

**DEVELOPING SOCIAL COMPETENCIES AMONG PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS IN  
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

**Hojieva Nasiba Bahodirovna**

Asia International University

**Abstract:** This article examines the development of social competencies among prospective teachers studying in higher education institutions. It provides a conceptual overview of social competence, its structure, and its importance in teacher training. The paper discusses effective strategies for cultivating social skills through active learning methods, social projects, and communication-based technologies. It also offers recommendations based on both international experience and national traditions.

**Keywords:** social competence, communication culture, teacher, collaboration, teaching practice, educational innovation, active methods

### Introduction

Today, changes in the education sector and new societal demands are radically transforming the requirements placed on pedagogical personnel. A modern teacher is not only an instructor of a particular subject but must also be socially active, communicative, collaborative, and emotionally intelligent. Therefore, developing social competencies among future teachers in higher education institutions has become one of the most urgent tasks.

### Relevance of the Topic

The Laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Education,” “On the Status of Teachers and Mentors,” and the “Concept for the Development of Education until 2030” emphasize the importance of personal and social competencies in the training of teaching staff.

A contemporary schoolteacher must possess essential competencies such as communication, active listening, teamwork, conflict resolution, adaptation to diverse social environments, empathy, and responsibility. Unfortunately, in practice, theoretical aspects of education often dominate, while insufficient attention is given to developing social skills. Hence, this article analyzes the scientific and practical foundations for developing social competencies among future teachers.

### Purpose of the Study

To analyze effective methods and strategies for developing social competencies among prospective teachers in higher education institutions and to provide recommendations for practical implementation.

### Objectives of the Study

- To clarify the concept of social competence;
- To demonstrate the role of social competencies in pedagogical education;
- To analyze effective methods and technologies used in developing social competencies;
- To identify opportunities for integrating these competencies into the educational process.

## Main Content

One of the most important tasks of the contemporary education system is to educate individuals who are not only knowledgeable but socially active and capable of interacting responsibly in society. This is achieved through the formation and development of social competencies.

Social competence refers to a person's ability to collaborate effectively within a group, communicate appropriately, make ethical decisions in various social situations, respect cultural diversity, and correctly understand the needs of others.

These competencies ensure the professional effectiveness of teachers, facilitate conflict resolution, foster civic responsibility, increase competitiveness in the labor market, and contribute to creating a humane and collaborative atmosphere in educational institutions.

## Components of Social Competence

- Communicative skills
- Cooperation
- Social responsibility
- Empathy
- Cultural competence

## International Experience

In many developed countries—such as EU member states, Finland, Canada, and Japan—“soft skills” are considered core competencies. In Uzbekistan, these competencies can be developed in harmony with national values, traditions, and collective life practices.

Developing social competencies among prospective teachers is increasingly recognized as a core component of professional preparation in higher education. Contemporary educational environments require teachers not only to possess disciplinary knowledge but also to demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively, collaborate, manage classroom interactions, and respond empathetically to students' needs. In this context, the development of social competencies becomes a multidimensional process shaped by psychological, pedagogical, sociocultural, and technological factors.

First, social competence is strongly linked to communication skills, which serve as the foundation for successful pedagogical practice. Research shows that teachers with advanced communication abilities are better equipped to create a supportive learning climate, facilitate constructive dialogues, and foster student engagement. Higher education institutions therefore play a crucial role in integrating communication-centered pedagogical strategies—such as dialogic learning, peer interaction models, and reflective communication training—into teacher education curricula.

Second, collaboration and teamwork are essential dimensions of social competence. Prospective teachers must develop the ability to work effectively with colleagues, administrators, parents, and diverse student populations. Cooperative learning strategies, group-based assignments, and collaborative teaching practicum experiences have been shown to significantly enhance

teamwork skills, enabling future teachers to internalize the value of shared responsibility and collective problem-solving.

Empathy, as another central aspect of social competence, contributes to teachers' capacity to understand students' emotional, social, and cultural backgrounds. Empathic teachers create safe and inclusive classroom environments where learners feel respected and supported. Higher education programs can strengthen empathy development by integrating experiential learning activities, multicultural education courses, and reflective practices that encourage self-awareness and emotional intelligence.

Conflict management is another critical competency for teachers. School environments naturally involve interpersonal tensions, behavioral challenges, and differing viewpoints. Prospective teachers must acquire strategies for identifying early signs of conflict, mediating disagreements, and applying constructive resolution techniques. Role-playing simulations, case study discussions, and workshops based on models such as the Thomas–Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument are effective tools in teacher training programs.

Social adaptability and flexibility are also essential for managing diverse and dynamic classroom settings. Rapid technological advancements, multicultural classrooms, and the growing complexity of student needs require teachers to be adaptive thinkers. Higher education institutions can nurture adaptability through exposure to varied teaching contexts, integration of digital learning tools, and problem-based learning approaches that stimulate critical and creative thinking.

Moreover, the rise of digital education and online communication has expanded the understanding of social competence. Teachers must now demonstrate competency in digital etiquette, online collaboration, virtual classroom management, and remote communication strategies. The integration of digital platforms, virtual simulations, and AI-based learning systems into teacher preparation programs has enhanced the capacity of future teachers to communicate and collaborate effectively in technology-rich environments.

Leadership constitutes an advanced form of social competence that empowers teachers to motivate students, influence school culture, and contribute to institutional decision-making. Leadership development through mentoring programs, student-led initiatives, and community-engagement projects allows prospective teachers to cultivate confidence, responsibility, and strategic thinking.

Overall, the development of social competencies among prospective teachers is not a single-course outcome but a continuous, integrated process embedded in instructional design, experiential learning, and institutional culture. Higher education institutions must adopt holistic, competency-based models that align theoretical knowledge with practical skill development. When effectively implemented, such models produce teachers who are socially aware, communicatively competent, emotionally intelligent, and professionally prepared to meet the evolving demands of modern education systems.

## Key Considerations

1. Modern educational needs
2. Importance of social competencies

3. Need for a comprehensive approach
4. Role of practice and reflection
5. Role of professors
6. Improving the assessment system
7. Expected outcomes

#### Conclusion and Recommendations

1. Develop a strategy for forming social competencies.
2. Include topics on communication, cultural interaction, emotional intelligence.
3. Engage students in social projects.
4. Create assessment criteria and diagnostic tools.

#### References:

1. Qurbonova S. (2021). Pedagogical Communication Competencies Development. Tashkent: O'qituvchi.
2. Abdurasulova N. (2020). Social Abilities in Pedagogical Activity. Samarkand: Ilm.
3. OECD (2018). The Future of Education and Skills 2030. OECD Publishing.