

Personal and Group Professional Identity in the 21st Century

Case Study: The School Counseling Profession

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Received: March 3, 2021 Accepted: April 11, 2021 Online Published: April 13, 2021

doi:10.5539/jel.v10n3p64 URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v10n3p64>

Abstract

The current study focuses on the concept of professional identity in the school counseling profession, its definition and measurement. According to the definition in this study, the concept of “professional identity” is divided in two: personal professional identity, which is the practitioner’s sense of belonging to and solidarity with the profession, and group professional identity, which includes the features attributed to the profession, both by those who belong to it and by those who do not practice it, and makes it possible to discern between professions.

The school counseling profession, occupied mainly by women, is contending with a lack of clarity regarding its role definition, role boundaries, and demands. Therefore, despite the change in the status of the profession in recent years, various issues impede the group professional identity of school counseling and the personal professional identity of its practitioners. This study is the first to examine the professional identity of school counselors on two levels: personal and group, among school counselors in Israel.

The study included 174 school counselors who completed two professional identity scales constructed for the purpose of the study. Each scale underwent factor analysis, and a significant association was found between the two scales and the factors they comprised. The research findings indicate that the personal professional identity of school counselors is affected by their group professional identity, and vice versa.

The research findings indicate the need to distinguish in future studies between personal and group professional identity, both in the school counseling profession and in other professions, particularly in a world characterized by professional mobility where current professions will become irrelevant while others will be in demand and there may be a need to define the personal and group professional identity of workers.

Keywords: professional identity, group professional identity, school counseling profession, professional efficacy, professional involvement

1. Introduction: What Is Professional Identity?

Forming one’s professional identity is part of the process of professional development that begins with training for the profession and continues throughout one’s professional career (Brott & Myers, 1999). Professional identity is complex, personal, and varies between those practicing the profession and is a continuous process in which the experiences of practitioners are interpreted and it is forged by many factors (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Rhoades, 2007).

The definitions and interpretations of professional identity in the extant literature are contested (Dobrow & Higgins, 2005; Sutherland & Markauskaite, 2012). Geijsel and Meijers (2005) and Gee (2000), defines professional identity as an identity which is shaped according to the (close and remote) external environment’s perception of the professional and the professional’s self-perception. Similar to other components of one’s identity, the shaping of professional identity depends on the social context (such as the social status of the individual and of the profession), the professional’s interaction with others (clients, colleagues, and other professionals), and the self-interpretation of professional experiences (Gee, 2000; Geijsel & Meijers, 2005). Therefore, professional identity has two interconnected components: the interpersonal (group professional identity) which relates to the culture, knowledge, skills, values and beliefs of a profession that the individual has acquired; and the intrapersonal (personal professional identity) which considers the individual’s perception of

themselves in the context of their profession. Professional identity facilitates gathering and understanding the knowledge and skills associated with professional work as well as the values and dispositions of professions (Sutherland & Markauskaite, 2012).

For the first time, in this study we discern in a quantitative research, two levels of professional identity: personal professional identity and professional identity on the group level.

Personal professional identity is part of one's self-identity and it is the answer to the question "Who am I, or what am I, as a professional?" This is the practitioner's sense of belonging to and solidarity with the profession (Tickle, 1999). Personal professional identity is affected by the cultural values, expectations, perceptions, and attitudes at the core of the profession's identity. All these are embraced by practitioners in a process of professional socialization reinforced by interactions with professional colleagues, other professionals, and the general public (Kozminsky, 2008). A practitioner's well-established personal professional identity will help him define his field and role, reach professional decisions, develop professionally (Brott & Myers, 1999), and facilitate the gathering and understanding of work-related knowledge and skills (Sutherland & Markauskaite, 2012).

One's personal professional identity is associated with professional functioning (Watson, 2006). A strong sense of professional identity provides a sense of stability, confidence, and pride in one's practice (LaFleur, 2007). Studies show that well-established personal professional identity affects one's work values, capabilities, and knowledge of the profession, the sense of unity among colleagues in the same profession, assuming personal responsibility, ethical and moral conduct (Brott & Myers, 1999; Gale & Auston, 2003; Hiebert & Uhlemann, 1993; Van Zandt, 1990), and growth as a person and as a professional (Gazzola & Smith, 2007).

Group professional identity (namely, how society recognizes a certain profession) is a collection of expectations and characteristics ascribed to the profession both by those who belong to it and by those who do not practice it, enabling distinction between groups (Stout, 2004). The clearer the perception of the profession's unique features by its practitioners, professionals in adjacent fields, supplementary professionals (those in contact with the specific profession and with all those in adjacent fields), and the general public, it may be said to have a more cohesive group professional identity (Erhard, 2014). Professional identity on the group level affects professional status and practitioners' appreciation of the historical sources and building blocks that comprise the profession (Gale & Austin, 2003).

Group professional identity derives from a developmental process that facilitates gradually increasing comprehension of the profession's essence by practitioners and allows them to explain and express this essence to others outside the occupation (Brott & Myers, 1999; Smith & Robinson, 1995). Indeed, studies on professional identity often focus on the question of how individuals relate to the professional group with which they are associated (Elsbach, 1999; Pratt & Foreman, 2000). Group professional identity affects one's beliefs regarding oneself and one's self-definition. A person who identifies with his profession will grasp the profession's values as his own and see himself as an inseparable part of the profession and the profession as an inseparable part of himself (Pratt, 1998). Moreover, strong group professional identity has been found to result in pride and satisfaction by those who chose the profession (Remley & Herlihy, 2007). In addition, the strength of a group professional identity is linked to the strength of belonging and personal professional identity which have a positive impact on career success (Slay & Smith, 2011), and in contrast, individuals who work in professions with insufficiently cohesive group professional identity, have difficulty establishing a strong personal professional identity and identifying with the profession and seeing it as part of themselves (Hall, 1968).

Remley and Herlihy (2005) found that while high group professional identity has consequences for the knowledge of practitioners concerning the basic philosophy of the profession and of the services it provides, low group professional identity has a direct effect on the work quality of practitioners, leading in turn to a drop in the image of practitioners. Hence, this study is the first to examine the professional identity of school counselors on two levels: personal and professional, among school counselors in Israel. The study might have relevant significance for a world characterized by professional mobility, when current professions will no longer be relevant, and others will be in demand.

2. The School Counselor Profession: Personal Professional Identity and Group Professional Identity

According to the definition determined by Israel's Ministry of Education, school counseling is a professional service provided within the school and intended to promote the functioning and mental well-being of students and educational staff (SHEFI- Psychological counseling service).

Employment of counselors in schools: Since 2000 the status of school counseling in Israel changed from a task

assigned to teachers and other professionals at schools, who devoted several hours a week to providing students with direction and professional counseling, to a profession that requires a Master's degree, where a counseling license is predicated on at least two years of experience in the profession (Erhard, 2014). The role of school counselor in Israel, occupied mainly by women, is complex, intricate, and not unequivocal. Therefore, the definition of the counselor's role and the type of position differs and is adapted to the needs of each school. The school counselor's employment terms and job are affiliated with the school management and its patterns of counseling utilization, which are annually subject to change and negotiations (Erhard, 2014).

The counselor's fields of occupation: Counselors work according to the principles of the systemic conception, namely, they must advance students' well-being within the educational organization while supporting all the other elements in the system. Counselors are required to fill many roles in varied fields of activity. They work routinely with extensive target populations in the school (principals, coordinators, teacher staff, homeroom teachers) and with relevant elements outside the school (psychologists, social workers, and other community workers) (Deshevsky, 2009). The school counselor is responsible for helping and integrating students with special needs, operating intervention programs, placement and construction of classrooms, filling forms, as well as individual counseling of struggling students and topical student groups (Cobia & Henderson, 2003; Erhard, 2014; Erhard & Klingman, 2004). In addition, school counselors are also teachers and they must hold classes at the school to a varying extent according to the school's regulations (Deshevsky, 2009).

Studies from around the world also attest to the considerable burden on counselors, who are required to carry out a large number of tasks (Bardhoshi, Schweinle, & Duncan, 2014; Kim & Lambie, 2018; Mullen, Chae, Backer, & Niles, 2021). Counselors have bureaucratic work that includes too much paperwork, perceived as bothersome and boring. They also deal with the emotional load generated by encountering the personal tribulations of counselees, which remain with them after hours as well (Kolodinsky, Draves, Schroder, Lindsey, & Zlatev, 2009; McCarthy, Kerne, Calfa, Lambert, & Guzmán, 2010; Lee, Cho, Kissinger, & Ogle, 2010). Beyond the overload of school counselors, they also contend with a lack of clarity regarding to their role definition, and primarily the fact that the role boundaries and demands of the counselors are not defined (Mullen, Blount, Lambie, & Chae, 2017). Individual, social, and systemic needs change from one school to another and by the composition of the school and management, and they dictate the components of the counselor's role. Due to the unclear job description, in a school setting, principals can have extensive influence on determining the role of the school counselors with whom they work (Amatea & Clark, 2005; Dollarhide, Smith, & Lemberger, 2007). Research suggests that when compared to school counselors, principals seem to underestimate the time that school counselors spend on clerical and administrative noncounseling duties and place more importance on the performance of other noncounseling duties such as record keeping, coordinating the standardized testing program and scheduling (Finkelstein, 2009).

Splitting the role into systemic and therapeutic aspects and the lack of uniformity in definitions of everyday and general functioning make it hard for counselors to better define their professional identity (Crosslin, 2006). Other studies that examined the burnout and difficulty levels of school counselors found that one source mentioned frequently in this context is role conflict, which derives from a situation where two or more demands are made of the counselor concurrently, such that complying with one will create a prioritizing decision-making process and a difficulty to comply with the others (Lee et al., 2010; Wilkerson, 2009). Role conflict can also emerge when the counselor is expected to meet conflicting demands by principals, students, parents, and so on, or when there is a discrepancy between the counselor's perception of her role and the expectations posed by her superiors (Coll & Freeman, 1997).

Professional identity in the school counseling profession: The immaturity of the profession, its complexity, its unclear definition, and the employment terms of its practitioners, lead to the issue of the professional identity and satisfaction of school counselors in Israel and elsewhere (Erhard, 2014). Well-established and rooted professional identity is particularly important in the profession of school counseling, as the professional definition of counseling is still being established around the world (Cinotti, 2014). The desire is to transform school counseling into a defined and legitimate profession with a unique identity rather than only one that imitates other professions in the field of mental health or education (Pelling & Whetham, 2006). A well-established professional identity of school counselors enables them to present the professional significance of the profession to other educators working with them and thus to promote its significance as perceived by others (Reiner & Hernandez, 2013). Counselors with low professional identity who do not do so, might lose their special place in the school, their significance for the role, and their job will be carried out by other professionals (Reiner & Hernandez, 2013; Whiston, 2002). Nonetheless, to date the profession has been characterized by constant development and accelerated changes that contribute to the unclear definition and perception of the

profession (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Erhard, 2014).

Group professional identity in counseling: As mentioned before, the definition of the school counseling profession is unclear and the role definition changes between schools. That fact lets unrelated elements (such as officials in local authorities and in the Ministry of Education, school principals, as well as regional directors and general supervisors) to define the role of school counselors and to dictate what they must do at the school (Guillot-Miller, 2003). Counselors undertake various administrative and educational tasks and assignments that are not related to the counselor's work. In the long term, performing such assignments impairs the distinction of the school counseling role and on the personal level it creates a negative effect of frustration and lack of self-esteem among counselors (Erhard, 2014).

In this study we shall examine the group professional identity of the school counseling profession as perceived by school counselors themselves. It appears that establishing the group professional identity of school counseling is perceived as essential in order to receive public recognition (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Pistole & Roberts, 2002). Consolidating a clear group professional identity helps counselors perceive themselves as belonging to a specific professional community, which gives them an advantage in representing the profession to various professional factors and to the general public (Lanman, 2011).

Personal professional identity in counseling: The personal professional identity of counselors is directly affected by the definition of the profession. Therefore, since the role definition of school counseling is very wide and vague, the professional identity of counselors remains unclear (Gazzola & Smith, 2007). Beyond the fact that school counselors are also subject teachers or homeroom teachers, they are also charged with unending everyday activities that they perceive as "unprofessional", such as planning student monitor duties, dealing with student discipline problems, filling out forms, etc. The multiple roles contribute to the difficulty with defining their professional identity (Baggerly & Osborn, 2006).

In addition, it seems that the tasks defined by the Israeli Ministry of Education for school counselors are not compatible with the extent of their position and their work hours. School counselors often complete their duties on a voluntary basis due to their sense of professional commitment. The employment terms of school counselors in the educational system and the extent of their position do not enable them to fulfill the many tasks with which they are charged and to provide adequate assistance to those in need of their services (State Comptroller report, 2014).

The question is: What are the consequences of un-unified professional identity in school counseling? An unclear professional identity can have negative consequences for the counselor's work: the counselor's efforts and confidence in the profession (Blocher, Tennyson, & Johnson, 1963), sense of pride and stability in the profession (Nelson & Jackson, 2003), ethics and rules on the job, the counselor's work boundaries, awareness of the services provided, and general satisfaction with the profession (Remley & Herlihy, 2005). Therefore, a clear role definition in school counseling is critical for the definition of one's professional identity in counseling (Bruss & Kopala, 1993). Moreover, developing professional identity is important not only for the counselor's personal growth as a professional but can also affect the services provided to the people with whom the counselor is in contact (Brott & Myers, 1999).

It has been found that if a profession is not clearly defined by its practitioners, it risks being wrongly portrayed, and as a result wrongly defined by others (Alves & Gazzola, 2011). As detailed above, school counselors currently perform diverse roles that are not uniform (Gale & Austin, 2003) and therefore it is distinctly necessary for counselors to define themselves as united and as having a distinct and unique profession (Gazzola & Smith, 2007). A study conducted recently that examined the group and personal professional identity of school counselors in Israel (Heled & Davidovich, 2020) showed that since the role definition of counseling is unclear, in addition to the intricate, bureaucratic, and internally politicized educational system, counselors in the system have tough feelings. The professional identity of counselors is found to be poorer the higher the dissatisfaction with the role definition. It is also evident that all the counselors reported overload and inability to prioritize their work due to the problems involved in their role definition. Hence, it may be concluded that due to the lack of clarity with the role definition (poor group professional identity), the range of tasks they must fulfill, and the heavy burden, the personal professional identity of school counselors is affected.

Hence, it is evident that personal professional identity is influenced by group identity (Heled & Davidovich, 2020). The current study will examine how this affects the counseling profession. Additionally, we will examine how the fact that the school counseling profession in Israel is not clearly defined and changes between schools, affects counselors in the field with regard to their professional identity. This study is another step-in research on the professional identity of school counselors, through a case study of Israel. Studies and papers published over

the years in Israel and elsewhere include a recurring discussion of the uniqueness of school counseling and the distinctness of this profession compared to other roles in the educational system. Indeed, in light of the literature review, it appears that school counseling as a profession involves endless difficulties, both in its role definition and in the actual job, and this has an effect on the professional identity of practitioners (Heled & Davidovich, 2020; Heled & Davidovitch, 2019).

3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current study is to explore the different components of professional identity in the school counseling profession and to connect between them. For the first time, group professional identity in school counseling will be separated from personal professional identity of school counselors and the elements comprising the two dimensions of professional identity will be examined. In addition, the correlation between the components of group and personal professional identity will be explored.

To date, professional identity has not been explored in quantitative research in the manner proposed in the current study, i.e., group and personal professional identity separately. In the current study, this option will be explored for the first time in the school counseling profession. The research design and its findings will pioneer this different exploration of professional identity for other professions as well and will further illuminate how we grasp the essence of professional identity in general, of school counselors in particular as well as in other professions, particularly in a world that encompasses professional mobility.

4. Research Method

The current study explored, for the first time, how group professional identity affects and is related to personal professional identity of school counselors, by means of two separate scales. For the purpose of the study, a research review was conducted to search for a suitable instrument for examining counselors' group and personal professional identity. Since no such instrument was found in the literature, a decision was made to combine two validated and reliable scales: 1) A questionnaire on the professional identity of counselors in variety fields (Woo & Henfield, 2015), translated from English, adapted to the profession in Israel, and evaluating the respondents' **group professional identity**. 2) A factor questionnaire on the professional identity of teachers (Fisherman & Weiss, 2011), adapted for the school counseling profession and evaluating the respondents' **personal professional identity**.

4.1 In Light of the Research Literature, the Research Hypotheses Are That

- 1) A correlation will be found between group professional identity and personal professional identity of school counselors.
- 2) A correlation will be found between the factors comprising group and personal professional identity in the school counseling profession. Namely, the higher the group professional identity of a counselor the higher the professional identity, and vice versa.
- 3) The factors in the group professional identity questionnaire will positively predict the counselor's personal professional identity.
- 4) The factors in the personal professional identity questionnaire will positively predict the counselor's group professional identity.

4.2 Respondents

The research participants included 174 counselors, of them eight male and 166 female (The sample represents the proportion of men in the Israel school counselor population (Erhard, 2008). 167 of the respondents were from the Jewish sector, 4 from the Arab Muslim sector, one from the Arab Christian sector, and 2 from the Bedouin sector. The respondents' years of work in the counseling profession ranged from 1 to 32 ($M = 9.43$, $SD = 7.45$). Thirty-five respondents (20.1%) did not have a permanent counseling license. 89 counselors (51.1%) work in primary schools, 26 counselors (14.9%) in middle school. 33 high school counselors (19%) and 26 (14.9%) of the counselors work in the division and high school together.

4.3 Research Tools

The study utilized the following questionnaires: demographic, group professional identity, personal professional identity.

- **Demographic questionnaire.** The counselors were asked about their age, ethnicity, years in the profession, whether they have a permanent counseling license and the type of school the work in.
- **Questionnaire on counselors' personal professional identity.** A version of the questionnaire exploring

factors generating consolidation of teachers' professional identity (Fosherman & Weiss, 2011), transformed for the current study in order to explore the professional identity of school counselors. The original questionnaire consists of 27 items. The respondents ranked their replies on a 4-point scale from 1 (very untrue) to 4 (very true). A higher score means a higher score for professional identity. The original questionnaire enumerates four factors: confidence in professional choice, professional efficacy, mission, and the reputation of the profession. Adaptation to school counseling was carried out by changing words such as "teaching", "education", "teacher", to "counseling", "school counseling", and "counselor" (for instance instead of "I feel good working in teaching" the item was changed to "I feel good working in school counseling").

The original questionnaire was intended to explore the overall professional identity of teachers and no distinction was made between personal and group professional identity as in the current study. All the items in the questionnaire examine the teacher/counselor's feeling at work and personal attitude to the profession—as defined with regard to personal professional identity in the current study, which is why this questionnaire was chosen to explore this variable.

- **Questionnaire on group professional identity for counselors.** The items selected for the current study were translated from the Professional Identity Scale in Counseling (PISC) (Woo & Henfield, 2015). The original questionnaire was developed to examine the overall professional identity (no separation was made between personal and group professional identity) of US counselors in several fields (school counselors, vocational counselors, parenting and marriage counselors, and mental health counselors). The original questionnaire has 53 items and six factors.

The English version of the questionnaire was translated in the current study from English to Hebrew (by two translators independently) and back translated from Hebrew to English after forming one Hebrew version (based on the two parallel versions). This process is aimed at ensuring high compatibility with the original version of the questionnaire. Then, several adaptations were made to the language and contents, as well as with regard to organs related to school counseling in Israel. After a review by three judges from the field of school counseling who compared the translations and discussed each of the items, 35 items were found unsuitable for the profession in Israel and were omitted from the new scale. An example of an item that was omitted: "*I will/have completed professional training and standard education to perform my duties in my roles.*" In Israel it is not possible to become a school counselor without completing all one's academic obligations, so the answer to this question is self-apparent and the item was omitted.

The revised scale contains 18 items that examine the group professional identity of school counselors (for instance: "*I am a member of organizations/group related to school counseling (such as the Counselors' Association, groups on social networks)*" and "*I have the necessary professional knowledge and professional skills in order to perform my job properly*"). The items were selected both for their compatibility with the profession in Israel and for their compatibility with the term "group professional identity" that includes the counselor's professional involvement, knowledge of professional rules and components, and perception of the profession.

The respondents were asked to rank their replies on a 6-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). A higher mean score means stronger professional identity.

4.4 Research Procedure

In order to collect the data, approval was received from the Ethics Committee at the University. In order to reach as many respondents as possible, the researchers posted on the Facebook page "Counselors for counselors", which numbers more than 6,500 counselors and counseling students in Israel. The link to the questionnaires was included in the post. All counselors who responded to the message and fulfilled the question were included in the current study.

In addition, the researchers appealed to contacts familiar with many counselors (supervisors/volunteers in the Counselors' Association) and asked them to distribute the questionnaires to counselors interested in participating in the study.

The questionnaires were administered through the Qualtrics program, which is an online program for administering research questionnaires. All the counselors participated on a volunteer basis.

5. Research Findings

Data analysis utilized factor analysis of the professional identity questionnaires:

Questionnaire on personal professional identity: Due to the changes made in the questionnaire on “personal professional identity for counselors”, a new factor analysis was conducted for this questionnaire. After factor analysis of the principal component analysis (PCA) type, a slight change was evident versus the original questionnaire. The items in the original questionnaire called “sense of mission” and “reputation of the profession” were combined and some were omitted.

The new factor in the questionnaire in the current study was called “sense of solidarity with the profession”. Internal consistency analysis was held for each factor (Cronbach’s alpha (α)), namely, to what degree the set of items are interrelated. Finally, 24 items were included in the new questionnaire, on a Likert scale of 1 (very untrue) to 4 (very true) (item 12 is reversed), with three factors instead of the four in the original form:

- 1) **“Confidence in the choice of profession”** includes 13 items evaluating to what degree the counselor is reconciled with her decision to engage in the profession (sample item: “*I think that the school counseling profession is the most suitable profession for me*”) ($\alpha = .948$).
- 2) **“Professional efficacy”** includes 7 items that examine the counselor’s sense of professional efficacy (sample item: “*I think that my counseling skills are sufficiently efficient to be a good counselor*”) ($\alpha = .898$).
- 3) **“Sense of solidarity with the profession”** includes four items that examine whether the counselor identifies with the school counseling profession in Israel (sample item: “*When someone treats school counselors disrespectfully, I feel a personal affront*”) ($\alpha = .474$).

The following items were omitted during the statistical analysis due to low associations with the factors: “*I often have doubts about whether I am suited to be a counselor*”, “*I always thought that my mission is in school counseling*”, “*I think that only few counselors can define themselves as counseling professionals*”. A higher mean score for each factor means greater professional identity.

Table 1. Results of principal component analysis (PCA) of the personal professional identity questionnaire (N = 174)

No.	Item	Factor 1: Confidence in choice of the profession $\alpha=.948$	Factor 2: Professional efficacy $\alpha=.898$	Factor 3: Sense of solidarity with the profession $\alpha=.474$
1	I am certain that I did well when I chose to be a counselor	.836		
3	I feel good working in school counseling	.847		
4	I'm glad that I chose school counseling	.867		
7	I'm attracted to being a counselor	.794		
8	I think that the school counseling profession is the profession that most suits me	.723		
10	I think that I am realizing myself in counseling	.809		
11	I do not think that I will leave the field of school counseling	.700		
16	I am well reflected in the counseling profession	.694		
17	I'm at peace with my choice of counseling	.842		
18	Counseling is a mission for me	.687		
20	I'm not certain that I will remain in the counseling profession for long	.503		
25	Work in counseling attracts me	.751		
26	I'm satisfied with engaging in counseling	.841		
6	I think that I am a professional counselor		.790	
12	I think that my counseling skills are sufficiently efficient for being a good counselor		.741	
14	I'm certain that I have the qualities to be a good counselor		.743	
19	I have a good attitude to counselees		.706	
21	I have command of the intricacies of the counseling profession		.810	
22	I'm certain that I have the skills to be a counselor		.791	
24	I know what and how should be done in school counseling		.747	
2	I see the school counseling profession as a mission			.462
9	When someone treats school counselors disrespectfully, I feel a personal affront			.613
15	When I see a school counselor I feel appreciation for him/her			.607
23	When I am mistaken for another professional I correct the mistake and explain that I am a school counselor			.590

Note. Only high loadings above .40 are presented.

To explore the associations between the various factors in the questionnaire, a Pearson's correlation test was conducted, showing that all the factors are significantly positively correlated with each other. The data are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Pearson's correlation matrix between the factors in the personal professional identity questionnaire

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Factor 1: Confidence in choice of the profession	-----		
Factor 2: Professional efficacy	R=.481**	-----	
Factor 3: Sense of solidarity with the profession	R=.459**	R=.270**	-----

Note. * p < 0.5. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

Questionnaire on group professional identity: After administering the questionnaire in the study, factor analysis of the new translated questionnaire was performed in the principal component analysis (PCA) method, generating three factors. Each factor was subjected to an internal consistency analysis (Cronbach's alpha (α)), namely, to what degree is the set of items are interrelated:

- 1) **“Professional involvement”** includes eight items that examine the counselor's involvement in different professional organs related to the profession or in spreading its teachings to others (sample item: *“I'm a member of organizations/groups related to school counseling (such as the Counselors' Association, groups on social networks)”*) ($\alpha = .765$).
- 2) **“Knowledge of professional rules”** includes four items that evaluate the counselor's knowledge of the professional rules in Israel (sample item: *“I am familiar with the relevant rules and procedures of the school counseling profession (such as: the reporting law, confidentiality, regular attendance law)”*) ($\alpha = .724$).
- 3) **“Attitude to the profession”** includes six items that examine the counselor's appreciation for the profession (sample item: *“I recommend the school counseling profession to others who consider engaging in therapeutic professions”*) ($\alpha=.798$). The overall score for each factor is calculated by the respondent's mean score on all items of which it consists, such that a higher score means higher professional identity.

Table 3. Results of the principal component analysis (PCA) for the questionnaire on group professional identity

No.	Item	Factor 1: Professional involvement $\alpha=.765$	Factor 2: Knowledge of professional rules $\alpha=.724$	Factor 3: Attitude to the profession $\alpha=.798$
1	I am a member of organizations/groups related to school counseling (such as the Counselors' Association, groups on social networks)	.514		
2	I contributed to expanding my professional knowledge base by participating in studies on school counseling (for example by being interviewed, completing surveys)	.600		
4	I'm an active partner or seek opportunities to act (such as volunteer work, participating in meetings, community work) in organizations for school counselors (such as the Psychological Counseling Service / Teachers' organization / Teachers' Union / Counselors' Association)	.653		
5	I share information on the school counseling profession with the community and the public	.533		
8	I take part in discussions on the identity and vision of the school counseling profession	.696		
11	I am familiar with the organs that support the school counseling profession (Psychological Counseling Service/ Counselors' Association) and with their actions on behalf of the profession	.587		
12	I am familiar with the professional organizations of school counseling, their functions and achievements on behalf of the profession	.687		
13	I am familiar with the journals in the field of school counseling and their contribution to this field	.515		
10	I am familiar with the ethics rules in school counseling (for instance ethical codes, structure of therapeutic sessions with counselees)		.557	
15	I am familiar with the relevant rules and procedures of the school counseling profession (for instance: the reporting law, confidentiality, the regular attendance law)		.685	
26	I have the necessary professional knowledge and professional skills to carry out my job properly		.625	
28	I have knowledge of the ethical obligations and professional standards relevant for my work		.894	
18	I believe that the school counseling profession will further advance and develop in the future			.648
19	I recommend the school counseling profession to others considering engaging in therapeutic professions			.765
21	My personality and my beliefs are compatible with the values of the school counseling profession			.665
22	I am satisfied with my work and with my professional role			.821
23	I share my positive feelings for the profession when I collaborate with people from other fields			.764
24	I appreciate the fact that a school counselor can occupy different professional roles (for instance counselor, teacher)			.558

Note. Only high loadings above .40 are presented.

To explore the associations between the various factors in the questionnaire, a Pearson's correlation test was conducted, showing that all the factors are significantly positively correlated with each other. The data are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Pearson's correlation matrix between the factors in the group professional identity questionnaire

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Factor 1: Professional involvement	-----		
Factor 2: Knowledge of professional rules	R=.481**	-----	
Factor 3: Attitude towards the profession	R=.459**	R=.270**	-----

Note. * $p < 0.5$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

5.1 Data Analysis According to the Research Hypotheses

In order to examine the first hypothesis, whereby a significant association would be found between group professional identity and personal professional identity, a Pearson's correlation was conducted to analyze the association between the overall score on both questionnaires. The analysis showed a significant positive association ($r = .625$; $p < .001$) between the two questionnaires.

In order to examine the second hypothesis, whereby a positive association would be found between the factors in the group professional identity questionnaire and the factors in personal professional identity questionnaire, a Pearson's test was held. Exploration of the associations between the factors in the personal professional identity questionnaire and in the group professional identity questionnaire showed a significant positive association between all the factors in both questionnaires aside from the association with the third factor in the personal professional identity questionnaire (sense of solidarity with the profession) and with the second factor in the personal professional identity questionnaire (knowledge of professional rules), for both of which no significant association was found. The data are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Pearson's correlation matrix between the factors in the personal professional identity questionnaire and in the group professional identity questionnaire

	Factor 1: Professional involvement	Factor 2: Knowledge of professional rules	Factor 3: Attitude towards profession
Factor 1: Confidence in choice of the profession	R=.214***	R=.269***	R=.790***
Factor 2: Professional efficacy	R=.276***	R=.613***	R=.353***
Factor 3: Sense of solidarity with the profession	R=.171**	R=.114	R=.400***

Note. * $p < 0.5$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

In order to examine the third hypothesis, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted, with the explained variable being the counselor's personal professional identity and explanatory variables being the factors comprising the group professional identity questionnaire: professional involvement, knowledge of the professional rules, and attitude towards the profession. The regression model showed that the model's three independent variables significantly explained approximately 59.3% of the overall variance in personal professional identity ($F(3,170) = 84.906$, $p < .001$).

The regression findings showed a significant positive correlation between the second factor, knowledge of professional rules to personal professional identity ($\beta = .186$, $p = .001$). Namely, the more knowledge the counselor has of the profession's rules, the more established her personal professional identity. In addition, there is a significant positive correlation between the third factor, attitude towards the profession to personal professional identity ($\beta = .683$, $p < .001$). Namely, the more the counselor treats the profession as a prestigious profession, the more established her personal professional identity. No contribution was found of the regression line of the professional involvement factor ($\beta = .052$, $p = .319$) to personal professional identity.

The hypothesis was partially confirmed. The findings of the regression are presented in Table 6:

Table 6. Findings of the regression for predicting personal professional identity by the factors in the group professional identity questionnaire: professional involvement, knowledge of professional rules, and attitude towards the profession

	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
Professional involvement	0.028	0.028	0.052	1.000	0.319
Knowledge of professional rules	0.152	0.044	0.186	3.493	0.001
Attitude towards the profession	0.369	0.028	0.683	13.336	0.000

In order to examine the fourth hypothesis, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted, with the explaining variables being the factors of the personal professional identity questionnaire—confidence in choice of the profession, professional efficacy, and sense of solidarity with the profession, and the explained variable was the counselor's group professional identity. The regression model showed that the three independent variables in the model significantly explained approximately 38.5% of the overall variance in group professional identity ($F(3,170) = 37.074, p < .001$).

The regression findings showed a significant positive correlation between the first factor, confidence in the choice of profession to group professional identity ($\beta = .428, p < .001$). Namely, the more confident the counselor is in her choice of the counseling profession, the more established her group professional identity. In addition, there is a significant positive correlation between the second factor, professional efficacy to group professional identity ($\beta = .260, p < .001$), namely, the higher the counselor's sense of professional efficacy, the more established her group professional identity. No contribution was found by the regression line of the factor of sense of solidarity with the profession ($\beta = .064, p = .343$) to group professional identity.

The hypothesis was partially confirmed. The regression findings are presented in Table 7:

Table 7. Regression findings for predicting group professional identity by the factors in the personal professional identity questionnaire: confidence in the choice of profession, professional efficacy, sense of solidarity with the profession

	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
<i>Confidence in the choice of profession</i>	0.402	0.069	0.428	5.579	0.000
<i>Professional efficacy</i>	0.312	0.082	0.260	3.812	0.000
<i>Sense of solidarity with the profession</i>	0.083	0.088	0.064	0.950	0.343

6. Conclusion

The current study is the first to examine two separate professional identity questionnaires for school counselors, i.e., personal professional identity and group professional identity. We sought to examine the various elements that comprise each dimension of professional identity and their interrelations, as well as how personal professional identity is related to and affects group professional identity and vice versa. Factor analysis of the personal professional identity questionnaire detected three factors: confidence in the choice of profession, professional efficacy, and sense of solidarity with the profession. Analysis of the association between the factors in the questionnaire found that all the factors were significantly interrelated. Three factors were found in the group professional identity questionnaire as well: professional involvement, knowledge of professional rules, and attitude towards the profession. Analysis of the association between the factors in the questionnaire found that all the factors were significantly interrelated.

Exploring the interrelations between the factors in both questionnaires found interrelations between all the factors aside from the finding showing no significant association between “sense of solidarity with the profession” in the personal professional identity questionnaire and knowledge of professional rules. In order to explain these associations we shall examine the theory underlying each of the factors in the questionnaires.

6.1 Factors in the Personal Professional Identity Questionnaire

As stated, personal professional identity is part of one's self-identity and it is the answer to the question “Who am I, or what am I, as a professional?” This is the practitioner's sense of belonging to and solidarity with the profession (Tickle, 1999). In the current study three factors were detected in the personal professional identity questionnaire for school counselors, in contrast to Fisherman and Weiss' (2011) questionnaire which detected four factors:

- 1) **The first factor** uncovered in the current study is **confidence in the professional choice**. This factor is related to counselors' professional choice in the past, as well as to the choices they make almost every day. Counselors who are confident in their professional choice work with the feeling that despite having other professional alternatives they chose the school counseling profession (Fisherman & Weiss, 2011).
- 2) **The second factor**, found significantly associated with the first, is **the counselor's sense of professional efficacy**. Beijaard et al. (2004) claim that part of professional identity is the sense of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is one's perceptions of his abilities to carry out a certain task. The term "self-efficacy" is applied to the professional field and defined as the professional's ability to control events that affect his professional life. A person with high self-efficacy will probably reach the desired outcome, while those with low self-efficacy may be expected to fail in implementing their skills and not reach the desired outcome (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy in counseling is the counselor's self-concept of his ability to provide professional counseling and to adequately perform his role (Barnes, 2004; Fisherman & Weiss, 2011).

Studies on self-efficacy in school counseling indicated positive associations between self-efficacy and variables related to the counselor's work, such as the work environment, counselor's features, performance, level of anxiety and satisfaction. Experiences in the practicum, modelling by the training counselor, and positive feedback were found to promote professional self-efficacy in the first stages of training (Larson & Daniels, 1998). Counselors with high self-efficacy are reported to function better, put more effort into their work, and persist in their counseling work, as well as participating more often in counseling professional development (Daniels & Larson, 2001). It seems that just as Fisherman and Weiss (2011) found that teachers have high professional self-efficacy, counselors who are confident in their abilities, knowledge, and skills indeed have a cohesive professional identity. We conclude that counselors who believe that they do not have the necessary capacity to be good counselors have lower professional identity. As stated, a significant association was found between the two factors of professional efficacy and confidence in choice of the profession, namely, the higher the professional self-efficacy felt by the counselor the more confidence she will feel in her professional choice. Higher professional efficacy leads to better performance on the job (Mullen, 2014) and hence to confidence in the choice of profession, and vice versa, confidence in the choice of the counseling profession leads to motivation to succeed in the profession and hence to higher professional efficacy.

- 3) **The third factor** in the personal professional identity questionnaire is **sense of solidarity with the profession**. The factor examines whether counselors feel that the counseling profession is part of them and of their personal identity. The items include statements that examine counselors' perception of the counseling profession and how they feel when others do not appreciate it. This factor belongs to personal professional identity as it examines counselors' deep feelings in light of the profession's image in society. A person who identifies with the values of his profession will perceive them as his own and will see himself as an inseparable part of the profession (Pratt, 1998). In addition, studies have shown that pride in one's profession and practice is strongly associated with high professional identity (Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2001; Remley & Herlihy, 2007). This study examines whether social appreciation of the counseling profession, as perceived by counselors, affects their sense of solidarity with the profession. Accordingly, Lanman (2011) contended that forming clear professional identity helps counselors see themselves as belonging to a specific professional community, and this belonging is actually part of their self-identity, granting them an advantage in representing the profession to various professional elements and to the general public. The third factor was found to be significantly correlated with the first and second factors in the questionnaire. This may be explained as when one perceives his profession as having low value and has no solidarity with it, his confidence in the professional choice and his pride in the profession decline and hence also the professionalism and professional efficacy are lower (Wilson, Ruch, Lymbery, & Cooper, 2011). Therefore, counselors who feel that the professional image of the counseling profession is low both as perceived by society and by themselves, might feel unappreciated, a lack of confidence in their professional choice, their work, and their efficacy to perform the job.

Hence, it can be seen that the personal professional identity questionnaire has three factors that complement each other and form a cluster of items expressing the counselor's sense of belonging to and solidarity with her work.

6.2 The Factors in the Group Professional Identity Questionnaire

In order to examine the factors that comprise group professional identity in this study, the **group professional identity questionnaire for counselors**, translated and adapted from the Professional Identity Scale in Counseling (PISC) (Woo & Henfield, 2015), was chosen. Three factors were found to examine the group professional identity of counselors:

- 1) The first factor is **professional involvement**: The items include evaluation of the counselor's involvement in advocacy, organizations, research, and professional associations related to the school counseling profession. Studies found that professional involvement is strongly associated with professional identity (Lafleur, 2007; Luke & Goodrich, 2010). Counselors who were part of a professional association were found to have higher professional identity (Lafleur, 2007) and other studies showed that the socialization process of counselors with other counselors strengthens their professional identity (Alves & Gazzola, 2011; Gibson, Dollarhide, & Moss, 2010; Puglia, 2008). One of the most important factors for constructing a solid professional identity is creating unifying elements for school counselors through legislation, professional unions, licenses, communication between counselors, and united support of professional principles by counselors (Cashwell, Kleist, & Scofield, 2009). In Israel all school counselors belong to the Psychological Counseling Service of the Ministry of Education, which is the organ that provides supervision and professional development, and that leads the profession's customary laws and norms. These professional development courses are not voluntary rather mandatory, particularly for beginning counselors. More senior counselors can serve as guides in the Psychological Counseling Service. Furthermore, there is an association of school counselors in Israel, which is a registered non-profit organization that operates independently. The association acts to improve the employment terms of counselors and publishes a journal that presents studies on school counseling in Israel.
- 2) The second factor is **knowledge of the profession**. Studies have found a strong connection between knowledge of one's profession and professional identity (Choate, Smith, & Spruill, 2005; Emerson, 2010; Nelson & Jackson, 2003). Consequently, Emerson (2010) claimed that deep understanding of the profession is not only an inseparable part of the school counselor's professional identity rather it also contributes significantly to the quality of work in the field. Accordingly, knowledge of professional rules and of the necessary areas of expertise contributes to the professionalism and high standards of the counselor's work (Van Zandt, 1990).

The current study found a significant positive association between the two factors—professional involvement and knowledge of professional rules. This finding corresponds with previous findings, that school counselors that are involved and advocate towards their profession, can provide feedback to individuals and whole organizations regarding needs in the preparation of school counselors, particularly in the area of professional knowledge and skills (Cigrand, Havlik, Malot, & Jones, 2015; Miller, 2006).

It is possible that the more professionally involved the counselor is in associations related to the profession, in the community or in research, her knowledge and command of professional rules increase. This finding shows that involvement increases knowledge of the profession in general and of its rules in particular—the counselor is more involved, maintains contact with other counselors and with professional elements, and therefore it is only logical that she will know more about the foundations of the profession.

- 3) The third factor: **Attitude towards the profession**. The factor relates to the personal views of the counselor towards the profession and its components. The factor includes items such as “I believe that the school counseling profession will further advance and develop in the future” and “I appreciate the fact that a school counselor can occupy different professional roles (for instance counselor, teacher)”, as well as another four items where the counselor ranks her trust in the counseling profession and how she is involved in it. Studies have found that a positive attitude to one's profession is strongly associated with positive professional identity (Brott & Myers, 1999; Gale & Austin, 2003; Mrdjenovich & Moore, 2004). The third factor was found to be significantly positively associated with the two other factors of group professional identity. The first factor, professional involvement, was found to have a significant positive association with attitude towards the profession. It appears that the more involved the counselor is in professional associations or with other counselors, the more positive her attitude towards the profession. Furthermore, it may be concluded that the reverse association is also possible. The more positive the counselor's attitude towards the profession, the higher the chance that she will be more involved professionally in different aspects.

The association between attitude to the profession and knowledge of the profession also appears to be significant. The more the counselor displays a positive attitude and pride in the profession, her knowledge of its rules increases. She may display more curiosity and openness to knowing each level of the profession due to her positive attitude. Moreover, the reverse association can be explained as the more the counselor understands the profession's rules, they are clearer and logical to her, thus her attitude to the profession improves and is enhanced.

6.3 The Association Between the Personal Professional Identity Questionnaire and Group Professional Identity

Although personal professional identity and group professional identity are congruent and complementary (Alves & Gazzola, 2011; Brott & Myers, 1999), a professional may have a solid personal professional identity while his perceived group identity of the profession might lack cohesion, or the opposite (Gazzola & Smith, 2007). Respectively, counselors may have a well-established personal professional identity while concurrently perceiving the profession's group identity as weak (Gazzola & Smith, 2007; Gazzola, Smith, King-Andrews, & Kearney, 2010).

In the current study we sought to examine the association between the two questionnaires and between the factors comprising them. A significant association was found between counselors' group professional identity and their personal professional identity. Thus, the higher the group professional identity the higher the counselor's personal professional identity, and vice versa. According to the findings, well-established group professional identity of counselors, namely understanding the profession, its components, rules, attitude towards the profession, and professional involvement, lead to a more established personal professional identity—the counselor's understanding of who she is as a professional school counselor, as well as a deeper connection with the profession and contentment with it. LaFleur (2007) reinforces our argument and claims that one's perception of his profession as having high value leads to a sense of stability, confidence, and pride in its practice. The association can be reversed as well—personal professional identity, i.e., the counselor's understanding of the profession, or of herself in the profession, her reconciliation with its choice, the knowledge that she is capable of effecting change and that she is good at her job, lead to higher group professional identity. It is possible that due to a well-established personal professional identity the counselor will be interested in being more involved professionally with colleagues or in research, more familiar with the foundations of the profession, and her attitude to the profession will be more positive and she will see it as meaningful for society.

6.4 Associations Between the Factors That Comprise Each of the Questionnaires

Significant positive associations were found between all the factors aside from the second factor of group professional identity—knowledge of the profession, and the third factor of personal professional identity—sense of solidarity with the profession. Knowledge of professional rules and procedures may not be related and sufficient for the counselor's sense of identifying with the counseling profession, and vice versa, the fact that the counselor sees the profession positively and as part of her personal identity does not lead to deep knowledge of the procedures and rules of the counseling profession.

Beyond this finding, the strong associations between the factors in the two questionnaires show that personal and group professional identity can be merged to form overall professional identity, and that all the components within it are interrelated. The associations between the two questionnaires correspond with the findings of Remley and Herlihy (2005), who found that while professional identity interacts with the knowledge of practitioners concerning its foundations and services (knowledge of the profession), low professional identity has a direct effect on the work quality of practitioners (professional efficacy), which in turn affects the decline in practitioners' image (attitude towards the profession). Moreover, solid group professional identity was found to be strongly associated with pride and satisfaction by those who chose the profession (confidence in the choice of profession, solidarity with the profession, attitude towards the profession (Remley & Herlihy, 2007).

Other findings that correspond with the research findings show that well-established personal professional identity by practitioners of a certain profession will help them define their field and role (attitude toward the profession and knowledge of professional rules), reach professional decisions, and develop professionally (professional efficacy) (Brott & Myers, 1999) and make it easier to amass and understand the knowledge and skills related to the job (professional knowledge) (Sutherland & Markauskaite, 2012). Other studies found that professional identity affects the sense of unity among colleagues in the same profession (professional involvement), assuming personal responsibility (professional efficacy, solidarity with the profession), and ethical and moral conduct (professional efficacy and knowledge of professional rules) (Brott & Myers, 1999; Gale & Austin, 2003; Hiebert & Uhlemann, 1993; Van Zandt, 1990). It is evident that the research findings are compatible with extensive studies on various professions. Therefore, it may be concluded that the definition of professional identity, divided into personal and group, can be generalized to other professions as well, beyond school counseling.

At the same time, the findings that arose from the regression analysis indicate a more complex state of affairs. The regression analysis that examined the factors in the group professional identity questionnaire, which affect the counselor's personal professional identity, indicates that the factors that comprise group professional identity explain a large part of the variance in the counselor's personal professional identity. This finding corresponds

with Kozminsky (2008), who contended that personal professional identity is affected by cultural values, expectations, perceptions, and views that are at the core of the profession's identity (group professional identity). The most influential factor found in the regression analyses is the counselor's attitude toward the profession. As stated, this factor means how the counselor perceives the environment's attitude toward her profession, but it also contains dimensions within items that represent the counselor's personal professional identity and thus this factor may have the greatest contribution to the variance.

The second most important factor is knowledge of professional rules, which also significantly explains the variance in the counselor's personal professional identity. The professional involvement factor was not found to contribute to the variance in personal professional identity. This finding contradicts previous studies that show an association between professional involvement and professional identity. This result may have been obtained because in a regression analysis, when there are several predictors some of them may have a significantly stronger effect on the dependent variable than others. It appears that when deducting the two significant factors of attitude towards the profession and knowledge of professional rules, the contribution of the professional involvement factor to personal professional identity remains negligible and therefore it is not significant in the regression equation.

The regression analyses that explored the effect of the factors within personal professional identity that affect group professional identity found that personal professional identity explains the variance in group professional identity significantly but to a lower degree (approximately 38.5% of the overall variance). Namely, personal professional identity explains a smaller part of group identity. The factor that most affects group professional identity is confidence in the counselor's professional choice. Namely, the more confident the counselor is in her choice of the counseling profession, the more effect this has on her group professional identity. Professional efficacy has a lower positive but significant correlation with group professional identity. No contribution of the factor of solidarity with the profession to group professional identity was found. As explained in the previous regression analysis, it is possible that when deducting the two first significant factors, confidence in the choice of profession and professional efficacy, the contribution of solidarity with the profession to group professional identity remains negligible, and therefore in the regression equation it is not significant.

When looking at the two regression analyses, it may be concluded unequivocally that personal and group professional identity influence each other, but factors within group professional identity have a greater impact on personal identity and they explain a very large part of the variance in counselors' personal professional identity. We conclude from this that how the counseling profession is portrayed to others, the components and the work structure of the profession, affect how the counselor herself sees the profession as part of herself, including her capacity to succeed in it and her confidence that this is the profession in which she is realizing herself and with which she is reconciled.

Therefore, the research findings reinforce previous studies showing that the definition of the school counseling profession and its recognition in the educational world have a critical effect on the personal professional identity of school counselors (for instance: Heled & Davidovich, 2020; LaFleur, 2007).

7. Discussion

The school counseling profession is still in a process of forming its professional identity and reaching a clear definition of the profession. The research findings further emphasize the need for reexamination of the role and employment structure of the counselors and their professional status at the school. As stated, the demands made of school counselors are not defined precisely. School counselors have many important roles, among other things providing students and teachers with personal therapy and counseling, as well as indirect services such as managing educational and therapeutic programs. At the same time, they must fulfill various roles that are not always related to the counseling profession. Therefore, beyond examining the personal and group professional identity components of the school counselors, other factors that affect this identity should be examined. It is necessary to examine thoroughly how various variables such as seniority, employment structure, role structure, and type of school (elementary, junior high, high school) at which the counselors work, affect both personal and group professional identity. Demographic and personality factors too can affect professional identity; demographic variables such as age, sex, and marital status, and personality variables such as self-efficacy and attachment style.

Future studies can also focus on the contribution of training to professional identity in counseling. Forming one's professional identity is part of a process of professional development that begins with academic training. Counselors can feel a contradiction in their work at the school between what they learned in academia as part of their professional training and what they are required to do in practice. If the aspirations and hopes of the

counselors for implementing the profession of their choice are not fulfilled, this can lead to lack of pleasure and frustration with the career of their choice. It would be interesting to check how academic training and training in the counselor's first years of work contribute to their personal and group professional identity.

In addition, this study was the first to examine personal and group professional identity separately and in separate questionnaires and it offers the possibility of examining professional identity in a new and different way than that examined to date. Future studies can examine professional identity similarly in other professions—both in the educational-therapeutic field and in other fields.

The research findings might have implications in a world of professional mobility, when current professions will no longer be relevant and others will be required, and when there will be a need to define the personal and group professional identity of workers.

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