

DIRECTIONS FOR APPLYING THE INTEGRATIVE APPROACH IN THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF PRACTICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the study of the directions and specific features of applying the integrative approach in the professional training of practical psychologists. The potential of using the integrative approach in the process of professional training of practical psychologists is examined and analyzed. Key directions for implementing the integrative approach as a synergistic tool for forming new integrated learning outcomes are identified, including the integration of professional activities, the integration of knowledge and skills, as well as the integration of components of general and professional competencies. The integration of professions, knowledge, and skills is characterized, and theoretical and methodological approaches to their implementation in the training of practical psychologists are outlined. Specific features of the professional training of future practical psychologists in accordance with state standards are defined, along with the peculiarities of content integration within academic disciplines. It is established that the professional competence of a practical psychologist possessing integrated knowledge and skills is effective in a specific social or professional environment and ensures the formation of a new model of psychological assistance—one that combines deep academic knowledge with flexibility in adapting to the environment in which the specialist operates. The importance of adhering to a human-centered paradigm in the development of psychological education within a unified specialty is emphasized, as the increasing socio-communicative role of practical psychologists under contemporary global challenges (traumatic events, war, emotional burnout, digitalization, identity crises, etc.) requires the integration of profound academic knowledge with high levels of emotional intelligence, adaptability, and ethical responsibility. In conclusion, it is noted that the future specialist must be prepared to carry out psychological diagnostics, counseling, prevention of destructive states, crisis intervention, psychoeducation, and facilitation of personal development—in various settings and at different stages of the human life cycle.

Keywords: integrative approach, professional training, practical psychologist, training directions, directions of the integrative approach, content integration, knowledge integration, skills integration.

Напрямки застосування інтегративного підходу в професійній підготовці практичних психологів

Анотація. У статті досліджено напрями та особливості застосування інтегративного підходу в професійній підготовці практичних психологів.

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Проаналізовано потенціал використання інтегративного підходу в процесі формування фахової компетентності майбутніх практичних психологів. Виокремлено ключові напрями реалізації інтегративного підходу як синергійного інструмента формування нових інтегрованих результатів навчання, зокрема: інтеграція професійної діяльності, знань і навичок, а також компонентів загальних і професійних компетентностей. Охарактеризовано інтеграцію професій, знань і вмінь, окреслено теоретико-методологічні засади їх реалізації в освітньому процесі підготовки практичних психологів. Визначено специфіку професійної підготовки майбутніх практичних психологів відповідно до державних стандартів, а також особливості змістової інтеграції навчальних дисциплін. Доведено, що професійна компетентність практичного психолога, який володіє інтегрованими знаннями та навичками, є ефективною в конкретному соціальному чи професійному середовищі та забезпечує формування нової моделі психологічної допомоги — такої, що поєднує фундаментальну академічну підготовку з гнучкістю адаптації до середовища професійної діяльності. Акцентовано важливість дотримання людиноцентричної парадигми у розвитку психологічної освіти в межах єдиної спеціальності, оскільки зростання соціально-комунікативної ролі практичного психолога в умовах сучасних глобальних викликів (травматичні події, війна, емоційне вигорання, діджиталізація, кризи ідентичності тощо) потребує інтеграції ґрунтовних академічних знань із високим рівнем емоційного інтелекту, адаптивності та етичної відповідальності. У висновках зазначено, що майбутній фахівець має бути готовим до проведення психологічної діагностики, консультування, профілактики деструктивних станів, кризового втручання, психоосвіти та супроводу особистісного розвитку — у різних середовищах і на різних етапах життєвого циклу людини.

Ключові слова: інтегративний підхід, професійна підготовка, практичний психолог, напрями підготовки, напрями інтегративного підходу, змістова інтеграція, інтеграція знань, інтеграція навичок.

Problem Statement. The issue of integration is not new to pedagogical science and remains consistently relevant, as integrative tendencies—such as interdisciplinary integration, the combination of theoretical and practical learning, the integration of organizational forms of the educational process, and both professional and cognitive integration—have been observed since the earliest stages of educational development. The task of synthesizing knowledge across disciplines and organizing a holistic educational space that meets human needs and supports productive and free personal development has been addressed throughout the historical evolution of pedagogy in the 20th century, ultimately transforming this issue into one central to mass education [5, p. 23]. Until the 1980s, researchers mainly used the term “interdisciplinary connections,” which was later replaced by the broader and deeper concept of “integration.”

In the early 1980s, the emergence of the concepts “integration” and “integrated educational course” in pedagogical science marked a significant stage in the development of integrative processes in education. Integration fosters the formation of deep connections between various domains of knowledge in learners, expanding their cognitive potential. Since the 1990s, the theory of integration has been actively developed in Ukraine within a didactic context. By the beginning of the 21st century, pedagogical science had accumulated substantial experience in studying the phenomenon of integration, its significance for education, and its practical application in the educational process.

The traditional discrete-disciplinary model of curriculum implementation has long ensured the training of highly qualified professionals who met the demands of their time. However, new socio-economic relations and evolving requirements for modern professionals necessitate its revision. The formal separation of related disciplines in curricula, unjustified

differences in conceptual and terminological frameworks, and the underuse of integrative approaches hinder the targeted development of a coherent system of knowledge in future professionals. General relations, connections, and dependencies are revealed within each academic discipline through its specific methods and terminology. It is the integration of knowledge that has led to the formation of disciplinary cycles and complexes [1, p. 173].

The integrative approach ensures the organic combination of various types of knowledge and methods of cognition on a scientifically grounded basis and proves to be effective in implementing the content of professional training across specialties, given its methodological foundation. Although the analysis of integrative approaches in the training of professionals across various levels and fields of education reveals many similarities, differences arise in the procedural aspect of implementing educational content and objectives. Scientific literature still lacks sufficient justification for the use of the integrative approach in the professional training of practical psychologists, which has defined the relevance and purpose of our research.

Analysis of Key Studies and Publications. In conducting this research, we drew upon the methodological foundations of integration formulated by S. Honcharenko, as well as theoretical developments related to professional training within an integrative educational context. Among the scholars whose work informed our analysis are O. Bilyk, N. Bozhko, L. Dolnikova, O. Dubynchuk, M. Kostiuchenko, V. Kuzmenko, O. Levchuk, M. Paikush, I. Pastyrskaya, O. Serhieiev, V. Sydorenko, M. Chapaiev, and T. Yakymovych.

At the same time, certain aspects of applying the integrative approach in the professional training of practical psychologists remain insufficiently explored and require further scholarly investigation.

Purpose of the Study.

The aim of this article is to analyze the potential and identify the main directions for the use of the integrative approach in the professional training of practical psychologists.

Results

The term integration was introduced into science long ago and initially referred to the mechanical combination and unification of disparate elements. Today, this concept encompasses at least two meanings: it denotes both a state of connectedness among differentiated components and functions of a system or organism, and the process of convergence and interaction among elements that results in their unification into a whole, occurring in parallel with their differentiation.

Interdisciplinary integration is often reduced to merely aligning the scientific content of various academic disciplines. However, its true purpose is to teach students how to apply methodological tools, core concepts, and theoretical foundations of disciplines as means for analyzing, investigating, and solving cognitive and professional problems. Effective interdisciplinary integration should enable the construction of comprehensive models of studied phenomena, create conditions for students' meaningful understanding of these phenomena, facilitate their resolution of specific cognitive problems and situations, and promote the holistic development of the student's personality.

A key task in defining the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of a graduate—as the integrated result of the entire educational system—is identifying the functional-content components of their professionalism, which we interpret as the graduate's professional competencies [3, p. 522]. This includes ensuring consistency in the criteria for assessing students' knowledge across core and professional disciplines—both required and elective—and aligning them with program competencies as integrated learning outcomes according to the national qualifications framework.

According to Yu. Kozlovskiy, "Professional integratology is organically embedded in all branches of pedagogical science, complementing and specifying them. Areas for improvement of the educational process relate to the development of integratology, particularly the

transformation of traditional knowledge components, structural reorganization of the technological support for mastering integrated educational content, consolidation of educational units, and the creation of fundamentally new educational constructs on an integrative basis” [7, p. 109].

The development of integration processes is aimed at fostering integral paradigms of professional education, enhancing integrative processes in pedagogical sciences, promoting the integration of pedagogical systems, and reducing the number of educational principles to optimize the teaching and learning process across all levels of professional training and to advance pedagogical science.

Professional integratology, as a subfield of integratology, focuses on the holistic study of professional education and the professional development of the individual. It is grounded in theoretical regularities and methodological principles, and its main outcome is the efficient archiving and condensation of outdated knowledge along with the organic incorporation of new knowledge into the system of professional training.

Based on the above, we define integration in our study as: “a process of interaction between elements (with defined properties), accompanied by the establishment, complication, and strengthening of essential connections between these elements on the basis of sufficient rationale, resulting in the formation of an integrated object (a holistic system) with qualitatively new properties, in which the individual characteristics of the original elements are preserved” [8, p. 63].

In particular, educational integration refers to the interaction of elements resulting in the formation of a holistic system with new properties while maintaining the individual attributes of the original components.

An analysis of the scientific and pedagogical literature allows us to define the essence of the integrative approach in education as “the establishment of connections among components of educational content through pedagogically substantiated transformation of real connections among concepts, phenomena, disciplines, and fields of knowledge.” A scientifically grounded combination of integrated and subject-specific knowledge is a key factor in effective professional training.

The integrative approach to educational content includes both external and internal integration, as well as content-related and procedural integration [10]. Integration processes can serve an organizational role in education, allowing for new outcomes within existing components, ensuring the compatibility of knowledge across systems, and uniting disciplines through shared methodology and universal logic-based reasoning. The conceptual foundations of integration in education are defined by the challenges of integrating within modern educational systems, updating the content of instruction based on the integrative approach, and combining fundamental and applied concepts as well as integrated content with integrative teaching methods and organizational forms.

The integrative approach in education is a strategy that leads to the integration of educational content—that is, the meaningful unification of its components into a coherent whole. This approach yields integrative knowledge at various levels: understanding of reality, nature, particular subject areas, individual subjects, courses, sections, and topics. It is implemented through the study of integrated courses or individual subjects that interpenetrate each other on the basis of shared concepts, teaching methods, forms of assessment, and correction of learning outcomes—thus orienting the educational process toward the unification of knowledge.

In our view, the integrative approach to the professional training of practical psychologists involves several key directions, namely:

1. Integration of Specializations

In the process of professional training, the issue of integrating professions becomes increasingly important. This integration is manifested in the parallel acquisition of multiple

specializations and in stepwise education at higher education institutions within related fields. Professional integration can be implemented on the basis of various principles. These include, for example, integration based on the presence of invariant elements of activity; integration grounded in the commonality of labor functions or tools; and the combination of professional roles. The objectives of such integration may also vary. For instance, one of the criteria might be the educational goals: whether they are production-oriented or didactic in nature.

The need to group professions on a didactic basis — that is, to define profiles, clusters of occupations, and groups of academic disciplines that facilitate the generalization of interdisciplinary links [4, p. 35] — has long been recognized and is closely associated with integrative processes in education. In this context, the integration of professions contributes to the rational unification of curricular documentation for a given profile.

For example, in the field of modern psychological practice, a competent, problem-oriented specialist is required — a practical psychologist, or as referred to by Western colleagues, an “embedded psychologist,” who operates directly within a specific social or professional environment: an educational institution, medical facility, military unit, corporate structure, etc. This approach represents a significant innovation, forming a new model of psychological support that combines in-depth knowledge with the flexibility to adapt to the environment in which the professional operates.

For the first time in the history of psychological education in Ukraine, the content of professional training is currently being developed collegially and undergoing broad public discussion through a draft of the professional training standard. However, this process is significantly complicated by the need to harmonize the list of professional competencies for future psychologists who will study within an integrated educational program.

An analysis of proposals and remarks from the academic and pedagogical community of specialized universities regarding the draft standard for the Bachelor's degree in specialty 053 "Psychology" reveals the presence of conflicting methodological approaches to shaping the content of professional training. These range from an excessive emphasis on the theoretical and humanistic foundations of psychology to a predominant focus on the tools of psychodiagnostics, psychological counseling, and practical therapeutic work, with elements of psychotechnological support.

Certain representatives of departments of psychology and pedagogy, or departments of social sciences within technical and classical universities, are currently attempting to justify the need for either expanding or, conversely, narrowing the specialization of educational programs for training practical psychologists — through differentiation among clinical, educational, and organizational psychology, or through the creation of a universal model of a broadly skilled specialist.

In these conditions, it is essential to adhere to a person-centered paradigm in the development of psychological education within a unified specialty. This is because the growing socio-communicative function of the practical psychologist amid the rising challenges of the modern world (traumatic events, war, emotional burnout, digitalization, identity crises, etc.) necessitates the combination of deep academic knowledge with a high level of emotional intelligence, adaptability, and ethical responsibility.

The future specialist must be prepared to carry out psychological diagnostics, counseling, prevention of destructive states, crisis intervention, psychoeducation, and facilitation of personal development — across various environments and at different stages of the human life cycle.

2. Integration of Knowledge

Knowledge, as a component of educational content, is viewed in the context of reproducing in the educational process the body of information that exists in social consciousness. This includes facts, theories, constants, methods, models, as well as concepts, judgments, and inferences. The dominance of information related to a particular subject area

determines the type of education (general or professional) and its category (humanities, mathematics, philosophy, etc.).

In the process of professional development, various types of knowledge are distinguished [12]:

Propositional knowledge — information related to the subject area, professional principles, and validated research findings ("knowing that"); this foundation is sometimes referred to as "declarative knowledge" (Skakun E.) or "descriptive knowledge"; it encompasses academic knowledge recognized by humanity as valid;

Procedural knowledge — refers to skills and abilities ("knowing how") involving the collection and presentation of information, as well as other cognitive processes (e.g., evaluation, decision-making, planning);

Personal knowledge — includes pre-propositional knowledge, individual representations and interpretations;

Tacit knowledge — closely related to personal knowledge, is implicit and often hidden, not subject to doubt or conscious control.

The key areas of knowledge that future practical psychologists must integrate are defined in accordance with the core requirements of professional training. Such a specialist should possess knowledge in the following domains:

Legal and ethical regulation of psychological practice, including the foundations of Ukrainian legislation on mental health protection, the ethical code of the psychologist, and standards of confidentiality and professional responsibility;

Scientific and methodological foundations of psychological diagnostics, correction, counseling, and prevention of psycho-emotional disorders;

Organization of psychological support in educational, medical, social, military, and corporate environments;

Psychological interpretation and analysis of behavioral, cognitive, and emotional manifestations of personality in various life and crisis situations;

Methods for developing communication competence, emotional intelligence, stress resilience, reflexivity, self-regulation, and personal growth;

Fundamentals of psychodiagnostic practice and documentation management (including psychological conclusions, recommendations, consultation protocols, etc.);

Proficiency in modern information technologies used in psychological practice, such as specialized psychodiagnostic software, digital tools for monitoring mental state, and online counseling services;

Knowledge of methods for organizing psychological space, planning development programs, preventive interventions, training sessions, and individualized client support trajectories.

3. Integration of Skills

In professional activity, skills hold significant importance—they represent a person's mastered complex and flexible method for successfully performing professional actions in non-standard, unusual, and diverse situations. Skills include elements of automatism; however, they are always consciously executed, involving active thinking, reflection on existing knowledge, and constant mental control and evaluation of what is happening in the current situation.

If the acquired knowledge "unequivocally indicates what and how to do, then a person, acting in accordance with it, acquires a simple skill. Such skills represent an initial stage in the formation of a corresponding habit and do not have independent significance as a measure of learning" [12, p. 312]. Complex skills include knowledge and abilities but never degenerate into thoughtless habits. Each time these actions are performed, one must concentrate, search, create, and demonstrate independence. Complex professional skills constitute the highest level of professional mastery.

Additionally, axiological integration and the integration of scientific and methodological support are important, primarily through the creation of integrative textbooks. In particular, I. Klyuchkovska highlights the general features of using a structural approach to form the content of an integrative textbook [6]: the integrative textbook realizes the principle of representing connections in an operational form; its purpose is the systematization of knowledge from related sciences and the correlation of scientific achievements with cultural phenomena; the integrative textbook implements both external and internal, content-related and procedural aspects of integration, making it the most comprehensive and didactically justified resource.

At the current stage of training practical psychologists, there is a trend toward more differentiated learning. Several pedagogical and humanitarian disciplines— which could and should act as integrative elements in the implementation of practical psychologist training content—have been removed from the curriculum, negatively affecting the quality of practical psychologist preparation.

Conclusions

The analysis of the potential application of the integrative approach in the professional training system of practical psychologists allowed identifying the key directions for its implementation. Among them, the integration of professional activities should be highlighted, which involves combining various functions of a psychologist in the fields of education, healthcare, social work, and organizational consulting; the integration of knowledge, which facilitates the interdisciplinary unification of the theoretical foundations of psychology with other sciences such as pedagogy, philosophy, medicine, and sociology; and the integration of skills, which enables the formation of a set of practical competencies necessary for the effective performance of specialists in various professional contexts.

Equally important are the integration of values, aimed at fostering a humanistic worldview, professional ethics, and social responsibility, and the integration of scientific and methodological support, which involves harmonizing programmatic, educational, and didactic content in the training of future specialists, as well as the integration of knowledge and skills.

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