

**KAPITEL 7 / CHAPTER 7⁷****THE SPIRITUAL SPHERE OF THE FUTURE TEACHER AS THE BASIS OF THE PROFESSIONAL IMAGE FORMATION****DOI: 10.30890/2709-2313.2025-36-03-015**

It should be mentioned that all social institutions face a daunting task, in particular, to determine the main values, ideals and norms that are supposed to form the basis of a young person's spiritual world formation. Young people are paying less and less attention to the need for the spiritual and cultural development in the modern period, the period of the social systems' transformation, although at the same time they do not reject its expediency. The life and spiritual values of today's youth will determine the lifestyle of tomorrow.

If we consider the spirituality issue in the context of genesis, starting from its elementary manifestations and reaching a high, perfect level, then it can be interpreted as a stable immanent, personal property of a person, obtained as a result of certain innate psychophysiological abilities (inborn abilities), which in the process of mastering individual life experience are constructively combined with social influences (including specially organized educational ones) and, in a systemic combination, contribute to the formation of the individual as an active (self-active) subject of social activity, behavior capable of making a life choice (deed), for which a person places responsibility on oneself.

A spiritually developed person is not only aware of the crucial importance of morality in human relationships, in the development of society on humanistic bases, but is also actively affirming the moral principle in everyday life – in the attitude towards other people, towards oneself [3]. Hence, an essential characteristic of a person's developed spirituality is the effectiveness, constructive and transforming power of the value orientations that a person acquired. Without the above-mentioned efficiency it is only possible to speak about a certain level of awareness of a person's system of spiritual values. It is obvious that such awareness is vital, but at the same

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time, is absolutely the insufficient condition in order to influence the real behavior and activity of a person significantly.

Due to the shortage of special youth organizations, the process of studying for the Ukrainian students in higher education institutions becomes practically the only field of the educational influences' application owing to the content and methods of the disciplines, which are taught there. The direction based on the universal, spiritual, personal and professional values formation for the Ukrainian youth is one of the priority directions of higher school reforms, contrary to the existing dominance of the technocratic education. Education, as one of the most important institutions of socialization, affects not only all subjects of the educational system (students), but also society as a whole, through the young generation, which is a source of the social experience reproduction [7].

The modern focus of education on humanization and the growing need for the specialists, who are capable of promoting the spiritual development of the students, determine its new goals and tasks, the main paradigm of which is the development of a creative personality with a pronounced subject position, able to adapt in a changing world [2].

According to V. Zinchenko, the education system, faced with a diverse world of values, is forced to transform them, deepen them, set goals and offer means of educational activity. And the main thing is to transfer values into the status of organic, immanent formations. The scholar psychologist believes that the general value of the education system is its ability to reveal, form, and strengthen the individual values of its subjects. This is how the continuous convergence of universal values takes place, and the spiritual function of education is carried out. The author highlights the great importance of this process and formulates the postulate of the spirituality of education: the content of values in education should be fundamentally open, which allows education to be free, diverse, dialogical and at the same time steady and stable [6].

The development of the spiritual sphere of the future teacher is a unique basis for the formation of a professional image and the professional formation of his personality. It includes a system of values that determine the content and nature of educational



activity, that regulate the interaction of its subjects, stimulate their personal self-expression, that directly affect the effectiveness and efficiency of education.

7.1. The general idea about the image of the teacher

The teacher's image is presented, most often, as a factor in the success of pedagogical activities, as a tool, the effective use of which helps to build relationships with other people, the subjects of the pedagogical interaction.

The interpretation made by O. Apostol is eye-catching, where the image of the teacher is considered to be as a key component of the pedagogical imageology. In this context, the author claims rightly that the image of a teacher is “a success factor in professional activity, as a tool that helps build relationships with others, as an element of competitiveness and advancement in the market of educational services” [1,p.30] .

O. Kozlova made an offer to single out the following structural components, while considering the image of a teacher in this format, in particular: moral and spiritual values of the teacher, professional knowledge, pedagogical abilities, socio-pedagogical qualities and pedagogical technique. The scholar's considerations about the relationship between the level of pedagogical skill and high qualification, professionalism, self-realization, and improvement of pedagogical technology deserve special attention [9]. At the same time, the specified qualities are expressed in the individual style of the teacher's activity, which is manifested through the appearance, speech, expressiveness of movements, facial expressions, together with the aesthetic design (clothing, hairstyle, makeup and other attributes of the appearance), as well as through the object spatial environment of the teacher's professional activity [11].

At the same time, V. Tymoshenko, emphasized the communicative component of the teacher's image, claimed that “the teacher's professional image is the image of the professional role, which is constructed by the teacher himself and complemented by an individual image in the process of educational activities, interaction with students, colleagues, administration and society” [14, p.197] .



Due to the above-mentioned, it is possible to give a preliminary definition of the image: the image of the future teacher is a harmonious combination of external and internal individual, personal and professional qualities of the teacher, designed to demonstrate the teacher's desire, readiness and ability for subject-subject interaction and communication with participants in the educational process.

Hence, we can come to the conclusion that the image of the future teacher, representing a multi-level multifunctional system, is the most important component of the pedagogical skill. It ensures the process of the professional socialization through the image as a representation of oneself – to the figurative presentation of oneself to society; from self-understanding and self-knowledge – to essential self-identification, then through the process of self-improvement and development – to self-presentation to society.

7.2. The image components

Mostly, the scholars refer to the structural components of the image as visual (hairstyle, costume, facial expressions, etc.) and internal images, which consist of two categories: verbal behavior (voice, emotional state, etc.) and non-verbal behavior (behavior, gestures, etiquette, etc.) and mentality (intellect, spiritual component of personality, etc.).

There are other approaches to image structure. For example, the scholars distinguish three groups of qualities that determine the individual part of the image: 1) natural qualities; 2) qualities, as a result of education and personal training; 3) qualities related to life and professional experience [4].

The above-mentioned point of view is considered to be the best, as it claims, on the one hand, about the objectivity of the basis of the image, on the other hand, the possibility of its addition in the process of self-improvement. We should agree with the scholars' statement that image is a collective concept. This is the appearance, that is, the form of a person's life manifestation, owing to which the powerful personal and



business characteristics are exposed “to people”. Education, erudition, and professionalism should be recognized as priorities among them. These are the milestones on which the image of a specific personality can be held reliably [12]. The spiritual component of the image is of utmost importance for the scholars: “Possessing a higher level of spirituality acts as an indispensable condition for creating a worthy image, and self-knowledge of one’s spirituality acts as one of its initial conditions” [8].

To our mind, M. Speranska-Skarha offered the most detailed structure of a teacher’s professional image. The scholar emphasized the unity and interconnection of such components:

- the internal component: knowledge (general professional knowledge, knowledge of the theoretical foundations of pedagogical imageology); skills (professional, methodical, perceptive, psychotechnological, diagnostic evaluative); capacity for empathy and tolerance; attitudes focused on understanding, compassion, independence, democratic management style and interest in successful academic work; focus on professional, personal growth and self-development, formation of a positive image; values (the value of a child’s life, his personality as self-worth); adequate self-assessment of the teacher; the formed “Self -concept” of the teacher;

- the external component: an external element, mediated by the teacher’s appearance, designed in the context of a business style; a verbal element characterizing the teacher’s speech culture; the kinetic element caused by the absence of aggressive manifestations in the teacher’s gestures, facial expressions, and postures; an element of the environment associated with the harmonious and expedient design of the subject-spatial environment; procedural: democratic style of teacher leadership; communication style based on the teacher’s enthusiasm for joint creative activity with students [13].

The theoretical analysis of the sources made it possible to summarize and determine that the scholars most often distinguish the following components in the structure of the image: the personal image (a combination of a number of internal and external factors, the foundation of the image is the “Self”-image); the self-image (self-respect, self-confidence, self-sufficiency); the image in the eyes of others (how other



people see us, sometimes the perception of which differs from our own attitude towards ourselves), and the desired image, which is connected, first of all, with the specific requirements of the profession, which include professional competencies, a certain professional appearance (dress code), sociability, etc.

The above-mentioned understanding of the studied phenomenon gives us an opportunity to offer a general structure of professional image, built on the basis of the analysis of scientific literature. According to this structure, the image of the future teacher is a whole unity, which includes the characteristics that determine the teacher's individuality.

7.3. Spirituality in the structure of professional image

Nowadays, when the teaching profession has low social prestige, the effectiveness of teachers' activities depends on the spiritual orientation of forming the image of a future educator, encompassing their personal professional, behavioral, and socio-psychological characteristics. It is spirituality that allows one to see what a future teacher can "dedicate themselves to," where to invest all their efforts, or how to undergo a fundamental transformation.

In the history of scientific thought, two recent trends in interpreting spirituality can be distinguished. One views this phenomenon as dependent on a higher power, where "spirit" is understood as a supra-intelligent principle, comprehended intuitively through complex mediation of reality—an idea close to religious ideology. The other trend considers spirituality as a core quality of personality, an internal orientation that allows one to trace the deep, value-semantic interconnection of various forms of human activity. Gradually, a new worldview is emerging—a new perspective on the human being, who inherently possesses spirituality with all its broad, "universal" characteristics. This perspective acknowledges the grandeur of the spirit, self-awareness of the individual, the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty, the understanding of universal human values, and the creative-transformative engagement



with the surrounding world.

An analysis of contemporary scientific literature shows that there is still no unified definition of spirituality. This is due, on one hand, to the multifaceted nature of the issue and, on the other, to the wide range of research approaches, which are often structured from the following perspectives:

- The necessary information approach, where spirituality is defined as an individual expression of two fundamental needs: the ideal need for knowledge and the social need "for others" [7];

- The axiological approach, which considers spirituality as "value awareness" [9];

- The activity-based approach, where spirituality is perceived as a specific type of activity [8];

- The system of personal activity and relationships concerning different spheres of human life, realized in the integrity of cognition, spiritual feelings, and goal-setting [2];

- The ability to perceive the self within the context of the universe, as a subject of activity who actively realizes their potential for the benefit of humanity [12];

- The acmeological approach, which views spirituality as a psychological phenomenon—a process of continuous self-improvement and striving for a higher ideal as the culmination of development [5];

- The understanding of spirituality as an orientation toward solving existential problems [13].

The conducted analysis generally shows that spirituality, as a phenomenon in the history of science, is considered in two dimensions, existing in a dual-vector space. One dimension includes the religious ideology of serving God, while the other is measured by axiological content, personal spiritual development, and service to humanity, truth, goodness, and beauty. Overall, spirituality can be defined as a distinctly human, deeply personal way of perceiving and mastering reality, determined by an orientation toward universal human values. At its core lies the ideal of free, comprehensive, and harmonious human development. Spirituality should not be viewed as a static criterion for the development of specific personal characteristics or



as a self-sufficient foundation for approaching higher teleological values. Rather, it should be understood as a process and an individual's ability to orient themselves toward higher value-based instances in their life activities, thereby intensifying their spiritual, personal, and professional self-development.

Such a methodological understanding of spirituality most fully reflects the personal-professional development of future teachers, guiding them toward identifying value-semantic regulation of behavior, personal and professional growth, and allowing them to align their actions and decisions with a chosen value-based dominant.

The essence of spirituality as the foundation of a professional image lies in the integration of future teachers into the universal spiritual culture and values as guiding principles for self-realization.

In a teacher's spiritual culture, the personal-activity essence of the subject is manifested. Spiritual activity is directed toward consciousness and the realm of the ideal, and it can be categorized into several main forms: cognitive activity (accurate, adequate, or illusory reflection of reality, including theoretical reflection); prognostic activity (reflection of reality in terms of its possible changes, ideal anticipation of outcomes); value-oriented activity (reflection of reality in terms of values—what holds positive significance for the individual, aligning with their ideals and worldview); and communicative activity (expression of beliefs, aesthetic development, artistic perception of the world, and evaluation of good and evil).

The personal essence within the structure of a teacher's spiritual culture is composed of three components:

1. Spiritual Knowledge – serving as the foundation for the formation and development of spiritual culture in general. As a spiritual value, spiritual knowledge functions as a goal of effective activity, a prerequisite for successfully addressing personal-professional challenges, a condition for harmonizing the educator's relationship with the surrounding world, and a basis for forming and developing both spiritual culture and professional image.

2. Spiritual Values – as a regulating component, they indicate the teacher's readiness and ability to apply their knowledge in practice (the axiologization of



knowledge). These values provide stability to both the educator's and the student's personality, shape behavioral principles, direct interests and needs, and regulate the motivational sphere.

3. Spiritual Ideals and Convictions – guiding the future educator's life activities, serving as a reference point, and aiding in decision-making. These values include consciousness, initiative, willpower, determination, sincerity, love for others, wisdom, courage, loyalty and devotion, humility and modesty, faith and trust, kindness and compassion, as well as love itself. It is crucial for educators to understand universal and personal values, as the ability to accept another person without judgment and to comprehend the causes of their life difficulties is possible only on the basis of these values.

Values reflect:

- The boundaries and characteristics of an individual's spiritual world, their value-based stance, and assessment of the surrounding world;
- A system of attitudes that determines a unified orientation toward an ideal ("Ideal Self");
- Convictions (including religious ones), respect for the opinions of others, and an understanding of the role of beliefs in one's professional development ("Professional Self");
- The ethics and semiotics of a teacher's behavior: professional etiquette, artistic taste, body language and facial expressions, and fashion ("Ethical Self").

In Viktor Frankl's concept of personality, one can find an approach where he distinguishes three groups of values: creative values—most natural and significant, yet not essential, primarily realized through work; experiential values—primarily associated with love, which is the only way to deeply understand another person's essence (though love is not a necessary condition for a meaningful life); and attitudinal values—reflected in an individual's response to life-limiting factors such as pain, guilt, and death [15].

Spiritual self-improvement is a process-oriented and outcome-based component that structures spiritual values into a hierarchical system according to personal meaning



and orientation toward the high ideals of Goodness, Truth, and Beauty. This hierarchy of value orientations is reflected in the teacher's stance and style of spirituality.

The development of spiritual culture requires identifying the characteristics of a future teacher's personality. These characteristics, on one hand, influence the formation of professional image and pedagogical activity, determining their course, and on the other hand, can serve as a subject for pedagogical forecasting.

- "Spiritual activity"—at the level of the intra-individual substructure of personality, associated with human psychophysiology (typological properties of the nervous system) and the style of spirituality.

- "Spiritual strength"—at the inter-individual substructure level, based on the teacher's value-based relationship with the world, directly reflected in their perception of the world and co-creativity with it.

- "Spiritual beauty"—at the meta-individual substructure level of personality.

The unity of a teacher's spiritual beauty, strength, and activity forms an integral personal quality, characterizing their professional image as a conscious effort of the human spirit to achieve an ideal goal and self-improvement.

This process entails qualitative changes in the individual's life, shaped by the development of a holistic understanding of the world and their place in it. It aligns with the future teacher's process of choosing their personal stance, forming self-awareness, which generates the need to understand oneself as a distinct individual. Through professional experience, a future teacher's value-based self-concept is refined, specified, and reorganized. These values form the foundation for self-regulation, self-education, reflection, and activity planning, all aimed at preserving both their own mental health and the psychological well-being of children, while considering their personal capabilities.

In the context of our research, spirituality is viewed as a "transcendent quality of a person", fundamentally based on the future teacher's ability, first, to create their inner world through awareness and empathy toward received information, and second, to engage in spiritual self-improvement. In this sense, spirituality is defined as the need to comprehend both the surrounding world and one's inner self, as well as the



conscious understanding of one's life purpose.

Based on the concept of spirituality and its role in shaping a future teacher's professional image, spiritual values must be considered in light of human dignity and approached as fundamental to human development. Spiritual values are closely linked to professional values, which occupy a central place in the hierarchy of human values. At its deepest level lies the "spiritual self", which serves as the core element of a future teacher's professional image.

7.4. The structure of the professional image of the future teacher

We distinguished the following blocks in the image structure, filled with the following content: 1) the natural component 2) the personal component 3) the internal conformity of the profession 4) the behavioral component 5) the spiritual component (*Fig. 1*).

There are both natural personality properties and those that can be created artificially among the characteristics mentioned by us. The structure of the professional image of the future teacher, in our opinion, includes the following:

The natural component – physical, psychophysiological features, temperament, age, gender. Based on the analysis of the requirements for a teacher, it can be said that a teacher should have excellent physical characteristics, an optimal temperament, and a high degree of physical and mental endurance. At the same time, as it was shown by the results of the survey carried out among the students of various educational institutions, the age of the teacher is not of great importance if above-mentioned conditions are seen.

The personal component – qualities that the future teacher acquires as a result of education and upbringing: moral, communicative, intellectual, emotional and strong-willed, etc. A teacher should have love of the subject, humanity towards students and a whole system of personal qualities (tolerance, tactfulness, benevolence, reflexivity, etc.) and psychological tools (verbal and non-verbal, communication methods,



positions, roles), which the teacher uses on purpose in order to achieve the optimal result of the pedagogical activity.

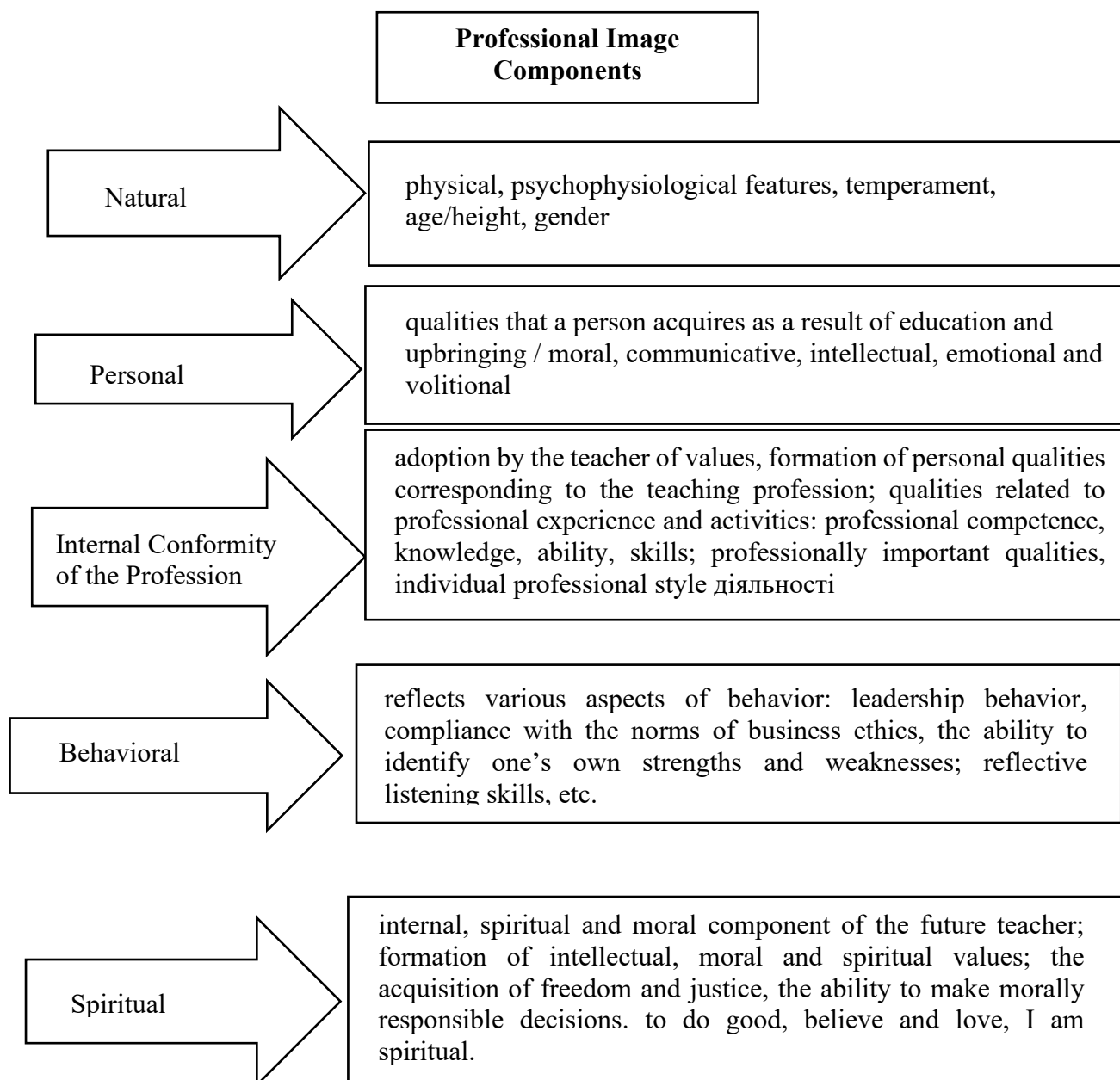


Fig. 1. The general structure of the professional image of the future teacher

The personal component of the professional image of the future teacher serves as the basis for creating the image of such a teacher, who is able to demonstrate individual originality, attractiveness, brightness and thereby conquer the participants of the educational process, establish friendly relations with them.

The internal conformity of the image of the profession is the leading component



of the professional image. It refers to the future teacher's internal adoption of values, the development of personal qualities, corresponding to the profession of a teacher. It will be facilitated by: 1) the sufficient self-esteem, self-confidence; 2) the social and personal responsibility; 3) the desire to change and constantly improve oneself. It is clear that the attitude towards the profession as a whole is closely related to the student's personal preferences, his direct emotional reactions to certain features of the profession, professional situations and interactions with representatives of the profession. This component also speaks of the future teacher's interest in image making, motivation to master its technologies and techniques, formation and development of image competence.

The behavioral component reflects various aspects of human behavior in various situations: leadership behavior, compliance with business ethics, etc. The future teacher should definitely be a leader, an example for students. Otherwise, it will be ignored by the students and the effectiveness of the influence will be insignificant, which means the effectiveness of the lesson itself. According to the results of our conversation with the teachers, it was showed that the high professional knowledge of a teacher cannot be properly implemented when there is the absence of expressed leadership qualities.

The above-mentioned component also includes a set of values, knowledge, skills, readiness and ability to implement them in the pedagogical activity in order to achieve high results of professional training. It is expressed in a conscious preference for a certain system of life values, a line of behavior (for which a person makes a moral decision and tries to ensure its implementation).

If this component is mastered, it will enable the future teacher to develop the ability to analyze, understand one's own individual and professional image, the ability to identify one's own strengths and weaknesses; the skill of reflective listening, the ability to look at oneself through the eyes of the image audience.

The spiritual component can be considered as a search, practical activity, experience, owing to which the future teacher develops the ability not only to see, but also to feel the greatness of a person as a bearer of spirituality, to shape greatness in



everyday life actively, in relationships with others. It contributes to the formation of intellectual and moral values of students through the prism of dynamic actualization of their personal and subjective experience on the way to acquiring freedom and justice, the ability to make morally responsible decisions, to do good, to believe and to love. The ability to feel, understand, do good, and recognize evil are special moral qualities of the individual that the future teacher must develop independently. Moral qualities are based on such humane feelings as: love, faith, respect, care, understanding, compassion, sense of duty, responsibility, etc.

The ability to maintain a position of ethical attitude towards the Other, even in difficult life circumstances, represents one of the highest spiritual qualities of a teacher's personality, and the harmonization of relations with significant Others, in the broadest life context, can certainly have a significant impact on the effectiveness of a teacher's professional activity.

Taking into consideration A. Maslow's ideas, we can say that "transcendence belongs to the higher, integrative, integral levels of human consciousness, behavior and relationships, this is the ultimate goal, ... to find oneself, other people, to understand something important, the key to knowing the secrets of the human form, nature..." [10, p. 205]. According to Maslow, transcendence is the highest form of metamotivation of a person, the highest need and a manifestation of "sensitivity to what is required of the person by the reality that lies beyond the person's mental world" [10, p. 295].

The spiritual component of the professional image provides the future teacher with the acceptance of the pedagogical values, readiness to implement them in activities, and inspires confidence in one's life. Experience and intuition allows you to understand your mission as a teacher, who is able to cope with any pedagogical tasks.

It includes spiritual knowledge, data, ideas about the ways of image formation: knowledge about patterns and mechanisms of image functioning; knowledge of techniques for creating a positive and influential image; knowledge of ways to strengthen a positive self-concept; knowledge about the essence and specificity of professional image; knowledge about the meaning and significance of non-verbal pedagogical communication; knowledge of working methods in audiences of different



composition, training, and age; knowledge about the barriers of pedagogical communication and ways to overcome professional deformations.

The spiritual knowledge is the basis of the formation and development of spiritual culture in general. The spiritual knowledge, performing the function of spiritual value, acts as a goal of effective activity, a condition for successful resolution of personal and professional issues. The spiritual values as a regulatory component indicate the readiness and ability of the future teacher to use the knowledge system in practice (existential axiologisation of knowledge).

The ability for self-awareness, self-actualization, and self-mastery, which express a future teacher's spirituality (the sum of their adopted moral norms and their ability to make personal moral judgments), as well as the ability to form life principles and values, is encapsulated in the concept of spiritual competence.

In modern academic and educational discourse, spiritual competence is increasingly associated with personality formation based on Christian morality. This means that its development is facilitated through the implementation of Christian love and ethics, as Christian spiritual and moral values are considered superior to secular values due to several key advantages:

1. They are more stable and universal, unaffected by socio-political influences, whereas secular morality is variable (e.g., shifting attitudes toward homosexuality and civil unions).
2. They possess a categorical moral imperative, focusing on inner self-improvement and soul refinement (in all three aspects: intellect, will, and emotions).
3. Christian values serve as the foundation for core human values, emphasizing self-sacrifice.
4. They reveal the concept of true humanism, affirming human dignity through the belief in the divine image and likeness.
5. Christianity recognizes a singular source of ethical norms—God, who is the ultimate legislator of moral law.

Thus, Christian morality is absolute and does not require justification, unlike secular morality.



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Hence, it can be stated that all components of the professional image, as a systemic phenomenon, are interdependent and interconnected, constitute a unity and provide for the harmonious organization of the external and internal in a person. Spirituality can be defined as the basis for the formation of a professional image, as a special quality of an individual, based on his ability to create his integral inner world with the help of transcendence, comprehending, disinterestedly evaluating and sensibly experiencing the information received on the basis of universal norms of morality, and directing his activities to achieve the truth , goodness, beauty and love in the process of self-improvement.

Conclusions

A teacher, creating his image, improves himself spiritually. It is important that the image does not differ from the internal attitudes of the future teacher, corresponds to his character and views. The purposeful formation of a professional image should be gradual and well thought out.

The organic unity of the personal, professional and spiritual growth of a teacher is possible when, in the process of “growing” into a profession (choice of a profession, professional training, implementation of pedagogical activities), the ability to organize one’s internal and external resources to achieve the set goals and development prospects is formed.

Determining what the image of a future teacher capable of realizing the task of developing a harmonious personality should be, we note that this person should be a



humanist, which should be manifested in his appearance, actions, conversation and professional activity; its internal content must correspond to the external one and vice versa; in addition, the person must be in a harmonious relationship with the environment.

Taking everything into consideration, the spiritual sphere of the future specialist not only determines the quality of general professional training, but is also the basis of professional activity, without the formation of which it is very difficult to prepare a professional, who could respond adequately to the dynamics of social changes and is capable of adaptation, socialization and inculturation in the conditions of the Ukrainian society transformation. The professional image of a spiritually oriented teacher, his psychological and visual characteristics, which are manifested in pedagogical activity, can contribute to self-affirmation, self-actualization, and self-determination of students. Humanistic orientation ensures educational, professional and social self-determination of the personality of the future teacher, his internal motivation, his choice of the image of his “Self”, the trajectory of his life and professional path.