Introduction

The professional identity of a professional certain category, in this specific case, that of Occupational Therapy requires a meticulous analysis of historical aspects related with the development of their practices, well keeping in mind the political, educational, social and economic different contexts that were decisive for the professional identity and that facilitated its consolidation gradually.

In accordance with Penna [1] the recognition is a fundamental notion to treat the identity, since this is composed of two poles - the pole of the self-recognition - like the individual is recognized and the alter-recognition- like the individual is recognized by the other ones. Thus, to consider the identity inscribed in this context presupposes human fellow's conception as bearer of the capacity of symbolizing, of representing, of creating and
SUMMARY

This work has for objective to approach conceptual aspects about the Occupational Therapist's professional identity, taking into account that the notion of the term “professional identity” is polysemic, dynamic and complex. Initially we present a bibliographical revision that will help us to increase our understanding of its construction process considering the different contexts, as well as the social, political and cultural determinants. At the same time that we seek how to discuss and to meditate on other pertinent and inherent aspects for the professional identity as the interdisciplinarity, the training, the competences and the professional profile like outstanding elements that are articulated, conditioned and co-related in their constitution.

RESUMEN

Este trabajo tiene por objetivo abordar aspectos conceptuales sobre la identidad profesional del Terapeuta Ocupacional considerando que la noción del término identidad profesional es polisémica, dinámica y compleja. Inicialmente presentamos una revisión bibliográfica que nos ayudará a aumentar nuestra comprensión de su proceso de construcción considerando los diferentes contextos, así como también los determinantes sociales, políticos y culturales. Al mismo tiempo que buscamos discutir y reflexionar sobre otros aspectos pertinentes e inherentes a la identidad profesional como la inderdisciplinariedad, la formación, competencias y el perfil profesional como elementos relevantes que se articulan, condicionan y se correlacionan en su constitución.

sharing meanings in relation to the objects with which he/she lives. This way Jacques \(^2\) refers that the individual is revealed at the same time as character and author of his/her history, in the measure in that the history is constructed itself and the individual is constructed by the history.

2. The concept of professional identity

The use of the term identity has its roots in the classic thought and throughout the times, other meanings were enlarged, giving it a dynamic and complex dimension. The topic identity has been studied in diverse areas like sociology, anthropology, psychology, among other, and in this sense the field of the health is a fertile field for this study.

As I have described previously, the concept of identity is complex, polysemic and it accepts a diversity of theoretical approaches, this way without seeking to carry out an exhaustive discussion on the theoretical tendencies on this matter, looking in this work for drafting a conceptual cutting to locate the reader on the existent numerous conceptions starting from the optics of different authors.

The term identity derives of Latin "identistas" and it is made up of two words-: idem - same and entista - entity / being.
In the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Language Academy \cite{3} defines the term *identity* like "group of features of an individual or a collective that characterize it in front of the other ones". For Durozoi and Rousel \cite{4} the term is defined as "character of which is identical, meaning unique, although denominated in several ways."

Deepening in the concept Morin \cite{5} refers to the *complex identity*. This indicates "an identity with evolving mobility and that it can contemplate the multiplicity of problematic and he makes reference to the term identity in the sense of ownership to a community."

In accordance with Kielhofner \cite{6} the identity is one of the main factors that describe the perception that an individual has of itself and it is construed starting from real and significant experiences. The author defines the *identity* like "a characteristic or a person's recognizable aspect and, at the same time, to the person's opinion." (p. 6)

"The development of the personal identity is closely together to the self-concept and the professional self-development, taking place a creative and permanent exchange between the knowledge and the being, in a permanent exchange that evidences the capacity of the subject to learn how to evolve and to build its own line of professional statement."

Álvarez Martin mentioned by Talavera Valverde \cite{7} defines the *identity* like "a provisional result of transactions that operates the subject regarding his/her own history and projects (biographical transactions) and of transactions among the identity defined for other and the identity defined for itself, relational transactions." (p. 3).

Caniglia \cite{8} defines identity like "a group of characteristic typical of something and that, for these characteristics, it can be identified as such." (p.20)
Inside the diversity of conceptual references described about the definition of identity, how can the perspective of Professional Identity be understood? What in fact does the identity of a professional define, in the case of the Occupational Therapist?

In a general way, we can say that the notion of professional identity is associated to the concept of the profession and of the professional. This way, the term profession refers to the "employment, ability or occupation that somebody exercises and for what perceives retribution." The profession concept is the result of a social-cultural and ideological frame that influences in a labor practice, since the professions are legitimated by the social context in which they are developed. The professional term designates "person that exercises its profession with outstanding capacity and application."

Segundo Lima [9] says that the professional identity is an imaginary construction that attributes a value to a certain profession, value which is directly related with the value that that discipline has socially. (p. 43)

3. The Therapist’s professional Identity

In accordance with Rojas [10] three dimensions can be identified whose understanding is essential for the study of the identity of Occupational Therapist: humanism, disciplines and services. These dimensions are articulated with the conception of field of professional performance. For the author a field can be considered as scientific starting from the following conditions:

- Scientific Community: A field of knowledge demands a community of people dedicated to be, to know and to make in a way of solidarity.
• Interest domain: It is referred to those dimensions of the human experience whose knowledge and service occupy their attention.

• Philosophical principles or world view\(^1\): The Philosophical principles of a field of knowledge are the beliefs that a scientific community has on the human being's nature and the relation of this with the environment.

• Problems: this condition of a field of knowledge makes reference to the problems regarding the knowledge of pertinent practices to the study domain.

• Tools: the tools are the means used to reach the goals.

• Method: Methodologically the study of the human occupation, in their disciplinary dimensions.

• Purpose: The purpose of the disciplinary dimension which concerns the occupational therapist it is double: firstly, the systematization of hypotheses and theories of the knowledge accumulated by the own scientific community on the human occupation, in their intrinsic value for the development and the conservation of the well-being and what is related with the occupational competences and their neuro-motor component, of sensorial integration, cognitive, intrapersonal and social.

---

\(^1\) Notice of the compiler of the text in clarification to the word referred by the author: A world view is the group of opinions and beliefs that conform the image or general concept of the world that a person has, epoch or culture, starting from which the person interprets his/her own nature and the nature of everything. A world view defines common notions that are applied to all the fields of the life, from the politics, the economy or the science until the religion, the morals or the philosophy. The term "world view" is an adaptation of the German Weltanschauung (Welt, "world", and anschauen, to "observe"), an expression introduced by the philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey in his work Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften ("Introduction to the Sciences of the Culture", 1914). Relationships, sensations and emotions taken place by the peculiar experience of the world in the breast of a certain atmosphere will contribute to make up an individual world view. All the cultural or artistic products will be in turn expressions of the world view which create them. The term was quickly adopted in the social sciences and in the philosophy, where is used both translated and in the German original form. A world view won't be a particular theory about the operation of some particular entity, but a series of common principles which would inspire theories or models by all the levels: an idea of the structure of the world, which forms the mark or paradigm for the remaining ideas. This way, it belongs to the scope of the philosophy traditionally called metaphysic. However, a world view is not an explicit philosophic product neither it depends on one; it can be more or less rigorous, completed and intellectually coherent.
• Background of accumulated knowledge: This constitution of a field of knowledge refers to the collection of data, hypotheses, theories and methods obtained by the scientific community and reasonably true or effective.

• Society: A field of knowledge needs that the society supports, accepts or at least tolerates the actions of the members of the community, in such a way that provides him/her the means and offers him/her the necessary freedom to investigate or facilitate the exercise of his/her activities.

• Ethos - It represents the attitudes and peculiar posture of the community with regard to itself, to the others and the environment." (p. 38- 45)

The conditions described by Rojas, configure and determine the comprehension of the constituent elements of the occupational therapist's professional actuation field. Pardo (1997), mentioned in Caniglia [8]... "he identifies four factors for the constitution of a profession: legislation, ethic, study object, procedures and techniques." (p. 29)

Still on the concept of professional field, Drummond [11] it stands out that this concept is understood as a social space, where takes place material and symbolic goods; this happens for the structuring of an own language that provides him/her a relative autonomy, in the measure that is averaged by the dominant principles of the society.

In accordance with Caniglia [8] the professional training is the gradual process which offers minimum fundamental conditions for the exercise of one profession. (p. 29)
Kielhofner [6] refers that the professional identity of the Occupational Therapy is based in the paradigms* which fix the members of a profession and provides them a sense of ownership and public collective identity." (p. 265). The professional identity is conceived as an individual entity construed in relation to a work space and a professional reference group. For the author the occupation is understood as center of the paradigm of the Occupational Therapy, standing out to the discipline like:

- Exclusively interested in the paper of the occupation in the life and the human being's well-being.
- Focused in the solution of problems which appear with the personal limitations, the factors of the atmosphere that avoid or threaten the participation in the occupations of the daily life or both.
- A practice that uses the participation in occupations as therapeutic agent. (p. 266)

This focus on the discipline remarks the importance for the development of a professional identity. The professional identity is, therefore, determined by the origin of the discipline, its roles, its basics and values.

In accordance with Medeiros [12], the Occupational Therapist's professional actuation in some contexts, has been enough diversified, so much in what refers to the techniques used, as much as in relation to the theories that base their interventions. In certain way, this situation has hindered the comprehension of its identity in its professional and assistance environment. However, this situation can be considered as a positive aspect, in the measure in that this apparent fragility characterizes a diversity of possibilities for the profession. This multiplicity of cuttings in the field of the Occupational Therapy described also by Galheigo [13] implies agreement with Mangia [14] relation with

* The concept of professional paradigm referred by Kielhofner is based on the original work of Kuhn (1970). “the members of a discipline are gathered by a shared vision”
a discursive diversity that provokes a significant delocalization in the traditional disciplinary field favoring and foster an interdisciplinary dialogue outstanding and complex.

The emphasis of some questions resides in: Which Occupational Therapist do we want to form? Which are the general and basic competences required for the professional exercise?

We consider important to deepen the reflections on the Occupational Therapist's education based on the comprehension of a plural, elaborated, articulate, contextualized knowledge which presents other variables like the disciplinary knowledge, curricular knowledge, the experience and the construction of the knowledge. These elements contribute for the critical reflection on the performance field, the Professional Identity and the production of knowledge. It is necessary to highlight that all these aspects receive cultural, political, epistemological, educational influences acquired and cultivated in the scope of the institutional practices and of the social relationships.

Thus, to meditate on the education requires an evaluation with approach of the curricular configuration of the educational programs, starting from a global and integral vision of the process of knowledge and the effective power for its implantation.

4. Professional Profile and Competences

The professional profile has like a role to guide the construction of the curriculum, to sustain the decisions taken and to be a referent for the permanent dialog among the institutional education efforts, the work world and the own practitioners of the profession.

Zita [16] makes reference to the education of the occupational therapists in the XXI century, highlighting this document where it is remarked what follows:

“The Educational Programs must adapt to the context, to their specific necessities in subjects like health and well-being and to their traditions and values like significant occupations which can give answers to the local problems and to satisfy the national and international expectations about the quality of the professional practice." (p. 42)

In accordance with Hahn and Lopes [17] "the pillar which sustains the educational proposal for the training of the Occupational Therapists is based on the philosophical comprehension of Occupation, including its nature and multiples meanings, the cultural comprehension of one self and the diverse possibilities of problems and/or satisfactions experienced by people in relation to its insertion or not in the different occupations." (p. 126)

Drummond [11] refers that the "professional training is directly related to certain forms of perception of the professions and their work fields, forms created and incorporated by the educators, professionals, associations and other organizational levels of these professionals." (p.2) In this perspective, drafting a professional profile is necessarily linked to the delimitation of frontier, convergence criminals, hierarchy established in the production of the knowledge and for the legitimating of the practices and of the professional competences.
In literature we are going to find several connotations for the competence concept like we present below. The dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy \[3\] describes the term like being "Know-how, aptitude, suitability to make something or to intervene in a certain matter." This term comes from the Latin *competent.i.a.*

In the scope of the Occupational Therapy Kielhofner \[6\] describes that the conceptual basics of the discipline provide to occupational therapists the identity and professional competences. Corvalán and Hawes (2005) mentioned by Fugellie B, Rodríguez E, Yupaqui A \[18\] highlight certain elements characteristics to the concept of competences:

"In first place the knowledge, the procedures and the attitudes conclude; another aspect remarks that they are only defined with regard to its application in a performance, a third point says relation with the experience, which is important in terms of confirmation and evaluation, and finally the context, the one that defines in certain way the efficacy of the performance; it explains that a competition can be evidenced depending on the context in which it is applied (...) The capacity of the individual to mobilize knowledge, procedures, and attitudes, applied to different situations, so much daily as professionals, with the purpose of contributing to the quality of its personal life and of the society. ( p. 5-6)

A educational focus based on competences responds on one hand to current scenarios where, who performances a work should have the capacity to foresee or to solve the problems that are presented; and on the other hand, to respond to the investigations on the learning and, therefore, the educational focus proposes an organization that favors the significant and durable learning.
The discussion of TUNING project during the encounter of educational of the programs of Latin American Occupational Therapy in the mark of the VI Argentinean Congress and VII Latin American Congress of Occupational Therapy made possible to open a debate about the specificities of the education programs existent today, and also to know the proposal developed with the countries of the European Community, about the used methodology, the professional profile, procedures, terminologist, description of professional competences and results.

Another aspect to be described on the competences refers to its classification. These can be classified as general and specific ones. In this sense Garagorri [19] defines general competences such as those that are nuclear and common to all the disciplinary areas and specific those that are applied to a situation or a family of situations inside a particular context. We have seen here that there are different definitions; however, inside this diversity you can recognize some nuclear common elements.

(.) "The competences, in accordance with the proposal of the Commission of the European Communities (2005), are those that all the people specify for its personal realization and development, such as for the active citizen, the social inclusion and the employment." (p.49)

From this point of view, the curriculum based on competences should articulate and combine experiences and knowledge. In our opinion, in order to be competent in something it is necessary to use in combined or coordinated way theoretical conceptual knowledge, abilities, procedures or the named applicative knowledge. This way, the professional competition is given by two aspects that we consider relevant, which are the capacity to solve the problems characteristic of the performance field and the more effective or pertinent way of solving the problem or task. Thus, besides the conceptual discussion on the competences, becomes necessary to discuss the trajectory in the development of the competences. In this sense it is worth to place some inquiries: how to
develop competences for a professional full practice? In which way the development of the competences can involve to reach better performance levels?

We highlight the importance that the associations of Occupational Therapy have in their contexts for the development of the profession of Occupational Therapy in the diverse performance fields, professional exercise, as also the articulation with the programs in the formulation of their study plans, definition of competences and abilities.

It is necessary here to remark that the World Federation of Occupational Therapists - WFOT and other regional groups in the world scenario as the Council of Occupational Therapists for the European Countries– COTEC, Latin American Confederation of Occupational Therapists– CLATO (as its acronym in Spanish), the European Network of Occupational Therapy in Higher Education– ENOTHE are systematically worrying with the professional education of the occupational therapists promoting discussions about the specificities in their regional contexts.

Specifically in Brazil the curricular guidelines of the educational programs of Occupational Therapy passed a wide debate on the essential aspects of the Occupational Therapists’ education, emphasizing the definition of study topics, professional profile, competences and abilities and the workload contemplating at least 1000 hours of training in service, in consonance with the World Federation of Occupational Therapists.

Santos [20] refers that "the Spanish Occupational Therapy assumed the challenge of adapting the education of Occupational Therapy to the principles of the European convergence and to the quality policies that are modulated from "European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education– ENQA." (p. 24).
Furthermore it is remarkable the formulation and integration of the professional competences carried out by the National Conference of Directors of University Schools of Occupational Therapy– CNDEUTO (as its acronym in Spanish), together with the competences of the European Network of Occupational Therapy IN Higher Education– ENOTHE, contributing for the quality of the education of the programs and the occupational therapist's professional exercise.

This way

5. Considerations

Approaching to the topic of the professional identity allows us to use a lens on its historicity, the constituent elements which take part in their constitution and it allows us to analyze its specificity being about the occupational therapist's professional identity.

We set up initially that all process of construction of professional identity is influenced well by a group of factors that take into account the dialectical relation with the society, an historical period and a culture that are configuring the professional identity, such as the practices developed in the different fields of the professional exercise.

In an analytical perspective the professional identity is not something static; on the contrary it is dynamic and flexible. Thus, the way the professional exercises his/her profession presupposes a theoretical and methodological clip which determines a group of procedures and strategies.

Starting from the authors described in this work, it is verified that the construction of the Occupational Therapist's Professional Identity settles down starting from a narrow interaction among personal and social dimensions.
To discuss the Occupational Therapist's Professional Identity implies therefore, to meditate and to analyze diverse aspects that are related to the professional profile, educational programs of training, general and specific competences on the performance field, production of knowledge that characterizes the complexity of the topic. In this sense, the purpose of this work has been the one of presenting some elements that guide us and that can contribute to the enlargement of the theoretical referential on this matter, such as for achieving the investigation on this field.

The thematic provides a group of inquiries that do not have conclusive answer, but signalize inherent aspects in an objective way and outstanding on the Occupational Therapist's professional identity which can foment the ethic and critical debate in our professional community.
References


