



THE CONCEPT OF PROFESSIONAL-PRACTICAL COMPETENCE AND ITS CONTENT AND ESSENCE

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Abstract

The concept of professional-practical competence represents one of the key theoretical and methodological foundations of modern higher education. It defines the ability of an individual not only to possess professional knowledge and skills but also to apply them effectively in practical situations. This thesis examines the essence, structure, and content of professional-practical competence in the context of pedagogical and vocational education. The paper also analyzes its relationship with professional standards, lifelong learning, and innovative pedagogical approaches.

Keywords: professional competence, practical skills, education, competence-based approach, professionalism.

In the context of rapid scientific and technological progress, globalization, and growing competition in the labor market, higher education faces the urgent task of training specialists who are capable of independently applying knowledge to solve complex practical problems. The traditional model of education, focused mainly on the transfer of theoretical information, is gradually being replaced by a competence-based approach, which emphasizes the integration of knowledge, skills, and value-based attitudes. Within this paradigm, the concept of professional-practical competence acquires special significance.

Professional-practical competence reflects a person's ability to act effectively in real professional contexts, demonstrating not only technical mastery but also creativity, responsibility, and adaptability. It forms the foundation of professional development and lifelong learning. The relevance of studying this phenomenon lies in the need to align educational outcomes with the demands of modern industries and society,



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where flexibility, problem-solving, and continuous improvement are valued above rote learning [1].

The origins of the concept of competence can be traced back to the works of linguist Noam Chomsky, who in the 1960s introduced the term “linguistic competence” to describe an individual’s ability to use language effectively. Later, the notion was expanded into pedagogy and psychology, acquiring a broader meaning related to an individual’s capacity for successful activity. In the 1990s, the competence-based approach gained momentum in European educational policy through the Bologna Process, which reoriented higher education toward measurable learning outcomes [2].

Professional-practical competence, as a subset of general professional competence, focuses on the application of theoretical knowledge in specific work situations. It includes professional thinking, the ability to adapt to new tasks, use modern technology, and engage in reflective analysis of one’s own actions. According to contemporary scholars, it is not limited to mechanical execution of professional duties but involves the integration of cognitive, motivational, and behavioral components that form the professional identity of the individual.

The structure of professional-practical competence is multidimensional. It can be conditionally divided into four interrelated components:

Cognitive component — includes theoretical knowledge, understanding of professional norms, and analytical thinking required for problem-solving.

Operational (activity-based) component — encompasses the ability to apply methods, tools, and technologies to real tasks.

Personal-value component — reflects motivation, moral responsibility, and a conscious attitude toward professional activity.

Communicative component — involves interpersonal and teamwork skills necessary for interaction within a professional environment.

These components do not exist in isolation but interact dynamically in the process of professional growth. A competent professional demonstrates harmony between intellectual capability, technical proficiency, and ethical maturity. For example, a teacher’s professional-practical competence is manifested in their ability to design



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lessons, apply pedagogical technologies, assess results objectively, and continuously reflect on their teaching methods.

Practice is the main arena where competence becomes tangible. Professional-practical competence cannot be formed solely in the classroom — it requires situational experience and the opportunity to apply theoretical concepts in real-life conditions. This is why modern education systems emphasize practice-oriented learning, including internships, simulations, and project-based tasks. Through these activities, students learn to analyze, make decisions, and assume responsibility for their results [3].

In pedagogical contexts, for example, students develop professional-practical competence through teaching practice, lesson design, classroom management, and reflective assessment. In engineering or medical education, competence manifests through problem-solving in labs, clinical rotations, and fieldwork. In all these cases, the learner's ability to transform knowledge into effective action serves as the criterion of competence formation.

A crucial element of professional-practical competence is self-development. A modern specialist must not only perform tasks but also engage in continuous self-improvement, expanding both professional and social horizons. This involves self-assessment, reflection, and goal-setting. The development of professional competence, therefore, cannot be considered a one-time achievement; it is a lifelong process influenced by new technologies, social change, and individual aspirations.

Professional-practical competence is the cornerstone of modern education aimed at preparing specialists who are capable of autonomous and responsible action. Its essence lies in the integration of knowledge, skills, and personal qualities that enable a person to adapt to new tasks and environments. The competence-based approach shifts the focus from teaching to learning, from instruction to self-development, and from theory to practice.

As global trends continue to reshape the labor market, professional-practical competence becomes the key to lifelong employability and social relevance. Educational institutions must, therefore, prioritize active learning environments, reflective practices, and continuous collaboration with real-sector organizations. Only through such comprehensive efforts can higher education ensure the formation



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of professionals ready to act effectively, think critically, and contribute meaningfully to their field.

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