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PROFESSIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL READINESS OF FUTURE POLICE OFFICERS FOR WORK IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS' BODIES

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Abstract. Currently, the entire world community is facing fundamental changes and reforms in many government structures and spheres of public life. In modern society, there is an increase in socially dangerous trends, which necessitates the need to improve education in the field of initial professional training of internal affairs officers and to search for pedagogical means and technologies for the development of personal and professional-pedagogical qualities of future police officers. The purpose of the study is to theoretically substantiate the need for the formation of psychological and pedagogical skills and qualities that form the basis of professional and psychological readiness and to identify the level of development of psychological and pedagogical skills and qualities of students of the higher school of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The authors analyzed the scientific literature, normative documents regulating the organization of activities of educational institutions in the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs; and the curricula for initial professional training courses at the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The data from a questionnaire survey of 350 students in initial professional training courses for senior, private and junior commanding officers were compared with the results of expert assessments of teachers conducting classes. As a result, the data were obtained on the level of development of professional psychological skills, qualities and resilience of students. The authors substantiate the need to increase the number of training hours studied within the discipline “Fundamentals of Psychological Readiness”, but also to meaningfully change the discipline content to develop students’ pedagogical, technical and psychological skills, professional thinking and professional psychological readiness. This work contributes to the development of the theoretical foundations for the formation of professional and psychological readiness among future police officers. The results of the study can be used in the development of educational programs for students at departmental universities and for students of initial professional training courses.

Keywords: professional and psychological readiness, resilience, professional training, professional qualities, psychological qualities, moral values

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ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНО-ПСИХОЛОГИЧЕСКАЯ ГОТОВНОСТЬ БУДУЩИХ СОТРУДНИКОВ ПОЛИЦИИ К СЛУЖЕБНОЙ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ В ОВД

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Аннотация. В настоящее время все мировое сообщество переживает реалии кардинальных изменений и реформ во многих структурах государственных органов и сферах общественной жизни. В современном обществе отмечается рост общественно опасных тенденций, что обуславливает необходимость совершенствования образования в сфере первоначальной профессиональной подготовки сотрудников органов внутренних дел и поиска педагогических средств и технологий для развития личностных и профессионально-педагогических качеств будущих сотрудников полиции. Цель исследования – теоретически обосновать необходимость формирования психолого-педагогических умений и качеств, составляющих основу профессионально-психологической готовности, и выявить уровень развития психолого-педагогических умений и качеств обучающихся высшей школы МВД. Авторы проанализировали научную литературу, нормативные документы, регламентирующие организацию деятельности образовательных учреждений в системе МВД, учебные программы курсов первоначальной профессиональной подготовки в вузе МВД. В процессе исследования были сопоставлены данные анкетного опроса 350 обучающихся курсов первоначальной профессиональной подготовки старшего, рядового и младшего начальствующего составов с результатами экспертных оценок преподавателей, ведущих занятия. В результате были получены данные об уровне развития профессионально-психологических умений, качеств и психологической устойчивости у обучающихся. Авторы обосновывают необходимость увеличения объема изучаемых в рамках дисциплины «Основы психологической подготовленности» учебных часов и содержательного изменения дисциплины с целью формирования у обучающихся педагогических, технико-психологических умений, профессионального мышления и профессионально-психологической готовности. Настоящая работа вносит вклад в разработку теоретических основ формирования у будущих сотрудников полиции профессионально-психологической готовности. Результаты проведенного исследования могут найти практическое применение при разработке образовательных программ для обучающихся ведомственных вузов, для слушателей курсов первоначальной профессиональной подготовки.

Ключевые слова: профессионально-психологическая готовность, психологическая устойчивость, профессиональная подготовка, профессионально-психологические качества, нравственные ценности

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Introduction

Contemporary societal changes have placed heightened expectations on the competence and readiness of law enforcement personnel. In a recent address to the citizens of Kazakhstan, President Kasym-Jomart Tokayev underscored the necessity for a thorough overhaul of the police

force. He emphasized that around the globe, police institutions are adopting a service-oriented approach. While Kazakhstan has also announced its intention to transition to this model, the progress thus far has yielded only partial results. The President called for a more comprehensive reform of the local police service, emphasizing

the importance of community-oriented policing, where the district inspector assumes a pivotal role.

In this context, the police service model, which has been implemented and is actively developing in Kazakhstan today, can become a fairly strong link in the law enforcement system. The idea of the police service model is that the preservation of public safety becomes a problem not only for the police, but for every citizen of the country [18, p. 174]. Modern research in the field of legal psychology and legal pedagogy is trying to solve a number of methodological, methodological and ideological issues aimed at optimizing the process of moral and psychological support for the practice of internal affairs bodies. In addition, research results are gradually emerging designed to answer the question about the characteristics of a person who is inclined or not inclined to commit acts of corruption [27].

Currently, the interaction of law enforcement officers with citizens is becoming more and more active and multifaceted. This is due, firstly, to restrictive measures during the pandemic, and secondly, to the global trend of digitalization of society [23, p. 289].

In this regard, the importance of psychological and pedagogical aspects of the training of future and current police officers increases, as the range of non-standard issues solved by police officers becomes much more complicated and expands. At the same time, the content of their professional powers in modern conditions requires clarification and concretization, especially their aspect, which is associated with the degree and forms of legitimate psychological impact on citizens, as well as a psychological counteraction to the criminal element, energetic and proactive [28, p. 81].

In the conditions of the current state of society, the psychological responsibility of people in this profession for decisions and actions has significantly increased. The work of law enforcement officers is viewed as increasingly complex and even extraordinary, requiring the mandatory development of their professional and psychological readiness for professional, legally justified actions that exclude mistakes and offenses, including corruption [10].

The main driving force behind the formation of personal and professional qualities in police officers is upbringing, which today occupies a worthy place not only in the process of initial professional training, but also in the process of

continuing education for active police officers [18, p. 352]. The value-oriented educational process will allow future police officers to acquire ideas that will help them survive the stereotypes that live in citizens' perceptions of a police officer as a person prone to permissiveness, protectionism, and dependency, and overcome negative attitude of citizens towards police officers [31].

The study of personal and professional qualities of employees of internal affairs bodies in domestic and foreign psychological and pedagogical science is associated with the study of the conditions and factors of their activities that affect the formation and development of these qualities. The problem of vocational training in educational institutions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs has been considered by many researchers. However, the existing studies have not yet sufficiently studied the issues of the initial professional training of employees for police service. Therefore, the problem of understanding the organization of initial professional training in the universities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs is currently relevant, including through the analysis of the process of developing psychological qualities in law enforcement officers. In this regard, the task of studying the professional and psychological readiness of students in the initial training courses for professional service activities in the internal affairs bodies arises.

Literature Review

A large amount of research and development has been devoted to the peculiarities of the professional activity of internal affairs bodies and, in particular, the requirements for the personality and professionalism of police officers, as well as the relationship between personal development and professional formation of law enforcement officers (A.V. Budanov [7], A.V. Dulov [9], V.Ya. Kikot [12], V.V. Kozhevnikov [13], N.E. Minzhanov [17], O.E. Saparin [25], A.M. Stolyarenko [26] and others).

The results of research devoted to various areas of professional, service, ethical, and legal training of students of educational institutions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs are reflected in the works of A.V. Vereshchak [30], T.N. Voronina [32], A.F. Karavaev [11], S.I. Rabazanov [22], and V.N. Rybakov [24]. The issues of the initial training process in the educational institutions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the features of initial training in the process of personality development and formation were considered in the works of A.S. Andrianov [1],

K.V. Bogatyrev [6], V.L. Vasiliev [29], D. Blumberg [3, 4], I.A. Kucheryavenko [14], and O.D. Nazievsky [19]. D. Blumberg considers the problem when there is a conflict in correlation between recruitment to the police service and the quality of initial professional training.

Taking into account the relevance of the development of psychological skills among police officers, legal scholars study the development of personal and professional qualities of employees of internal affairs bodies precisely in the process of initial training. Thus, A.S. Andrianov considers the development of personal and professional qualities of police officers in the process of initial training at universities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs [1]. A.M. Stolyarenko drew attention to the importance of the psychological readiness of police officers to be actively involved in processing of legal cases cannot be presented as if it only involved the technically and procedurally correct interpretation of laws and the application of norms, the commission of legally significant actions (such as calling witnesses, questioning them, filing charges, etc.), the drafting of legal documents, the processing of evidence, the conducting of examinations, and the formulation of conclusions, etc. Based on actual-life scenarios, legal issues inherently involve individuals, interpersonal interactions, and human behaviour. Understanding them and coming to the appropriate judgments requires consideration of human psychology [26].

The problem of the motivational readiness of cadets to work in the Department of Internal Affairs was investigated by I.A. Kucheryavenko. In his opinion, during the initial training process in Ministry of Internal Affairs educational institutions, there is a focus on executive activity, stability of emotional reactions and mental tension, increased susceptibility and learning ability, and the accumulation of knowledge and skills in the professional development of law enforcement officers [14]. It is during this period of their professional formation when police officers react with particular sharpness to the novelty of training [2, p. 166]. We agree with the opinion that anxiety decreases, professional satisfaction and sensitivity rise, and learning interest rises when this process receives the right psychological and educational assistance [14].

Thus, the analysis of the scientific works of researchers as well as their own experience in the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan allows us to conclude that an important component of the success

of the professional activity of a police officer is his personal and professional qualities, on the formation and development of which the image and effectiveness of the entire police service directly depend.

Main Part (methodology and results)

Among the philosophical and general scientific research methods, the most significant is the systematic approach (I.V. Blauberg, F.Y. Korolev), which made it possible, based on the principles of system-structural and system-functional analyses, to identify the components of the professional and psychological readiness of police officers. The personality-activity approach has a methodological basis since any psychological process cannot be understood without taking into account the subjective individual psychological characteristics of the individual and without knowledge of objective social, socio-psychological, and other conditions in which psychological readiness for practical activity develops (A.N. Leontiev, P.Ya. Galperin, and G.V. Sukhodolsky). Our research is based on the dispositional concept, according to which the social behaviour of an individual depends on its readiness for a certain course of action. This readiness is associated with social conditions that meet certain needs of the subject. Personality dispositions have a hierarchical system of organization and characterize both the general orientation of the personality and the orientation in certain situations (V.A. Yadov).

To solve the problem, the following research methods were used:

– analytical (analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature on the topic; analysis of normative documents regulating the organization of educational institutions in the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs; analysis of curricula of initial vocational training courses at the university of the Ministry of Internal Affairs);

– diagnostic (survey of students of the Kostanay Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan named after Shkrabek Kabylbayev, expert assessments, analysis, and generalization of empirical data).

In order to clarify, we will present an analysis of key concepts: “professional readiness” and “professional and psychological readiness of an employee of the Department of Internal Affairs”. The analysis and generalization of scientific works allowed us to conclude that professional readiness is understood as a system of professionally significant and psychological qualities of a person necessary for independent perfor-

mance of professional duties, in particular, service in various departments.

Considering the professional readiness for professional activity of cadets of universities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, I.A. Kucheryavenko considers it important to take into account the psychological readiness to master the profession and the readiness to perform professional functions and notes that in the formation of professional readiness, the key point is the motivational readiness to learn professional activity [14].

Based on theorized findings about professional orientation, cognitive component content, and analysis of survey data from students enrolled in initial vocational training (hereafter IVT), it can be concluded that there is a sufficient level of motivational readiness among students to work in the internal affairs bodies. In light of this, a study of ordinary and junior commanding officers' students (hereafter OJCO) revealed that 94% of respondents believed that the primary goal of initial vocational training programs was "preparation for work in the internal affairs bodies". Answers to the question "Do you study psychological aspects in the Department of Internal Affairs independently for successful practical

activity?" were provided by students of the middle commanding staff (hence referred to as MCS). 31% of respondents said "no" while 69% said "yes".

In previously published works, based on the analysis of scientific research by well-known legal scientists A.M. Stolyarenko, A.V. Dulov, and psychologist O.E. Saparin, we presented a meaningful characteristic of professional psychological readiness of employees with three main components: professional psychological skills (intellectual or psychological) [5], professionally developed psychological qualities, and professional psychological stability [9, 16, 26].

For a more comprehensive analysis, each component is considered separately. *Psychological skills* include skills, the implementation of which retains mainly psychological content and requires a person to concentrate attention, primarily on the basis of personality psychology (and not on legal norms, not on the physical side of activity, etc.) (Fig. 1). The most significant psychological skills are represented by the lawyer's skills to take into account and actively create psychological conditions favourable for effective solutions to the legitimate problem [16]. Among the most critical professional skills, the following

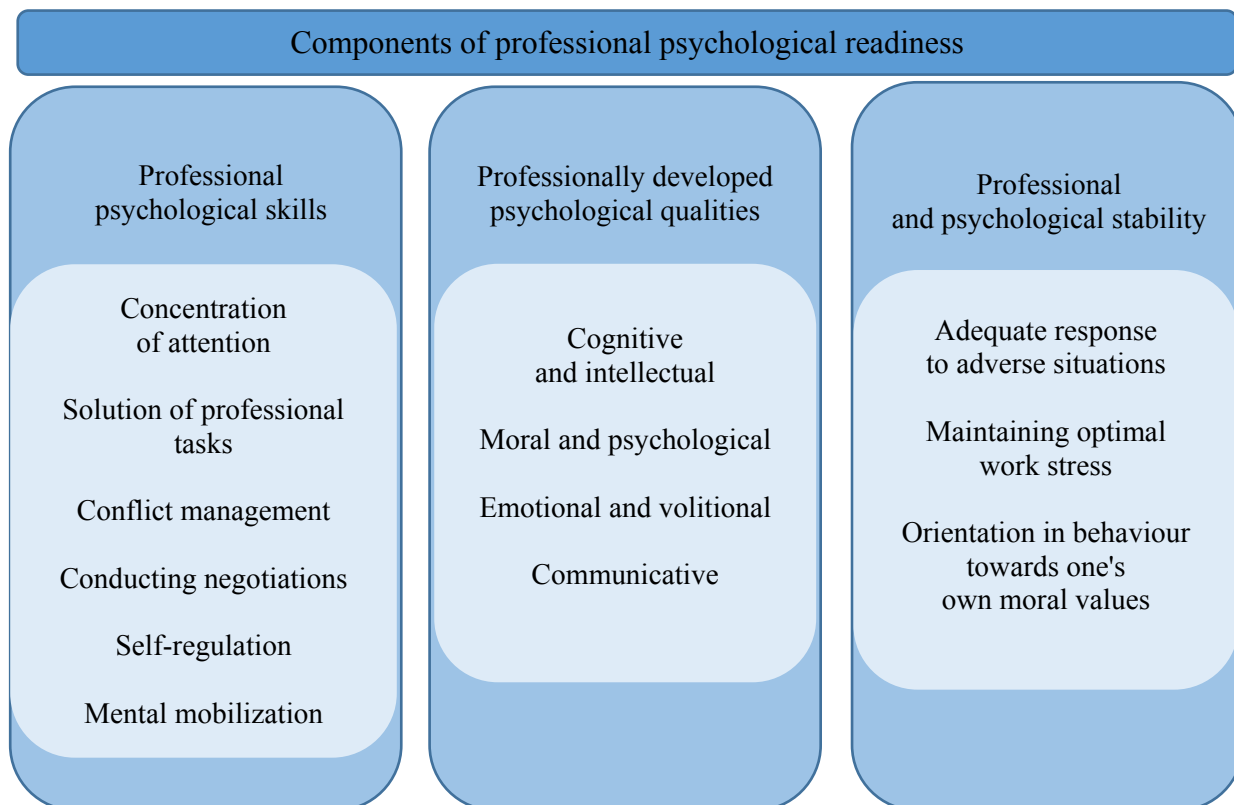


Fig. 1. Components of professional and psychological readiness of future police officers for professional service activities

skills can be distinguished: cognitive, emotional, social, and moral [28].

The use of diagnostic research methods, in particular questionnaires, allowed us to determine the level of knowledge of the content component of psychological skills among students of the initial professional training courses of ordinary and junior commanding staff. To the question, “*How much are you aware of the need to master professional psychological skills?*” 86% of the respondents answered, “*They have a general idea; 14% do not have specific knowledge about the content of psychological skills*”. 98% of require advice on how to handle conflicts and communicate effectively. It should be noted that this section was written prior to the introduction of the discipline “Fundamentals of Psychological Preparedness”. So, it stands to reason that the majority of pupils at the beginning of the course do not have specific knowledge about the content of psychological skills”. 98% of respondents need consultations on communication methods and conflict management (Fig. 2). It should be taken into account that this survey was carried out before the beginning of teaching the discipline “Fundamentals of Psychological Preparedness”. Thus, we can assume that at the initial stage of training, most of the students have not developed psychological skills.

Analytical and psychological skills provide increased adaptability for the individual to a variety of service conditions (unexpected, unfavorable, uncomfortable, etc.). A.V. Dulov believes This flexibility includes the capacity to detach from a certain set of stimuli and conceal unpleasant feelings triggered by the circumstances that have arisen during the execution of a particular action [9]. The use of *technical and psychological skills* involves the purposeful use of those means and opportunities that have a psycholo-

gical nature. These skills include means of speech and non-speech influence, as well as means of role behavior. A.V. Vereshchak, investigating the readiness of cadets of the University of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for professional communication, considers readiness for communication as an integral part of personal education, the structure of which includes a system of values, cognitive, emotional-volitional, and operational-behavioral qualities, as well as the subjective state of a person who is aware of himself as capable and prepared to communicate in professional activities. The essence of the cadet's readiness for professional communication is directly related to the specifics of the activities of the police officer. It is a set of communicative qualities and the possession of ways of communication and behavior [30].

In September 2020, the Center for Training Psychologists and Conducting Sociological Research of the Kostanay Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, named after Shrabek Kabybayev, conducted a socio-psychological study on the topic “The image of a policeman in the representations of citizens of Kostanay”. Here is comparative data from a survey of police officers and civilians.

To the question, “*How do you manifest yourself in communicating with citizens?*” Most of the police officers surveyed (64.2%) believe that they behave *politely and correctly* when communicating with citizens. At the same time, 49.4% of the respondents indicated *a negative impression of communication with police officers*. In turn, the police officers who participated in the survey confirmed the presence of a communication problem. To the question: “*What duties are police officers unable to cope with?*” 22.9% of the polled police officers answered “*communication with the public*” (Fig. 3). Thus, according to the results

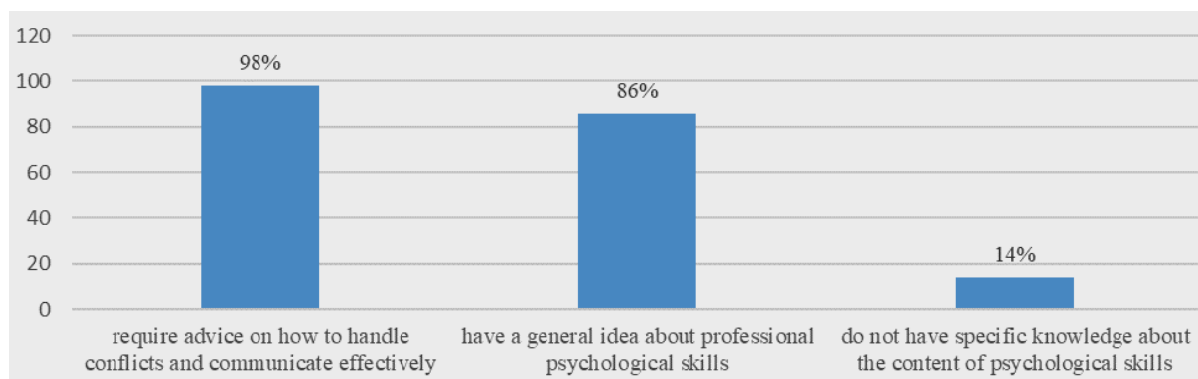


Fig. 2. The level of knowledge of the substantive component of psychological skills among students of the initial vocational training courses (ordinary and junior commanding staff)

of a study by the Center for Training Psychologists and Conducting Sociological Research of the Kostanay Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs named after Sh. Kabybayev, it can be assumed that the employees themselves feel the presence of obstacles that do not allow them to establish closer emotional contact with citizens.

In February 2021, we conducted a survey of ordinary and junior commanding officers on the basis of self-assessment (Fig. 4). To the question “Evaluate your level of proficiency in psychological and pedagogical work with the population (2: high, 1: medium, 0: low)”, we received the following answers:

a) “My work with the population is based on my understanding of psychology and education”: 87% rate themselves at an average level, 13% at a low level;

b) “I work with citizens by trial and error”: 95% at an average level, 5% at a low level;

c) “I can find contact with any category of citizens”: at high (26%), 62% on average, 12% low;

d) “I base my work on psychological and educational knowledge about how to resolve intergroup and group conflicts”: 68% on average, 32% on low (February 2021).

The analysis of the answers to this question is difficult. It is not possible to objectively assess the level of proficiency in psychological and pedagogical work with the population based on the answers of students since, in our opinion and taking into account the opinion of expert teachers, students are presented with answers with

inflated self-esteem. It is also difficult to interpret the following answers. Students of the initial professional training answered the question “Do you consider your level of professional and psychological readiness sufficient for practical activity?” with: “Yes, I think it's enough” (54%); “Yes rather than no” (45%); “No, I don't think so” (11%). At the same time, 94% of the respondents find it difficult to answer the subsequent question in the questionnaire “What knowledge and psychological skills do you use in your work?”.

Thus, these statistics indicate the need to assimilate the content of *tactical and psychological skills*, which are understood as a set of formed and applied psychological techniques:

– making psychological portraits of individuals and groups; socio-psychological portraiture;

– psychological analysis of information about crimes and other incidents that comes to the disposal of an individual employee or law enforcement agency;

– professional monitoring of objects of interest to law enforcement agencies;

– psychological observation of persons and groups of persons; establishment, maintenance, and termination of psychological contact with citizens;

– prevention of unnecessary (destructive) psychological conflicts with citizens and conflict management, the occurrence of which could not be prevented [20].

To the *professional psychological qualities*, legal scientists refer such cognitive mental quali-

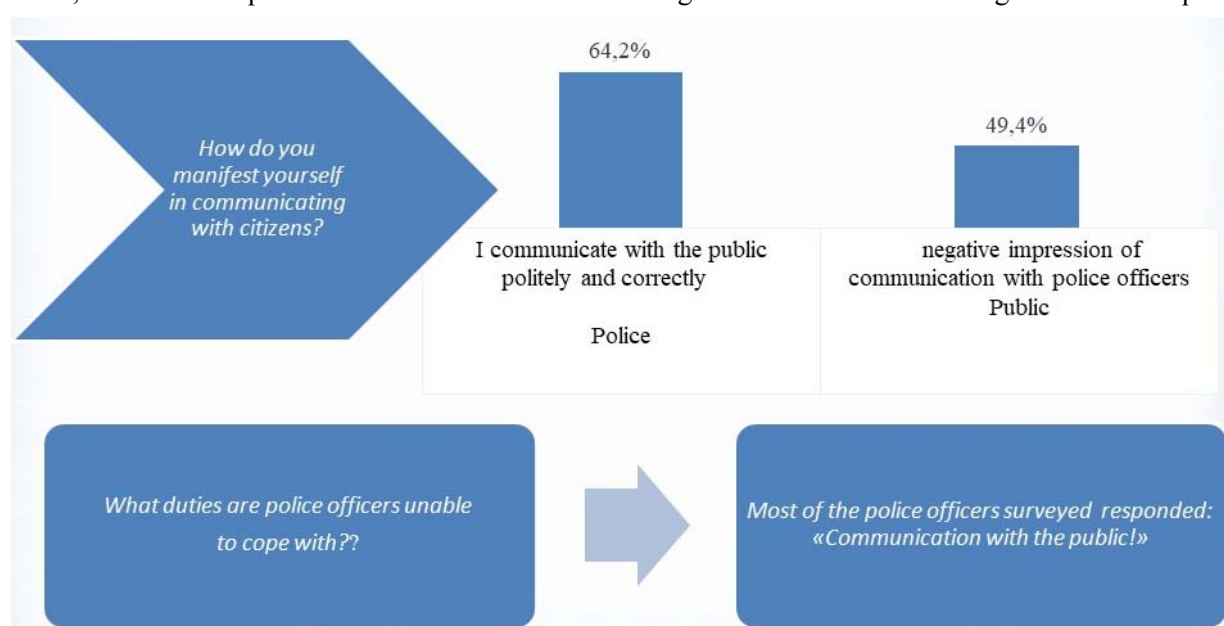


Fig. 3. Results of a survey of police officers and the public

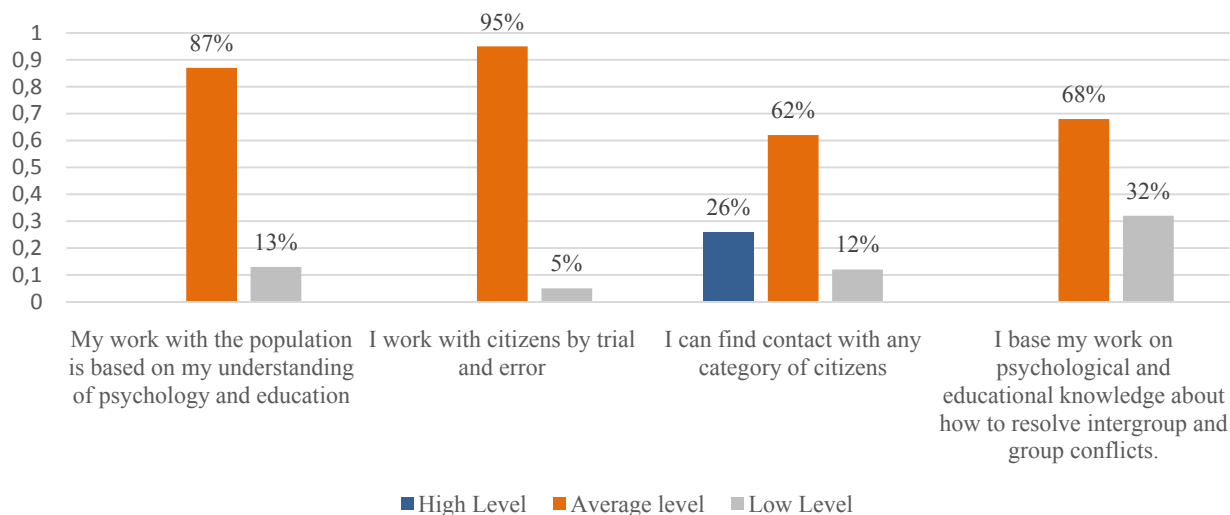


Fig. 4. Analysis of students' self-assessment of skills in working with the population

ties of an employee as perception, attention, psychological observation, memory, representation, imagination, and thinking.

The most important of these qualities is professional thinking. It allows you to analyse the available operational information, put forward versions, build hypotheses, form inductive and deductive conclusions, and synthesize information in the form of decisions on each fact of a violation of the law. Objectivity, impartiality, and critical thinking are its most important features [1].

Here are the results of the survey on this aspect: To the question “Do you know such a thing as «professional and psychological qualities of police officers?»” Middle commanding staff students answered 5%: “well known”, 69%: “known” and 26%: “not known”. However, when asked to name and characterize professional and psychological qualities, only 14% name qualities such as balance, stability, endurance, etc., and the remaining 86% find it difficult to answer.

Thus, it can be assumed that most of the respondents are not familiar with the definition of the concept of professional and psychological qualities of police officers.

The next component is the *professional and psychological stability* of the employee, which is an extremely valuable property of the individual not to succumb to unfavourable psychological circumstances of the professional tasks being solved and not to reduce the quality of performance of operational and service activities under their influence.

A.V. Dulov considered that one of the tools required in relation to the potential conflictual content of many conversations is psychological

stability. It is important to establish a specific stereotype of what happens and how people behave when there is conflict, particularly when it is severe. This will guarantee that communication continues and serve to lessen the emotional sensitivity of how things are seen, ultimately leading to the goal's accomplishment [9]. Psychological stability is closely related to emotional, motivational and intellectual, as well as biological, natural (genetic) determinants of human behaviour. In his research, O.E. Saparin presented the components of professional and psychological stability:

- the ability of a person to respond adequately (in a balanced, reasonable, and rational way) to unfavourable external factors in relation to her. This ability is realized when overcoming difficulties arising in connection with the impact on the employee of external adverse factors characteristic of operational and service activities through the chosen service or division;

- the ability to maintain the optimal work stress of the psyche for the performance of the assigned official task. This ability manifests itself in overcoming difficulties that are unspecific to this type of official activity, which inevitably arise during the implementation of any labour operations, solving service and combat tasks;

- the ability of a person to overcome mental states that are not optimal for the operational and official activity performed, without reducing its effectiveness and without failures to achieve broader professional interests [25].

- the ability of a person to focus on his own moral values in his official activity, even in critical situations.

A value-oriented educational process in an educational institution can serve as a condition for the formation of moral values in future police officers, which can help strengthen the prevention of their commission of offenses, including corruption [8, p. 382].

The value-oriented educational process involves:

– implementation of the humanization of the entire educational process in a departmental university while maintaining subordination of relations within the system;

– the priority of the formation of internally accepted moral values among students, which determine the meaning of life orientations: views, attitudes, beliefs, ideals, etc. [21, p. 15];

– development of the main content components of the structure of moral values among students: goals, assessments, and ideals, which are connected with the vital side of the activities of future police officers [26, c. 102].

The formed moral values can act as the foundation on which the professional and psychological stability of the individual is built. The problem of the formation of professional and psychological stability, in our opinion, requires a separate study and analysis based on theoretical and empirical research methods. In conclusion, we will present the results of a survey of students of the initial professional training, confirming their interest in obtaining psychological and pedagogical knowledge.

To the question “Specify the factors that would contribute to the assimilation of knowledge and the development of psychological skills (mark one or more positions)”, students (middle commanding staff) name the following factors: “the desire to change themselves for the better and work on themselves” (51%), “the opportunity to engage in self-training within the framework of appropriate activity” (23%), “the presence of an experienced mentor” (14%), “a sufficient number of psychological training classes and qualified psychological and pedagogical training of teachers of the University of Internal Affairs” (12%).

Conclusion

Drawing from the theoretical framework presented above and our analysis of the research findings, we can deduce that psychological

readiness stands as one of the most pivotal and intricately woven personality traits for a law enforcement officer. This personality trait encompasses a collection of psychological qualities acquired during professional training and independent practical experience, enabling the individual to align their attributes and potential with the requisites of the profession and the specific functional responsibilities of the role

The significance of psychological readiness for prospective police officers stems from the distinct nature of duties undertaken in the field of law enforcement. Currently, the inclusion of the comprehensive academic discipline “Fundamentals of Psychological Preparedness” at the University of the Ministry of Internal Affairs responds to the imperative of instructing a new generation of police officers. Teaching law enforcement officers how to communicate authentically with the public is essential, and this is a directive that should be central to the recruitment and training process.

Professional and psychological resilience, in conjunction with other elements of psychological preparedness, offers a form of psychological armour safeguarding the professional knowledge, skills, and abilities possessed by members of internal affairs bodies. This serves as the primary functional objective of fostering the professional psychological readiness of future police officers, a proficiency they must cultivate during their tenure at the University of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for successful engagement in their subsequent professional roles. In this context, the educational process assumes a foundational role, bearing a fundamental purpose.

The revisions aim to enhance the clarity and coherence of the text while preserving the original research content.

In the future, in conditions of accelerated learning, the main task at the university of the Ministry of Internal Affairs will be to develop and organize integrative courses that take into account the real connection between legal, psychological, and special knowledge of future and current police officers. It is also important to fully equip these courses with material and technical equipment, proper didactic support, and appropriate psychological and pedagogical training for teachers and mentors.

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