

Psychological Readiness as a Component of Professional Training of Future Lawyers

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Abstract. The relevance of the study is conditioned by the presence of a large number of problems of the professional training of future lawyers and the great importance of the practical application of attributes of psychological readiness in matters of their effective professional training. The purpose of the study is to comprehensively analyse the phenomenon of psychological readiness, to identify its relationship with the professional training of future lawyers, and to find out the most effective measures for the development of psychological readiness of future lawyers as a component of professional training. The following methods of scientific cognition were used in the study: terminological, logical and semantic, system and structural, functional, logical and normative, and non-experimental quantitative method of data collection by survey. The results showed that the psychological readiness of students to study has characteristics depending on what specialisation the law student chooses in the future. It was found that although students' psychological readiness for e-learning was high, they lacked technological and instrumental readiness. In general, the results obtained and the conclusions formulated on their basis have both theoretical and practical importance, which consists in improving scientific approaches to understanding the content of psychological readiness as a component of professional training of future lawyers. These results can be used in the future as a developed scientific base for investigating the prospects for studying the psychological readiness of law students, solving and developing problematic issues revealed in this study, and implementing them in the educational process

Keywords: psychological training, lawyers, modern education, online training, professional self-determination

Introduction

The development of social relations creates serious challenges for the transformation and rethinking of certain categories of psychological knowledge. The present is characterised by a complex educational process and rapid development of technologies. According to the document adopted on the basis of the summit “Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” of the United Nations Development Organisation, one of the fundamental goals for sustainable development is to provide quality education and motivate everyone to learn throughout their lives [1]. Along with this, there are a number of problematic aspects of the psychology of readiness as a component of the professional training of future lawyers. Psychological readiness for professional self-determination is associated with the professional orientation of cognitive processes, which requires their development in accordance with the objective requirements of the legal profession. The basis of professional self-determination is motivational and value readiness, which defines the effectiveness of professional self-determination of future lawyers [2].

Readiness psychology as a component of the professional training of future lawyers is crucial if the educational system seeks to prepare its students to meet the needs of future public demands. The issue of psychological readiness is one of the key problems of the psychology of personality development. According to B.U. Rasulov and D.R. Rasulova [3], psychological readiness is a personal education, a construct that provides and outlines the possibilities of continuous growth of the individual both today and in the future. Researchers have found that psychological readiness reveals the attitude of a person to the world and to oneself [3]. According to A.R. Sattarov and N.F. Khaitova [4], it is difficult to assess such a concept as “psychological readiness”, since this phenomenon gives an idea of the processes of transformation in the structure of the individual. Researchers say that readiness is primarily determined through self-awareness as a professional [4]. Definition of “psychological readiness for professional activity” is considered by V.Y. Drapezo et al. [5] as the most important element of personal readiness for professional development as a future specialist in the relevant

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field, including specific professionally-oriented characteristics of the individual, in particular, the process of thinking, stable beliefs or certain inclinations that are aimed at effective performance of professional tasks. The researchers found that all of the above elements occupy an important place in the structural framework of readiness for professional activity from the standpoint of the psychology of law students [5].

L.X.C. Oña et al. argue [6] that it is an indisputable fact that psychological readiness for learning directly affects the academic performance of both first-grade children and first-year students. Researchers have determined that changing temporal aspects and technical means requires a significant change in the learning model [6]. Of particular interest is the paper by G. Ilgaz and M. Eskici [7], where it is noted that the physical and mental development of a student is a complex and very serious part of personality formation in connection with the socio-natural process of development. The results of the study confirm that nowadays psychological readiness cannot but be influenced by events in the world [7]. Thus, the outbreak of COVID-19 caused a huge panic among people, including a large number of students who were experiencing considerable stress. E-learning and other innovative multimedia tools are being implemented to expand learning opportunities and facilitate students' access to education and success in it [7]. For ordinary universities, which initially used full-time training, online learning has become a problem that needs to be solved. These conditions negatively affect both teachers and students [8-10]. Lack of proper readiness makes the learning process unproductive and psychologically burdensome.

This study assessed the psychological readiness of law students as an integral part of their professional training in terms of the development of social relations and the direct impact on such readiness of events taking place in the world. Research hypothesis: the type and form of the curriculum directly affect the psychological readiness of law students for professional training.

The purpose of this scientific study is to comprehensively analyse the phenomenon of psychological readiness of law students to study at a higher educational institution for specialised education.

Materials and Methods

The methodological approach in this paper is based on such methods of scientific cognition as the terminological method, the logical and semantic method, the functional method, the system and structural method, and the logical and normative method. The theoretical basis of the study consists of the findings of a number of researchers on problematic issues related to the investigation of psychological readiness as a component of professional training.

The participants of this study were first-year students of the Faculty of Law. The number of respondents involved was 106 law students. The survey was conducted on an anonymous basis, orally and offline. The fixed number of questions was 10. In terms of content and form, the responses were open and detailed. Questions from this survey included problems related to students' psychological readiness to study at a higher education institution for specialised education; problems that students face during their studies; and whether students participate well in online learning.

The presented study consists of three stages. At the first stage, a theoretical basis was prepared, which in the

future can be used as a basis for further study. At the second stage, a non-experimental quantitative method of collecting data through a survey was used to assess the psychological readiness of first-year students of the Faculty of Law before and after the relevant educational process. Descriptive statistics are used for data analysis. At the third stage, based on the results obtained, the final conclusions were formulated, which determine the main trends in the development of scientific thought, the study of psychological readiness as a component of professional training of future lawyers.

Results and Discussion

The law is gradually being transformed, as a result of which the legislation is changing. Such circumstances pose new challenges for lawyers. In this regard, it is impossible to bypass the training of future lawyers, which by its nature is a dynamic process that constantly changes depending on the needs of society. One of the most important aspects to consider before defining a learning model is the psychological readiness of students. This is closely related to the readiness of each student to study separately. After all, readiness for learning is associated not only with physical conditions, but the most important thing is psychological readiness. From a psychological standpoint, students are not ready to participate in online training. The psychological readiness of law students to study can be grouped into two categories: the first category refers to the level of development of a person that allows them to have the ability to learn; the second category refers to readiness in terms of cognitive, social, linguistic, and certain other skills that are similar in content.

Self-regulation is directly related to the personality of a specialist, and the most important component of activity is group communication. The centre of psychological readiness is mental processes and properties. The latter are an invaluable basis for the general system of personality qualities. Psychological readiness for professional self-realisation can be defined as a well-coordinated system, which manifests itself in the form of unity of mental states and properties, including:

- 1) self-attitude, which is an assessment of their capabilities, which can be expressed in awareness of their own vocation and special personalised purpose of the individual, which contributes to the ability to accept tasks that other individuals will not be able to solve in the same effective way;
- 2) orientation, which represents certain motives and needs, value orientations of the individual, which is transformed in the interests, desire and necessity of self-expression;
- 3) creative abilities of the individual, which are considered as one of the most important factors of self-realisation;
- 4) implementation of the need for creativity and self-realisation [11].

In the structure of psychological readiness of future lawyers, the following elements can be distinguished: motivational; orientation; cognitive and operational; emotional and volitional; psychophysiological; evaluative. The motivational component is a set of professional attitudes and the desire to work as a lawyer. It acquires practical significance through the prism of professional orientation, namely a high level of desire to implement their knowledge in the chosen professional field. In such circumstances, a person expresses a positive attitude "to be a lawyer", has a penchant and interest in the legal sphere of activity, and is also characterised by an indescribable desire for self-improvement in the

professional sphere. In turn, the orientation component is understood as a set of value-based and professional orientations. The foundation of the latter is the ethics of professionalism, specific ideals, views, principles, and beliefs directly related to professional activity. The cognitive and operational aspect of psychological readiness includes such elements as certain volitional processes, the main purpose of which is to ensure a successful course and effectiveness. It is this professional orientation that is undoubtedly necessary for the successful implementation of a lawyer's professional activity. Understanding their forces, calculating them, hard work, activity, and self-control are components of the psychophysiological aspect of the psychological readiness of future lawyers. The evaluation component is reduced to the ability to carry out a self-assessment of own professional training.

Psychological readiness for activity begins with setting a goal based on requirements and motives (or understanding a clear problem). Motives are understood as the professional development of personal efforts to the acquired values of the profession, which encourage a person to set a specific goal of a professional nature and take measures to achieve it. Psychological readiness is the result of professional training and personality traits. It serves as a regulator of the success of the professional activity, a form of

attitude. One of the main goals of psychological observation of professional development is not only to provide timely assistance and support to a person, but also to learn how to overcome the difficulties of this process without outside help, to be responsible in the establishment, and to help a person become mature for professional life. Psychological observation involves the creation of a certain area of professional development of the individual, increasing the professional "ego", maintaining adequate self-esteem, rapid response and support, self-adjustment of life support, and acquisition of professional well-being. The result of psychological observation of professional development consists in professional development and self-consistency, realisation of the professional potential of personnel, ensuring professional independence, satisfaction from work, and improvement of the effectiveness of professional activities.

According to the results of the survey, 80 (73.4%) students have an average level of psychological readiness, 18 (17.5%) respondents showed the ability to reach a high level, and only 8 (9.1%) – have a low level of psychological readiness (Fig. 1). It is revealed that first-year students are characterised by a certain underdevelopment of psychological readiness, since they do not have sufficient resources of knowledge and skills that form the ability to think practically.

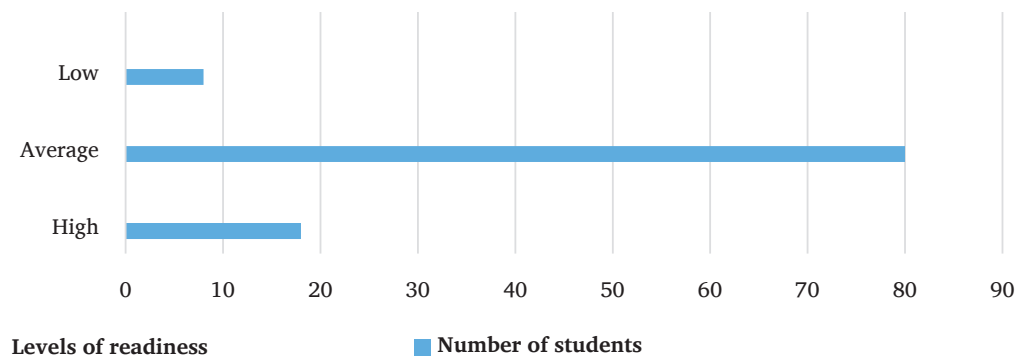


Figure 1. Levels of psychological readiness of first-year students of the Faculty of Law

Notably, 68 students with experience, for example, in legal circles or student professional associations, are able to control their emotions more, perceive and recognise their

own feelings, and show self-control. At the same time, they have lower emotional awareness than 38 students who have never participated in any extracurricular legal circles (Fig. 2).

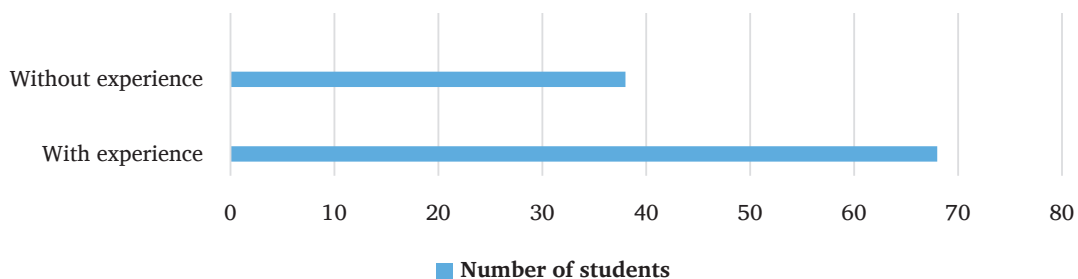


Figure 2. Experience in legal circles or student professional associations

According to the results of the survey, it is clear that first-year students of law faculties have characteristic features of psychological readiness. Their focus on the perception of educational material is directly related to the method and form of teaching. It is established that as a result of a dynamic process, psychological readiness for professional

activity, which consists of experience and attitudes, leads to such a stable characteristic of the individual as awareness. In this context, the main mission of the higher education institution will be to both provide future lawyers with theoretical knowledge and instil a desire to have a return on their profession.

The stimulating prerequisite for introducing the latest effective teaching methods into the learning process is the goal and content of the concept of improving legal education for the professional training of a lawyer according to the criteria of European standards of higher education. The choice of methods to be used in the process of teaching legal disciplines should be based on the purpose and effective approach to learning. Such methods can include: methods of covering the knowledge of the subject (verbal or visual); methods of stimulation and motivation in educational and scientific activities (educational discussions, search, and research); control methods (including self-control), surveys, and testing. According to the author of this study, one of the most important components of the current scientific and methodological support is tools for strengthening motivation for students to independently obtain new knowledge. Modern methods of teaching legal sciences have a rich toolkit of various methods, techniques, and means of teaching.

Legal education remains one of the most important components of the national higher education system throughout the entire independence of Ukraine [12]. This situation is primarily related to the implementation of government reforms, in particular, political and judicial ones. The accelerated development of market relations in the economy occurred due to the difficult political and socio-economic situation of the country. That is why the development of legal education in Ukraine, in particular higher legal education, is very relevant. The author of this study notes the problems that slow down the creation of an effective system of legal training at the state level. In addition, considering the coefficients of labour market analysis in Ukraine, questions arise about the lack of vacancies for the position of a lawyer due to their excess. In this context, it is appropriate to cite the following study: as of the 1990s, there were only 6 universities in Ukraine that trained lawyers, among which the most popular now are the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv and the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. In 2013, there was a “boom” of law students. This phenomenon was caused by the fact that more than 40 thousand people with higher legal education and more than 34 thousand with higher economic education were registered with the State Employment Service of Ukraine [13]. Referring to the results of salary monitoring, it was obvious that a number of engineering professions, chemists, physicists, analysts, and psychologists had higher salaries than lawyers with a low level of training [14]. Thus, it can be concluded that the fact that there are unskilled young specialists on the labour market who have received a legal profession provoked a drop in demand for legal specialists. At the same time, the study agrees with the conclusion of V.F. Opryshko that such statements are quite categorical and one-sided. This is conditioned by the fact that the national labour market is overfilled with highly qualified lawyers, which has a positive impact on the sphere of labour in general [15]. However, even in 2022, the demand for applicants at the Faculty of Law in universities does not decrease [16].

Admittedly, international students, when talking about the learning process, first of all, emphasise the following points [17]. First, an important point is the choice of the method of conducting lectures. Thus, it is emphasised that instead of reading a dry academic text, it is necessary to pay more attention to the fact that the student receives more live communication. The second feature is a change in the order

of studying subjects. Master’s students of Vilnius University study one discipline for 2-3 weeks and immediately pass an exam on it, which positively affects the assimilation of educational material and does not “scatter” the student during the session “on everything” at once [18]. Therefore, mastering the profession of a lawyer occurs through the personal perception of each individual student. Modernity dictates an increase in the importance of psychological and volitional qualities of subjects of legal science. At the same time, the process of becoming a professional in the legal field is complex and multifaceted. Thus, there is a tendency to develop the emotional component of self-awareness. Another important aspect is the ability to live in harmony with own inner emotions. On the other hand, a direct understanding of feelings in both work and interpersonal relationships contributes to better and more effective outcomes in the same work. Information about the state of students’ awareness of emotional qualities, psychological characteristics, personal states, and their role in professional activity allows understanding of exactly what level they are at, what is missing and how to influence them to increase this level in terms of the importance of this criterion for the effectiveness of activities.

In the aspect of this study, the author highlights the direct relationship between the cognitive component and the identification of such a trait as professionalism. The concept of legal professionalism is reduced to a set of knowledge and certain practical skills that together will allow achieving significant results in the legal field. The author agrees with O.B. Melnychuk, who considers the concept of “professionalism” not only as a specific process of developing abilities, but also as maximally and comprehensively covered knowledge in a specific professional field of activity [11]. Based on the theoretical analysis of scientific sources on the problems of professional training, it can be stated that there is a close relationship between the psychological aspect of the individual and its result, which is manifested due to the success of professional activity in general. Thus, the relevance of this issue of ensuring psychological readiness in the process of professional training of future lawyers in the new conditions of transformation of social foundations is only growing. This category, according to the author, will determine the potential opportunities of their professionalism not only in the near future, but maybe throughout their overall career. Requirements for professional training of future lawyers are formed, first of all, on the basis of determining the specifics of their activities in the future. The professional activity of a lawyer is aimed at effectively solving complex professional problems, and the stability of the functioning of legal phenomena as such.

Perception and focus can also play a big role in creating and removing barriers to change, thereby increasing psychological readiness for change. If the problem is perceived as manageable, or within individual resources, then attention will be paid to solving problems that create a challenge for a person (problem-focused overcoming) [19; 20]. If the challenge is perceived as an overload of resources, attention is focused on trying to control the stress or anxiety that has arisen (demands focused on emotions). Secondary evaluation has important implications for the change process. If resources are focused on the individual’s attention to reducing anxiety, the ability to solve the problem decreases and the process of preparing for change can be seriously disrupted. On the other hand, if a person’s cognitive resources are free, they are ready to solve problems related to change.

Conclusions

The requirements of modern society, the development of public relations, and globalisation processes lead to the need to provide a system of training of future lawyers for professional activities with a certain flexibility in timely response to the requirements of society. The development of psychological readiness of future lawyers is a specific goal and at the same time the result of a long-term process of academic training in the aspect of training a specialist in a higher educational institution, which is inextricably linked with a complex of organisational, psychological, and pedagogical activities. However, despite the increase in organisational efforts aimed at expanding the opportunities of higher education teachers in the field of decision-making, the type and form of training still need to be improved. The organisation of training requires the ability to adapt to the needs of modern times, which are constantly changing.

According to the results of the survey, only 18 students have a high level of psychological readiness. It is established that the focus of first-year students of the Faculty of Law on the perception of educational material is directly related to the method and form of teaching. Students with work experience (in legal circles or student professional associations) are able to show more self-control, unlike students who have never participated in any extracurricular legal circles. Thus, based on the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that the hypothesis is confirmed: the type and form of the curriculum directly affect the psychological readiness of law students. In a further study, it is proposed to develop a set of diagnostic methods and clear criteria for determining readiness for future activities in the professional space of the field of jurisprudence.

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Психологічна готовність як складник професійної підготовки майбутніх юристів

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Анотація. Актуальність заявленої тематики наукового дослідження зумовлюється наявністю великої кількості проблем професійної підготовки майбутніх юристів, а також великим значенням практичного застосування атрибутів психологічної готовності в питаннях їхньої ефективної професійної підготовки. Мета науково-дослідної роботи – здійснити комплексний аналіз явища психологічної готовності, виявити його взаємозв'язок з професійною підготовкою майбутніх юристів, з'ясувати найбільш ефективні заходи для формування психологічної готовності майбутніх юристів як складника професійної підготовки. У дослідженні використано такі методи наукового пізнання: термінологічний, логіко-семантичний, системно-структурний, функціональний, логіко-нормативний, та неекспериментальний кількісний метод збору даних шляхом опитування. Результати показали, що психологічна готовність студентів до навчання має особливості залежно від того, яку спеціалізацію в подальшому вибере студент-правник. Виявлено, що, хоча психологічна готовність студентів саме до електронного навчання була високою, їм бракувало технологічної та апаратної готовності. Загалом результати, отримані внаслідок наукового дослідження, а також сформульовані на їх підставі висновки мають важливе як теоретичне, так і практичне значення, яке полягає в удосконаленні наукових підходів до розуміння змісту психологічної готовності як складника професійної підготовки майбутніх юристів. Ці результати можуть бути використані в подальшому як сформована наукова база для вивчення перспектив дослідження психологічної готовності студентів-правників, розв'язання та розвитку розкритих у цьому науковому дослідженні проблемних питань та здійснення імплементації та рекомендацій в освітній процес

Ключові слова: психологічна підготовка, правники, сучасна освіта, онлайн-навчання, професійне самовизначення