Professional Competencies as a Key Factor in Higher Education

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Abstract: In modern conditions, society's requirements for higher education have changed, and therefore the formation of student competencies is one of the most pressing problems of education at the present stage. The article discusses the key factors of the competency-based approach in education. It is also noted that the competency-based approach reflects the conscious need of society to train people who are not only knowledgeable, but also able to further apply their own knowledge in their specialty.

Keywords: competency-based approach, ability, communication skills, methods, professional competence.

The competency-based approach today embodies the innovative process in education, corresponds to the general concept of educational standards adopted in most developed countries and is directly related to the transition - in the design of the content of education and systems for monitoring its quality - to a system of competencies. And Professional competence expresses the level of formation of key professional competencies and a set of special competencies given by the specifics of the object of a particular professional activity [16, p.133]. Various approaches to identifying key competencies have made it possible to identify a common thing: the willingness to notice problems and look for ways to solve them; the ability to analyze new situations and apply existing knowledge for such analysis; the ability to make decisions based on sound judgmentю. Therefore, the key competencies include the ability of a specialist to:

➢ see, analyze and find ways to solve problems;

➢ show initiative, take responsibility, and work independently;

➢ strive for improvement in the profession, continuous education; – search and process the necessary information;

➢ communication skills.

Professional competence is considered as professional literacy, the degree of qualification of a specialist, as the level of development of a person's personality and culture, as an integrative quality of personality, manifested in the readiness to solve problems that arise in the process of life and professional activity using knowledge, experience, individual abilities that are formed in the process her training, socialization and are focused on independent and successful participation in activities [19, p.2202]. Thus, we can assume that competence is a category that belongs to the sphere of relations between knowledge and practical activities of a person; it integrates knowledge, skills, and learned methods of activity in relation to specific conditions and abilities, readiness to carry out all types of activities.

Professional readiness is considered as a "transitional the stage from understanding the professional environment and identifying a vital problem in it (professional competence) - to its transformation on the basis of motivational, value, life-semantic guidelines, as well as on the basis of intellectual, situational, retrospective and prospective reflection (professional

competence)". According to T.V. Amelchenko, the category "professional competence of a specialist" performs a number of functions in relation to the educational and professional process [1, p.75]. The methodological function is expressed in the fact that structural-systemic, synergetic, axiological, personal-activity, cultural approaches to the study of the very phenomenon of professional competence of a specialist are carried out - a holistic approach to its formation is outlined. The descriptive function is connected, from the author's point of view, allows us to characterize the professional competence of a specialist as a pedagogical phenomenon and an innovative component of modern education, which sets the purposeful direction of the educational process. The explanatory function allows us to reveal the genesis of the formation of professional competence - from the formation of the professional competence of a specialist as a subject of professional activity, to the formation of the professional competence of a specialist as an integrity. Predictive and transformative functions open up new opportunities in building the educational process at a university and make it possible to implement a different strategy for developing the professional competence of a specialist: on an innovative basis in the process of integrating the educational and professional activities of participants in the educational process [23]. Considering professional competence as a qualitative characteristic of the degree of a person's mastery of his professional activity, we believe that it presupposes: – awareness of one's motives for this activity – needs and interests; aspirations and value orientations; motives of activity; ideas about their social roles; – assessment of one's personal properties and qualities as a future specialist, professional knowledge and skills, professionally important qualities; – integrative and creative nature of the activity, high efficiency of results; – regulation on this basis of one's professional development, formation of motivation for self-improvement, academic and labor mobility.

Based on the above, professional competence, from our point of view, includes cognitive, socio-communicative, informational, research and social-personal components. Cognitive competence is determined by fundamental knowledge, the individual degree of differentiation of consciousness, and the peculiarities of the development of cognitive processes, which predetermines the solution of professional problems. Obsolescence of knowledge, reluctance to develop, lack of interest in new directions in one's professional activity - all this can lead to professional degradation of the individual, hence, in accordance with society's requirements for a specialist, it is necessary to constantly engage in self-education to achieve certain professional results. Knowledge is a tool for developing cognitive competence. They involve comprehension of the deep, essential foundations and connections between various processes of the surrounding world. Features of a person's cognitive processes (adequacy of perception, comprehension, understanding and interpretation of various information of a certain professional space, systematic thinking, its flexibility, analyticality, variability, etc.) contribute, first, to the creation of professionally significant information about the state of objects of activity [30, 31, 32]. They also help competent analysis of the labor process and technical documentation; making rational decisions in a critical situation; forecasting and designing professional activities, reflecting a subjective focus on transforming the surrounding world.

Social and communicative competence is expressed in tolerance, the success of an individual's entry into the professional community, recognition of the values of a certain corporate culture, its psychological compatibility as the ability to adapt to different characters and the socio-professional environment, while reflecting the individual's capabilities in implementing: - cooperation, the ability to work in team, collective; - ability to establish vertical and horizontal contacts, resolve conflicts; – readiness for mutual assistance, mutual responsibility, mutual control in solving professionally significant goals, etc.

Information competence, focused on preparing a person for full life in the information society of the 21st century, is measured by the level of development of information technology culture, which we understand as a certain level of mastery of information technology, characterized by informational, technological and cultural components. The information component is a knowledge system that corresponds to the modern level of development of information

technology and ensures the implementation of information activities aimed at meeting educational and professional needs.

Technological component – mastery of information technologies, allowing to carry out information activities, creatively combining and updating existing technologies in accordance with the requirements of the time [18, p.11]. The cultural component includes understanding and awareness of one's own information needs, motivation to carry out information activities.

Research competence is expressed in the fact that a specialist, constantly solving many professional problems, acts as a researcher and builds his activities on the basis of research. In the modern world, research activity is considered not as a highly specialized activity, but as an integral characteristic of the individual, included in the structure of ideas about professionalism in any field of activity, as a lifestyle of a modern person [22]. Research activity as a systemic education represents the unity and integration of value foundations, personal meanings and ways of organizing professional activities; in modern science and pedagogical practice acts as a leading direction for updating the goals, content and structure of higher education. The educational process at a technical university should be as close as possible to research activities, implemented in classroom forms of lectures-research, seminars-research, trainings, Internet sessions and extracurricular forms of research during practical training, research carried out as part of coursework and dissertations [10,12] .

Social and personal competence is manifested in self-government, social identity and authenticity, and personal responsibility. Self-government defines such individual characteristics as the ability and readiness to: – manage oneself and others, adequate communication in various situations, taking into account relevant cultural patterns of communication and interaction; – critically analyze one's own professional activities and the work of others; – setting goals independently, searching for solutions and taking personal responsibility for their implementation; – to initiate, build, maintain and manage all types and forms of external and internal activity [26, p.1668]. Social identity lies in the individual's knowledge of his belonging to a certain social group, along with its value-semantic and emotional manifestations. Authenticity is compliance with oneself, one's idea, one's meaning of professional and personal self-determination, the desire for self-improvement, self-actualization, self-realization in the field of professional work. At the same time, the individual not only identifies himself with the surrounding socio-professional culture, but also considers himself as an equally significant and valuable reality in it [27, p.294].

Thus, the professional competence of a young specialist as a basic characteristic of his personality forms his readiness for professional activity, which is both the goal and the result of the professional and personal development of a specialist and represents the level of education reflected in the manifestation of his professionalism [34, p 130]. Moreover, the competency-based approach becomes the determining factor in higher professional education at the levels of theoretical understanding, technology of activity and personality structure.

The professional competence of a higher education teacher in modern education is characterized by a continuous desire to improve the quality of their abilities, knowledge, skills, and enrich their teaching activities with their creative contribution and individual experience. The psychological basis of competence is the desire to constantly develop and improve one's abilities and readiness for continuous learning. Only a teacher who thinks creatively, predicts the results of his work, designs and models the educational process is able to raise a highly qualified, in-demand new specialist in the modern world.

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