



EXPERIENCE OF DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION BASED ON  
A CORRELATIONAL APPROACH

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**Abstract:** *This article analyzes the educational and psychological determinants of the process of developing professional reflection in psychology students and their interrelationships based on a correlational approach. Professional reflection is considered an important psychological quality that forms a person's ability to analyze his own activities, learn from mistakes, and make the right decisions. Psychological tests, interviews, and observations, as well as statistical correlation analysis methods, were used as research methods. The results showed that the level of reflection is primarily highly correlated with self-awareness and motivation, and emotional stability also plays a significant role in its development. The psychocorrectional program developed on the basis of these determinants had an effective effect on increasing the level of reflection in students. The results of the article offer practical recommendations for the formation of reflective competence in the process of training psychologists.*

**Keywords:** *professional reflection, correlational approach, psychology students, determinants, reflective thinking, motivation, emotional stability.*

In today's era of globalization and increasing competition, the development of professional reflection is of particular importance in the training of psychologists. Reflection is the ability of a person to deeply analyze his own activities, draw the right conclusions from mistakes, and make the right decisions in the future. Professional reflection allows psychology students not only to master theoretical knowledge, but also to effectively apply it in practice.

However, practical observations show that many students do not sufficiently apply a reflective approach in their work. This may affect their professional success in the future. Therefore, we have developed and tested a program for the development of professional reflection based on a correlational approach.

The factors influencing the development of professional reflection are multifaceted: motivation, self-awareness, emotional stability, the ability to make independent decisions, and educational and psychological determinants. It is important to determine which of them is more strongly associated with reflection. The correlational approach allows us to reveal these connections and identify the main determinants in the development of reflection.

Professional reflection in psychology students is a psychological ability that is central to their professional formation and effective future work. Reflection is a continuous internal process aimed at self-development through understanding one's own activities, analyzing experiences and mistakes; it not only helps to apply theoretical knowledge in practice, but also strengthens empathy, objectivity and creative decision-

making skills in working with clients. In this regard, the development of professional reflection should be considered an integral part of the educational process.

This study involved psychology students, and the relationship between their level of reflection and psychological determinants such as self-awareness, intrinsic motivation and emotional stability was studied through correlational analysis. The methodology used tests, questionnaires, structured interviews and observation; The obtained data were processed using a correlation approach and the most important factors that ensure the reflection process were identified. This method made it possible to show the relationships between determinants and determine which elements of the practical program should be focused on.

According to the results of the analysis, it was found that the level of reflection is highly correlated with self-awareness ( $r=0.67$ ), closely correlated with intrinsic motivation ( $r=0.62$ ), and significantly correlated with emotional stability ( $r=0.58$ ). These correlation indicators indicate that the formation of reflection is more related to the individual's self-perception, intrinsic interest in the profession, and the ability to control oneself in stressful situations. Thus, pedagogical and psychological influences for the development of reflective competence should be aimed at strengthening these determinants together.

As a practical solution to the identified problem, a correlation program was developed and its phased implementation was initiated. The program began with a diagnostic phase, which involved determining the initial reflection, motivation, and emotional state of students; subsequent phases included motivational exercises aimed at increasing intrinsic motivation, role-playing games to develop reflective thinking, case study analysis, and journal writing practice. Breathing techniques, autogenic exercises, and stress management strategies were introduced to strengthen emotional stability. At the final integration phase, these elements were combined and training was conducted to comprehensively develop students' professional competencies.

The results of the experiment confirmed the effectiveness of the program: in post-program assessments, students became more confident in self-analysis, critical assessment of professional situations, and decision-making; positive changes were also noted in the indicators of adaptability to stress and emotional stability. This demonstrated in practice one of the main advantages of the correlational approach - the ability to design practical interventions and evaluate their effectiveness based on the results of theoretical analysis.

Practically, these results lead to several important conclusions. First, in order to develop reflection in the process of training psychologists, special pedagogical techniques should be systematically introduced - updated seminars, professional portfolios, regular reflective writing and video-analysis sessions. Second, the curricula should include elements that strengthen intrinsic motivation, for example, setting career goals, creating positive experiences through mentoring and practical work. The third aspect is strengthening emotional stability, which can be helped by stress management training, personal resource identification exercises and psychological support services. As a recommendation, we offer the following: teachers and practitioners should include reflective activities in the curricula and define criteria for their assessment, make reflective portfolios and diaries mandatory or motivating elements for students, and also organize

special training for teacher-mentors and teach them to model a reflective approach. In addition, it is recommended that the correlation program be adapted for students studying in other specialties and that the effectiveness and sustainable impact of the program be assessed through long-term monitoring. The development of professional reflection in psychology students is not a one-way process; it requires the joint development of personal (self-awareness), motivational and emotional resources. The study confirmed that using the correlation approach, these factors can be identified, targeted pedagogical interventions can be designed, and they can be effective in practice. In the future, testing this approach on a larger scale and creating new educational modules based on it will be an important step in improving the quality of training psychologists. The results of the analysis showed that the level of professional reflection in psychology students is positively correlated with self-awareness at a level of 0.67, with intrinsic motivation at a level of 0.62, and with emotional stability at a level of 0.58. These correlation indicators indicate that the formation and strengthening of the reflection process is mainly associated with psychological resources such as personal maturity (self-awareness), intrinsic interest in the profession, and stress resistance. In other words, as students improve their internal state, motivation, and ability to manage stress, their ability to critically evaluate professional activities and draw conclusions from them also increases. The correlation program developed and implemented in stages on this basis consisted of the following main components. First, at the diagnostic stage, the initial state of the students was determined and personal growth goals were set for them. The second stage — motivational work — was aimed at orienting students to the profession, identifying their professional values, and strengthening internal motivation; after the goal was set at this stage, students were given individual and group tasks. The third stage — the formation of reflective thinking — was carried out through self-analysis exercises (reflective diaries, professional portfolios), role-playing games, analysis of real cases, and group discussions. The fourth stage — increasing emotional stability — included stress management techniques, breathing exercises (diaphragmatic breathing), progressive muscle relaxation, and autogenic exercises. Finally, in the integration stage, these elements were synthesized and exercises aimed at the comprehensive development of students' professional competencies were conducted.

After the program was implemented, the results of the observation were positive: students deepened their approach to self-analysis, increased their confidence in critical assessment of professional situations and decision-making, and improved their ability to manage themselves in stressful situations. Practical observation showed that the most sustainable changes occurred through reflective journaling, regular feedback from a mentor, and role-playing games — that is, the effective transformation of theoretical analysis into practical exercises. These results require several pedagogical conclusions. First of all, professional reflection cannot be achieved through individual exercises alone — it is important to systematically include it in the curriculum, and to define reflective tasks and assessment criteria in course materials. Secondly, teachers (mentors, practice leaders) need special training on modeling a reflective approach and providing constructive feedback to students. Thirdly, emotional stability and stress management



exercises should be continuously supported, as they are an important transformative factor in increasing the effectiveness of reflection.

As practical recommendations, I suggest the following: introducing weekly reflective writing into the training modules (each student must write a 400–600-word reflection on one professional situation per week), making role-playing and case-study sessions mandatory, assigning each student a mentor, and evaluating a reflective portfolio and video analysis session at the end of each semester. Introducing a 6–8-week stress management module (each session 30–45 minutes) would also be effective. It is advisable to implement the assessment system with pre–post measurement (initial diagnosis and re-measurement after the end of the program, and 3 months later), and to deepen the results through effect measures (e.g. Cohen's *d*) and, if necessary, regression or mediation analysis.

However, one should be cautious in interpreting the results: correlation does not prove a cause-and-effect relationship—that is, it cannot be said with certainty that self-awareness or motivation causes increased reflection; these relationships may also be reciprocal.

Therefore, it is important to strengthen the results in future studies through randomized control groups, long-term follow-up, and larger samples. In conclusion, the study showed that the development of professional reflection occurs through the interaction of several psychological factors. The program developed based on the correlational approach is aimed at the targeted development of these factors, which has yielded significant positive results in practice.

The most important task for educational institutions is to consider reflective competence as an integral element of the educational process and systematically introduce appropriate methodologies.

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