

**CURRENT ISSUES IN PREPARING STUDENTS FOR PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

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**Abstract**

This article covers the theoretical and practical foundations of the process of preparing students for professional activities, the methods and conditions for forming professional competencies in the educational process, and the role of modern approaches and innovative technologies. Furthermore, factors affecting the effectiveness of vocational training are analyzed.

**Keywords**

vocational training, competence, innovative education, practice, pedagogical technologies.

**Introduction**

In a global competitive environment, preparing specialists who can achieve success is a priority for every higher education institution. Today, the labor market demands personnel who are highly qualified, capable of making independent decisions, and possess practical skills. This brings the issue of preparing students for professional activity to the center of the education system.

Vocational training is not just a collection of theoretical knowledge, but a complex pedagogical process encompassing practical skills, professional competencies, attitudes, and personal characteristics. It consists of the following components:

- Professional knowledge – sectoral theoretical foundations, interdisciplinary integration.
- Professional practical skills – the ability to carry out production, research, and service processes.
- Personal and communicative competencies – making correct decisions in problem situations, teamwork, leadership.

To achieve effectiveness in preparing for professional activity, the following conditions must be considered:

- Organization of education based on a modular-rating system;
- Involving students in practice-oriented projects;
- Creating an open educational environment integrated with production;
- Developing curricula and programs in cooperation with employers.

Innovative Technologies and Their Role. It should be noted that creativity in the process of adapting students to professional-pedagogical activity is understood as the basis of the innovative activity of educators and the integration of their professional and personal qualities.

A number of pedagogical scientists have approached the concept of "creativity" differently in their scientific research. Creativity is not simply creating something new; it is the fundamental basis for adapting students to professional-pedagogical activity and the point of mutual integration of the teacher's personal and professional qualities.

Two Poles of Creativity. M.N. Gnatko, researching the nature of creativity, divides its mechanisms into two vital stages:

1. Potential creativity: This is a person's internal intellectual reserve, a state of constant readiness to implement new ideas in any situation.
2. Manifestation in activity: At this stage, the teacher emerges not only as a theorist but as a "master of heuristic solutions."

Creative Competence: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

Adapting students to a professional environment requires high creative competence from the pedagogue. This competence matures in the following processes:

- Skillfully "absorbing" innovations into one's work style rather than just mastering them;
- Perceiving pedagogical difficulties not as obstacles, but as creative tasks;
- Possessing original ideas and finding intuitive solutions in unexpected situations.

The following technologies play an important role in enhancing students' professional preparation in modern education:

- Case-method – analyzing real-life problems;
- Blitz-trainings and simulation exercises – modeling professional activity;
- Project-based learning – developing independent work and creativity;
- Digitalization – establishing distance and blended learning on platforms such as Moodle, Google Classroom, and Teams. Professional internships increase students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge in life. It is necessary to organize practice correctly in higher education institutions, taking into account the opinions of employers and showing students the real work environment. Pedagogical creativity is not just the skill of teaching a lesson, but the innovative energy transformation that can make a student part of the professional environment.

International Experience. Today, modernization processes of vocational education are underway in many developed countries. Europe's ECTS system, Germany's dual education model, the outcome-based approach in the USA, and pedagogy based on communication and practical skills in Finland are all effective models.

Germany's Experience: In the dual education system, students carry out part of their education at the workplace within employing enterprises.

Finland's Experience: The educational process is focused on a personalized approach, communication, solving problem situations, and developing creativity.

Uzbekistan's Practice: In recent years, the approximation of education to practice, dual education pilot projects, the "master-apprentice" system, and industrial internships are being actively implemented.

Methods for Enhancing Motivation. Effective professional training also requires forming internal motivation, an active citizenship position, and a sense of responsibility in students. The following methods are effective:

- Goal-oriented individual work plans;
- Professional self-assessment and reflection processes;
- Involving students in scientific research;
- Participation in youth unions and professional clubs.

For example, in France, when evaluating students' professional preparation, not only academic indicators but also social activity and participation in public works are taken into account.

Results of Empirical Research and Proposals

Surveys conducted in Uzbek universities show that 65% of students demand an increase in the number of practical classes, and 40% demand stronger employer participation. Based on this data, the following proposals were developed:

1. Aligning curricula with industrial clusters;
2. Modeling practice in hazardous professions through the introduction of virtual simulators and VR technologies;
3. Expanding the dual system with scholarships and job guarantees for students;
4. Uniting teachers and employers through annual "Professional Competence Forums."

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