

N. I. Yelahina

ORCID <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5423-8327>

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I. Horbachevsky Ternopil National Medical University

TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF HIGHER MEDICAL EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND UKRAINE

Н. І. Єлагіна

Тернопільський національний медичний університет імені І. Я. Горбачевського МОЗ України

РОЗВИТОК ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ ВИКЛАДАЧІВ ЯК НЕВІД'ЄМНА СКЛАДОВА ВИЩОЇ МЕДИЧНОЇ ОСВІТИ У СПОЛУЧЕНИХ ШТАТАХ ТА В УКРАЇНІ

Abstract. The article is dedicated to the research and comparative analysis of the processes involved in the development of professional competence among teachers in higher medical educational institutions in the United States and Ukraine. Contemporary approaches to the training of teachers are examined, while common and distinctive characteristics of this process in the two countries are analyzed. The primary focus is on the importance of developing pedagogical skills, medical knowledge, and effective teaching methods to enhance the quality of medical education. By conducting a comparative analysis of the educational systems and approaches to preparing medical professionals in these countries, the article examines the principal strategies and initiatives aimed at enhancing the qualifications of teachers in the medical field. It delves into an analysis of current teaching principles at medical universities and colleges in the United States, highlighting the use of advanced pedagogical methods, innovative technologies, active engagement in scientific research, and practical skills in the educational process. The article also addresses the necessity of improving educational programs, implementing modern teaching approaches, and the importance of stimulating the scientific and pedagogical activities of teachers in medical institutions in Ukraine. Through this comparative analysis, the aim is to identify best practices and provide recommendations for further refining the training of teachers in these countries.

Key words: professional competence; teachers of medical institutions; educational systems; comparative analysis; teacher training; quality of medical education.

Анотація. Стаття присвячена дослідженню та порівняльному аналізу процесів розвитку професійно-педагогічної компетентності викладачів у медичних закладах вищої освіти у Сполучених Штатах та в Україні. Розглядаються сучасні тенденції та підходи до підготовки викладачів, аналізуються спільні та відмінні характеристики цього процесу у двох країнах. Основна увага приділяється важливості розвитку педагогічних навичок, медичних знань та ефективних методів навчання для підвищення якості медичної освіти. Здійснюючи порівняльний аналіз освітніх систем та підходів до підготовки медичних кадрів у цих країнах, у статті розглянуто основні стратегії та ініціативи, спрямовані на підвищення кваліфікації викладачів у медичній сфері. У статті проаналізовано сучасні тенденції викладання у медичних університетах та коледжах Сполучених Штатів. Висвітлено особливості використання передових педагогічних методик, інноваційних технологій, активне залучення до науково-дослідної роботи та практичних навичок у навчальний процес. У статті розглянуто необхідність удосконалення програм навчання, використання сучасних підходів до викладання та необхідність активізації наукової та педагогічної діяльності викладачів медичних закладів в Україні. Завдяки порівняльному аналізу можна виділити найкращі практики та зробити рекомендації для подальшого вдосконалення підготовки викладачів у цих країнах.

Ключові слова: професійна компетентність; викладачі медичних закладів; освітні системи; порівняльний аналіз; підготовка викладачів; якість медичної освіти.

Introduction. Medical education is an essential part of the global healthcare system. It requires high quality and professional training of teachers who impart knowledge and skills to future healthcare profes-

sionals. The professional and pedagogical competence of teachers in higher medical institutions is critically important to ensure a high standard of medical education and the training of future physicians and nurses. However, the process of developing this competence

may vary in different countries due to the specifics of higher education systems and cultural aspects.

A significant source for defining the current development strategy of medical education in Ukraine is the analysis of the global experience in the professional and pedagogical training of physicians. According to leading international and domestic scholars, one of the promising paths for educational reform is the implementation of the fundamental principles of a competency-based approach. A key figure in educational transformations is the teacher. At the current stage, there is a need to reconsider the content of activities for educators in medical education institutions in accordance with new requirements. This, in turn, requires an analysis of the quality of the professional and pedagogical activities of teachers from the perspective of competency development. An teacher should be creative, flexible, and capable of lifelong learning.

The researches of foreign scholars are dedicated to the development of higher medical education in the United States. It covers historical aspects and the current state of the functioning and development of the system for training future physicians. Researchers like J. Kelly, R. Danko, P. Dancing, D. Livingstone, and D. Hart have explored these issues. They have also examined the reform of the healthcare system and the training of medical professionals in the United States. Furthermore, scholars like D. Hilty, D. Pratt, and D. Braddock have investigated the components of professional competence and the development of professional qualities.

Various aspects of medical education in Ukraine and abroad have been explored by Ukrainian scholars. Specifically, the professional training of future physicians has been the focus of research by scholars such as M. Amosov, A. Vozianov, Yu. Voronenko, Ye. Honcharuk, Yu. Gubsky, O. Grando, V. Kalibabchuk, T. Khvalyboha, H. Klishch, O. Kobzar, V. Koliadenko, K. Kulchytsky, Z. Masny, A. Romodanov, O. Romanenko, O. Talalayenko, O. Chaliy, Yu. Shanin, V. Shevchuk, V. Shyrobokov, Yu. Shchulipenko, and Ya. Tsekhmister, V. Vykhreshch, N. Yelahina.

The principles of a modern system of continuous professional education have been examined by scholars like S. Honcharenko, N. Nychkalo, and S. Sysoieva. The psychological and pedagogical regularities of the development of professionally significant personal qualities of a teacher have been investigated by researchers such as V. Bezpalko, N. Kuzmina, A. Markova, V. Maslov, and V. Slastonin. The formation and development of pedagogical competence and

skills of teachers in higher non-pedagogical educational institutions have been addressed by scholars like S. Demchenko, O. Polozenko, I. Mishchenko, and O. Hura. The development of professional competence for educators in the system of postgraduate pedagogical education has been studied by scholars like T. Brazhe, A. Darhinsky, V. Kubinsky, and L. Sihaieva.

The aim – to develop and implement initiatives to enhance the professional and pedagogical competence of teachers in higher medical institutions in the United States, with the goal of improving the quality of education and the preparation of healthcare professionals in Ukraine.

Theoretical framework. The experience of developing the professional-pedagogical competence of higher medical education teachers in the United States is relevant for the contemporary reform of Ukraine's medical education system. It encompasses ways to enhance the quality of this competence, involving the retraining of teachers aimed at the effective acquisition of up-to-date knowledge, skills, and abilities, as well as the optimization of their moral and psychological readiness for professional activities in higher medical education institutions.

For the first time in the history of higher education, an attempt was made to create a system of educational qualification levels not based on a complex of studied disciplines, the number of hours, years of study, and a range of other indicators of the educational process. Instead, it was based on the consideration of learning outcomes, fundamental changes in its organization, modernization, and standardization of teaching and assessment methods to determine the level of competency achievement. This marked the formation of a new education paradigm, the history of which began in the 1970s in the United States [1, 4].

Competency-based education began to gain widespread acceptance in many developed countries around the mid-1980s. In various modifications, it became established in the education systems of countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, Finland, Austria, the United States, Canada, the Netherlands [15].

The concept of “Competency-Based Education” emerged in the United States in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Its foundation was based on the demands of business and entrepreneurship regarding graduates of higher education institutions, reflecting their uncertainty and lack of experience in integrating and applying knowledge in decision-making within specific situations [7, p. 90]. One of the early publications on this

issue was the article by D. McClelland, titled “Testing for Competence, Not Intelligence”.

Interestingly, it was in the United Kingdom, not the United States, where the concept of competency-based education was adopted as the basis for the national qualification standards system in 1986 and received official support from the governing authorities. As a result, in 1997, the program “Definition and Selection of Competencies: Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations” (DeSeCo) was initiated within the framework of the National Center for Education Statistics in the USA [2, p. 695]. Competency-based education modernized established educational values and marked the beginning of a new phase in the education systems of the United States.

After completing their education at higher education institutions, American physicians are required to obtain a license by passing tests on basic skills, general knowledge, and subject-specific knowledge. Students who continue their education at the master’s or doctoral level and choose additional courses in pedagogy and teaching methods must take a test in pedagogical competence related to their subject, which allows them to work in educational institutions (subject-specific pedagogical knowledge) [12, p. 118].

Pedagogical performance in medical educational institutions in Ukraine is carried out by teachers who got only a physician education. It is expected that the faculty of medical institutions in Ukraine should get both a physician and teacher education [2, 3]. However, as noted by Professor L. Neuman from Boston University in Massachusetts, the USA, the majority of professionals working in medical universities in the USA do not have comprehensive both medical and educational training that integrates medical, psychological-pedagogical expertise [8, 14]. Therefore, teachers who show interest in pedagogical activities take on leadership responsibilities in the educational process without the necessary preparation. As a result, an important factor that contributes to the development of pedagogical competence and the improvement of pedagogical skills for medical teachers is education in postgraduate pedagogical institutions (master’s or doctoral programs).

In general, university teachers participate in ad hoc training, opting for educational and professional courses from a regional or national course catalog that are believed to help them develop professional competence [9]. A greater awareness that competence is the result of education, self-education, and self-improvement by teachers will be a pivotal step in enhancing the quality of teaching and elevating educational objectives.

Competence is determined by an individual’s experience, their commitment to continuous learning and self-improvement, and their creative approach to their professional field.

A. M. Eraut pays particular attention to the features of professional-pedagogical competence of American teachers [11]. In his work, the scholar attributes the following characteristics to American teachers as active implementation of alternative forms and programs of education, which allow flexibility in the conditions of professional growth, cater to individual needs, promote continuous professional development, and align with the realities of pedagogical practice in higher education. In the process of defining professional-pedagogical competencies, A. M. Eraut emphasizes their general nature and a broader understanding compared to the qualifications of a worker [11].

From the perspective of experts in the United States, professional-pedagogical competence for the faculty incorporates five main aspects, which are the requirements for educators, i. e. general knowledge and awareness; fundamental skills; subject matter knowledge related to what is being taught; knowledge in pedagogy, psychology, and philosophy; teaching proficiency. Simultaneously, American scientists K. E. Eble and W. J. McKeachie believe that the development of professionalism in higher education teachers involves deepening their knowledge in the field of learning theory, enhancing professional skills and competencies, shaping professional consciousness, and pedagogical orientation in their personality, as well as realizing the need for continuous self-improvement [1].

The content of professional development for teachers encompasses issues related to the transparency of education, teaching quality, objective assessment, collaboration among educational process participants, and creating opportunities to study the fundamental mechanisms for involving the community in the work of educational institutions to improve the educational process [5].

Among the forms of qualification enhancement, expert scholars [11] highlight various types of courses (day/evening, in-person/online, long-term/short-term, weekend/non-working days, with or without leave from work, summer/intersemester, etc.), which are offered by research centers and consulting firms and follow programs with both theoretical and practical orientations.

In the United States, the development of professional-pedagogical competence among teachers in higher medical institutions is based on several key principles. Firstly, there is an emphasis on active learning, problem-based teaching methods, and the development of

critical thinking skills in students. Teachers are expected to be competent in using modern pedagogical approaches [1, 4, 14].

Additionally, medical education in the United States often focuses on practical clinical skills and adherence to ethical standards, so teachers must also possess high medical competence. This may include mandatory certification and ongoing professional development [8].

The preparation of teachers in medical universities in the United States for pedagogical activities involves several stages and aspects, including:

Professional education. Most medical teachers hold advanced academic degrees (doctoral, MD, PhD, etc.) in medical fields, which serve as the foundation for their teaching roles.

Teacher preparation. Teachers undergo training in pedagogy and teaching methods. This may include participation in pedagogical courses, seminars, and workshops. Many universities have higher education centers where teachers can receive pedagogical training.

Clinical experience. It is important for teachers to have clinical experience in their respective medical specialties. Many medical university teachers continue to work in clinics and hospitals to maintain their clinical competence.

Teaching methodologies. Teachers study modern teaching methodologies, including active learning, problem-based learning, distance education, and the use of innovative technologies in teaching.

Quality evaluation. Medical universities carefully select teachers and assess their teaching effectiveness. Teachers are expected to demonstrate high-quality teaching and effectiveness in working with students.

Pedagogical centers. Many universities have specialized pedagogical centers that provide support and resources to teachers for improving their teaching practices.

Engagement in research. Teachers often participate in scientific research related to medicine and education. This contributes to the improvement of their teaching activities and the development of new teaching methods.

Continuous learning. Teachers continually enhance their skills and knowledge by participating in conferences, seminars, and other professional development opportunities [4, 7, 12].

When preparing teachers for pedagogical roles in medical universities, the United States emphasizes the integration of clinical and educational experiences, the development of teaching and learning skills, and the encouragement of pedagogical development among university staff.

The Ukrainian medical education system also emphasizes practical training, but it has its own characteristics. In higher medical education institutions in Ukraine, teachers are expected to have high medical and pedagogical competence [6, 10].

The Ukrainian education system is actively evolving and continually adapting to international standards. Teachers in Ukraine undergo mandatory certification and participate in professional development courses to enhance their professional preparation.

A comparison of the process of developing professional-pedagogical competence of teachers in higher medical education institutions in the United States and Ukraine reveals some common elements. Both countries aim to prepare teachers who possess both high medical and pedagogical competence. Additionally, in both cases, there is an emphasis on practical skills and active learning.

However, there are differences as well. For instance, the higher education system in the United States is more fragmented and diverse compared to the Ukrainian system, which has undergone significant changes in recent years. It is important to identify best practices in both countries and enhance teacher training to ensure the highest quality of medical education.

Conclusions and Prospects for Research. The development of professional competence among teachers in higher medical education institutions is an essential element in preparing high-quality medical professionals. This process differs in approaches and specifics between the United States and Ukraine; however, it is aimed at achieving a common goal, i.e. improving medical education. Further analysis and the exchange of experiences between these countries can contribute to further enhancing the preparation of teachers in the field of medicine.

Expected outcomes are an increase in the level of professional-educational competence of teachers in higher medical institutions in the United States; improvement in the quality of medical education and the preparation of future medical professionals; implementation of the obtained results and methodologies into the system of higher medical education in Ukraine for the purpose of its enhancement.

Both countries have the potential for further improvement in the preparation of teachers, and the exchange of experiences between them can be beneficial for enhancing medical education in both the United States and Ukraine. The development of professional competence among teachers is a crucial component in shaping a new generation of high-quality and competent medical professionals.

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E-mail address for correspondence: yelaginani@tdmu.edu.ua