Formation of professional competence among students in a pedagogical university

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Abstract. In the current socio-economic landscape, there is a growing demand for socially active and creative individuals who can make independent decisions and take personal responsibility for their implementation. Consequently, the development of professional competence in individuals has become increasingly important. A high level of professional competence enhances the competitiveness of future specialists. The teaching profession, as one of the most complex forms of human activity, uniquely focuses on both its object and subject. This dual focus places unparalleled responsibility on educators to humanity and to individuals for the outcomes of their work. Consequently, it is essential to reassess the role of teaching in society and to intentionally guide future teachers toward embracing the humanistic values inherent in the profession.

1 Introduction

The professional competence of a teacher is manifested and applied in various ways throughout their daily teaching activities. In the current educational environment, several key factors are critical for developing a teacher's professional competence: understanding the scientific foundations of their future profession, practical application of this knowledge, and mastering essential professional skills and abilities.

The development of a future teacher's professional competence begins during their university education. This competence is built upon the study of fundamental (subject-based), specialized (didactic), and psychological-pedagogical knowledge, which collectively determine the level of skill mastery required for future professional activities.

Practical skills are particularly honed during teaching practice. This phase provides conditions that closely resemble those of independent teaching. During teaching practice, students engage in a range of functions (instructional, developmental, educational, etc.) and interact with various groups (students, parents, teachers, peers) similar to a professional teacher.

Furthermore, teaching practice is a critical component of professional training. It is grounded in fundamental, specialized, and psychological-pedagogical knowledge, offering practical insights into the patterns and principles of professional activity. This experience

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allows future teachers to master the organization of their work, serving as a "professional test" for their readiness to enter the teaching profession.

2 Materials and methods

Our research was grounded in psychological and pedagogical theories concerning personality development within social relations and work activities as crucial conditions for growth. It encompassed theories on motivation for educational activities, the principle of personal integrity, and systematic, scientific approaches that bridge theory and practice, emphasizing the dialectical unity of professional and educational challenges. Additionally, it drew on theories of personality activity and productive work, the dialectical interplay of public and personal interests, methodologies of professional training, and the creative and active engagement of individuals. The principles of unity in training, education, and development, along with the core tenets of the professional self-determination concept for youth, as developed by the Institute of General Secondary Education (IOSE) of the Russian Academy of Education, were also integral to our methodology.

To investigate our research problem, we employed several methods. These included theoretical analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature, examination of existing practices in developing professional competence during teaching practice, and various specific social and pedagogical research methods. These methods comprised questionnaires, interviews, surveys, observations, self-assessment techniques, self-description methods, expert evaluations, and analysis of the reporting documentation from students and teaching practice supervisors. Additionally, we conducted a pedagogical experiment to study the formation of professional competence in students during their teaching practice.

The issues explored by researchers are multifaceted, encompassing the influence of learning conditions, the formation and development of personal qualities, the enhancement of creativity as a component of competence, the development of individual aspects of professional activity, comprehensive training for future teachers, and systems of professional development, among others.

However, it is noteworthy that the development of professional competence during students' teaching practice has not been thoroughly examined. Addressing this gap will contribute to the theoretical understanding of students' professional competence.

3 Results and Discussion

In a rapidly evolving society, it is crucial to enhance all aspects of social life by blending positive traditional practices with innovative processes to sustain the momentum of ongoing transformations. The market economy places high demands on individuals, influencing their social, moral, and professional decisions. Teachers, as carriers of universal and national values, along with a wide range of professional competencies and personal qualities, play a key role in guiding individuals through these choices.

A progressive Russian school system requires competent teachers who are well-versed in their roles as educators, didacticians, methodologists, and psychotherapists. Such teachers must embody strong personalities, act as spiritual mentors for the younger generation, effectively organize students' cognitive activities, and foster creativity. Successful teacher preparation for professional tasks necessitates a well-structured program addressing various dimensions: universal, personal, professional, national-ethnic, regional, and more. This underscores the need for a substantial renewal of teacher education and the exploration of new approaches to training competent teachers for 21st-century Russian schools.
In modern contexts, the development of a teacher's professional competence is heavily reliant on understanding the scientific principles of their future professional activities, practical application of this knowledge, and mastering the necessary professional skills and abilities.

The foundation for a future teacher's professional competence is laid during their university studies. This foundation comprises the study of core (subject-specific), specialized (subject didactics), and psychological-pedagogical knowledge, which collectively determine the proficiency level in future professional activities.

Students actively develop practical skills during their teaching practice. This period simulates the conditions of independent teaching activities, providing a realistic environment for student-teachers to perform a range of functions (instructional, developmental, educational) and interact with various stakeholders (students, parents, teachers). This mirrors the responsibilities of a professional teacher.

Teaching practice serves as a critical component of professional training, integrating fundamental, specialized, and psychological-pedagogical knowledge. It offers practical insights into the patterns and principles of professional activities and helps students learn effective organizational methods. Essentially, it acts as a "professional trial" for aspiring teachers, bridging theoretical knowledge with practical application.

The formation of professional competence during teaching practice is influenced by several key pedagogical conditions. First, the content of students' activities during teaching practice must be comprehensive, encompassing organizational, educational, methodological, and research work. This approach encourages students to engage in self-control and self-analysis to evaluate the quality of their professional activities and the level of their developing professional competence.

Second, effective pedagogical management is essential, integrating the efforts of all participants in the educational process, including university teacher-methodologists, teacher-methodologists from educational institutions, and the students themselves. This collaborative approach ensures a cohesive and supportive environment for developing professional competence.

Third, the use of professional tests tailored to the teaching profession, organized in successive stages with increasing complexity, helps students progressively deepen their professional skills and knowledge.

Finally, fostering motivation for future professional activities is critical. This involves students critically evaluating their career choices and self-assessing their professional competence levels to ensure they are on the right path and continuously improving.

This course serves as a foundational link to more advanced specialized courses included in the senior year curriculum. By studying this course, students are expected to acquire a range of professional competencies. They should be able to select appropriate materials and methods for technological processes, apply advanced techniques for operating equipment in mechanical engineering, and utilize standard testing methods to assess material properties and finished products.

4 Conclusion

The pedagogical process consists of a series of interconnected actions by teachers and students aimed at helping students consciously acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities and develop the ability to apply them in practice. The literature identifies several approaches to making the learning process effective: learner-centered, systemic, and competency-based approaches.

The learner-centered approach views the student as the central focus of the educational process. The systemic approach emphasizes the relationship between assessment and the
goals, objectives, and organization of the learning process. The competency-based approach focuses on the overall criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the pedagogical process.

The pedagogical process is shaped by educational goals and the interaction of its main components: content, teaching, learning, and education. To effectively develop students' professional competence, it is vital to design an educational process where the content, organizational forms, and teaching methods align with the objectives of education and training.

These components should form the foundation for establishing organizational and pedagogical conditions that will ensure the development of competent specialists. According to N.N. Dvulitshanskaya, organizational and pedagogical conditions encompass the content and structure of educational subjects, educational and methodological support, and an innovative educational environment that facilitates the successful achievement of didactic tasks. In our view, these conditions are a set of interrelated factors essential for the effective development of students' skills and abilities, as well as the qualities needed for success in their professional endeavors.

A crucial element of the pedagogical process, which influences future professional activities, is its content. The content of professional education at the university is documented in the state education standard. This content embodies the social objectives set for the vocational education system in training qualified workers and specialists, thereby aligning with the specific goals of the pedagogical system.

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