium	Low
Life awareness	23	46	31
Socio-psychological attitude – fixation on the process	19	73	8
Socio-psychological attitude – fixation on the result	10	78	12
Socio-psychological attitude - fixation on altruism	-	75	25
Socio-psychological attitude - fixation on egoism	8	56	36
Socio-psychological attitude - fixation on work	8	59	33
Socio-psychological attitude - fixation on freedom	37	63	-
Socio-psychological attitude - fixation on authority	9	28	63
Socio-psychological attitude - fixation on money	-	28	72
Achievement motivation	36	46	18

These findings demonstrate the medium level of the attitudes' formation. However, the number of fixations on the attitudes "egoism", "authority" and "money" has reduced. The level of fixation on "freedom" was the highest. It is noteworthy that none of the students demonstrated the high level of fixation on "altruism". Common level of life awareness is in most cases the medium one. Thus, there are more opportunities to improve the characteristics of the axiological side of the students' personalities.

The results of the diagnostic assessment of psychology students' communicative potential demonstrate that the study participants tend to choose transitional type of communication. As for the level of self-esteem optimality and psychology students' self-confidence, none of indicators reaches the medium level. The level of the students' self-confidence turned out to be a little higher than the level of self-esteem optimality with no statistically significant differences. Thus, most of

psychology students (80%) have low and medium levels of self-esteem optimality, i.e. most of the study participants do not have optimum level of self-assessment of their own qualities and opportunities.

Table 4 shows findings obtained after psychological diagnostic assessment of cognitive difficulties in communication among 60 psychology students. The indicators showing the number of the study participants with strongly, moderately and poorly expressed proneness to cognitive errors are represented as percentage. It is noteworthy that the most common cognitive difficulties were "Reading other people's mind", "Taking everything personally", "Maximalism and perfectionism". However, some of the students are prone to other types of errors. Nevertheless, the number of the surveyed with moderately expressed difficulties is no less than 18% for each type.

Table 4.

**Results of Diagnostic Assessment of Psychology Students' Communicative Potential (Intensity of Cognitive Difficulties in Communication) (N=60, M, %, Δ)**

Types of difficulties	Groups of the surveyed								
	With intense difficulties			With moderate difficulties			With unexpressed difficulties		
	%	M	δ	%	M	δ	%	M	δ
1. Exaggeration	3.6	14	2.16	18.1	11	0.97	78.3	6	1.92
2. Reading others' mind	18.1	17	1.37	65.1	12	1.28	16.8	8	1.25
3. Taking everything personally	13.2	16	0.74	61.5	12	1.37	25.3	7	2.33
4. Maximalism and perfectionism	12.1	18	2.12	32.5	12	1.53	55.4	7	1.87
5. Cognitive anxiety	6	16	0.63	28.9	11	1	65.1	6	2.11
6. Tender conscience	2.4	16	0.71	31.3	11	1.44	66.3	6	2.23
7. Negativism	-	-	-	18.1	11	1.1	81.9	6	2.32

Table 5 shows consolidated results of diagnostic assessment of psychology students' reflexive sphere expressed as percentage and divided into levels that demonstrate the devel-

opment of qualities, and calculation of average level indicators (ALI) for each quality for the all of the surveyed.

Table 5.

**Results Of Diagnostic Assessment Of Qualities Of Psychology Students' Reflexive Sphere (N=60, %, ALI)**

The indicators under assessment	The levels demonstrated			ALI
	High	Medium	Low	
The level of self-esteem optimality	20	38	42	1.78
Self-confidence level	17	56	27	1.90

Diagnostic assessment of the level of psychology students' self-confidence and self-esteem optimality demonstrates that both of the indicators do not reach the medium level in integral expression. In this case, the level of students' self-confidence is a little higher than the level of their self-esteem optimality (ALI = 1.90 and 1.78 correspondingly) with no statistical significance. Thus, 80% of the psychology students have low and medium levels of self-esteem optimality regarding their personal qualities and capabilities. ALI for the whole

sample equals 1.78, which is with statistical significance lower than the medium level. As for self-esteem demonstrated by the study participants, it can be typified as non-optimal.

Differentiation of psychology students according to the level of their self-esteem optimality makes it possible to assess proper correlation of their opportunities and capabilities or inadequate self-perception that leads to emotional rejection of everything that contradicts their own self-perception. Optimal self-esteem provides a person with

correct knowledge of him/herself and based on it adequate attitude to him/herself along with assessment of certain psychic and physical demonstrations and qualities of a person. The data obtained in the diagnostic assessment comprehensively demonstrate the prevalence of non-optimal self-esteem among the students-psychologists under test.

Therefore, the results of diagnostic assessment of psychology students' reflexive sphere demonstrate the existence of somewhat unfavorable individual psychological features of their personalities, which require optimization in the context of their future career, which in its turn proves the necessity to develop these qualities in the process of studying at the higher educational institution.

In order to assess the spiritual potential of psychology students, we used O. Horbachov's technique. It was aimed at finding the study participants who are able to unleash their own spiritual potential in their behavior, studies and communication.

The results of diagnostic assessment show that 30.5% of psychology students have the high level, 58.7% – the medium level, and 10.8% – the low level of spiritual potential. Thus, most of the students have medium level of spirituality, which demonstrates the need for implementation of work aimed at reaching higher levels of students' spiritual potential.

### Conclusions

1. We have conducted theoretical and methodological review of the approaches to studying the impact of individual psychological features of a future specialist on the process of his/her professional development. It has

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been found that this impact involves the system of interdependent conditions and factors that provide achieving higher level of professional development. This system consists of the following components: activity-related (the unity of the subject and the content, common activity that unites students in the process of studying); motivational (the unity of goal and value orientations of a future psychologist); communication (the kind of communication between future psychologists); personal (common value orientations, senses and personal consonance between psychology students); spiritual (future psychologists' abilities to distinguish and choose intrinsic moral values, such as goodness, love, beauty, sincerity, freedom, responsibility and subject their actions, which form spiritual and psychological unity with other people in communication and work, to them).

2. Comprehensive diagnostic program was aimed at identifying the level of development of future psychologists' individual psychological features that form their personal potential that in its turn consists of cognitive, motivational, axiological, communicative, reflexive, and spiritual components. The psychodiagnostic assessment has made it possible to obtain and systemize experimental data that characterize the variety of motivational, communicative, value-orientation, professional, personal, and moral characteristics that together form personal potential of a psychology student. The data obtained confirm the need for developing a specially prepared program aimed at the development of future psychologists' individual psychological features that facilitate the process of their professional development.

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### ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ОСОБИСТІСНОГО ПОТЕНЦІАЛУ МАЙБУТНІХ ПСИХОЛОГІВ У ПРОЦЕСІ ПРОФЕСІЙНОГО ФОРМУВАННЯ

Статтю присвячено дослідженню наявного рівня розвитку індивідуально-психологічних особливостей у майбутніх психологів, які складають їхній особистісний потенціал у процесі професійного формування. Розкрито змістові характеристики особистісного потенціалу в контексті професійної підготовки майбутніх фахівців. Ефективне формування особистісного потенціалу фахівця можна забезпечити в процесі його навчання у закладі вищої освіти, комплексно здійснюючи його зі студентами за такими основними напрямками: когнітивний, мотиваційний, операційний, рефлексивний, духовний. Встановлено, що вплив індивідуально-психологічних особливостей майбутнього психолога на процес його професійного формування складає систему взаємозалежних умов і чинників, що забезпечують перехід професійного формування на вищий рівень. До цієї системи входять: діяльнісний компонент (предметно-змістова єдність, спільність діяльності, що поєднує студентів у процесі навчання); мотиваційний компонент (спільність цільової і мотиваційної спрямованості майбутнього психолога); комунікаційний компонент (характер спілкування майбутніх психологів); особистісний компонент (ціннісно-орієнтаційна, смислова та особистісна єдність майбутніх психологів); духовний компонент (здібності майбутніх психологів розрізняти та обирати істинні духовно-моральні цінності добра, любові, краси, щирості, свободи, відповідальності і підпорядковувати їм свої вчинки, які забезпечують духовно-психологічну єдність з іншими людьми у спілкуванні та професійній діяльності). Здійснено комплексну діагностику індивідуально-психологічних особливостей майбутніх психологів за допомогою таких методик: методика вивчення типу особистості за Дж. Холландом, методика діагностики мотивації досягнень у модифікації М. Ш. Магомед-Емінова (для діагностики професійного потенціалу майбутніх психологів), тест смисложиттєвих орієнтацій О. Д. Леонтєва, модифікована методика діагностики соціально-психологічних установок особистості О. Ф. Потьомкіної (для діагностики ціннісно-смислової сфери майбутніх психологів), модифікований варіант анкети помилок А. Фрімана - Р. Девульфа (для діагностики комунікативної сфери студентів-психологів), методика М. В. Носкова, опитувальник «Оцінка рівня духовності» О. Л. Горбачова (для діагностики духовної сфери студентів-психологів). За підсумками психодіагностичного дослідження отримано і систематизовано фактичні дані, які характеризують різноманіття мотиваційних, комунікативних, ціннісно-орієнтаційних, професійно-особистісних і духовно-моральних характеристик студентів-психологів, що у сукупності складають особистісний потенціал кожного з них. Отримані результати можуть бути використані при розробці спеціальної формульованої програми для розвитку індивідуально-психологічних особливостей майбутнього психолога, що обумовлюють процес його професійного формування.

**Ключові слова:** особистісний потенціал, індивідуально-психологічні особливості, майбутні психологи, професійний потенціал, аксіологічний потенціал, комунікативний потенціал, рефлексивний потенціал, духовний потенціал, студенти-психологи.

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