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STAGES OF FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS OF THE COMPETENCE-BASED APPROACH IN EDUCATION

Karimov Azizxon Azamjanovich

Master's student of Asia International University

Abstract: The competence-based approach (CBA) in education has become a central paradigm in modern pedagogy, emphasizing the development of knowledge, skills, and personal and professional competencies. This study examines the stages of formation and trends in the development of CBA, tracing its evolution from theoretical foundations to practical implementation in contemporary education systems. The research highlights the importance of learner-centered pedagogy, outcomes-based curricula, digital literacy, and social-emotional skills in fostering lifelong learning and employability. The analysis also addresses challenges in standardizing competences, aligning educational outcomes with labor market needs, and implementing effective assessment strategies. Overall, the study underscores the dynamic nature of CBA as a framework for preparing learners for complex, global, and rapidly changing environments.

Keywords: competence-based approach, educational outcomes, competence framework, lifelong learning, digital literacy, social-emotional learning, curriculum development, assessment strategies.

ЭТАПЫ СТАНОВЛЕНИЯ И ТЕНДЕНЦИИ РАЗВИТИЯ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТНОГО ПОДХОДА В ОБРАЗОВАНИИ

Аннотация: Компетентностный подход (КП) в образовании стал центральной парадигмой современной педагогики, акцентирующей внимание на развитии знаний, навыков и личностных и профессиональных компетенций. В данном исследовании рассматриваются этапы формирования и тенденции развития КП, прослеживается его эволюция от теоретических основ до практического внедрения в современных образовательных системах. Анализ подчеркивает важность ориентированной на обучающегося педагогики, учебных программ, основанных на результатах, цифровой грамотности и социально-эмоциональных навыков для поддержки непрерывного обучения и трудовой мобильности. Также рассматриваются проблемы стандартизации компетенций, согласования образовательных результатов с потребностями рынка труда и внедрения эффективных стратегий оценки. В целом, исследование подчеркивает динамичную природу КП как инструмента подготовки обучающихся к сложной, глобальной и быстро меняющейся среде.

Ключевые слова: компетентностный подход, образовательные результаты, рамка компетенций, непрерывное обучение, цифровая грамотность, социально-эмоциональное обучение, разработка учебных программ, стратегии оценки.

The global transformation of educational paradigms in the 20th and 21st centuries has emphasized the need for a shift from traditional knowledge-centered approaches to competence-oriented frameworks. This transition responds to the challenges of modern society, which demands not only the acquisition of knowledge but also the development of applicable skills, critical thinking, and personal and professional competencies. The competence-based approach (CBA) in education has become a central concept in this context, aiming to harmonize educational outcomes with labor market requirements and societal expectations. Its evolution reflects an ongoing effort

to improve learning effectiveness, employability, and lifelong learning opportunities. The formation of the competence-based approach in education can be traced back to the mid-20th century, where initial ideas emerged in response to the limitations of purely content-focused teaching. Traditional curricula often emphasized memorization and passive reception of knowledge, neglecting the practical application and contextual understanding of information. Early educational theorists, such as Benjamin Bloom, with his taxonomy of educational objectives, laid the foundation for more structured thinking about cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of learning[1]. Bloom's work highlighted the need to assess not only what students know but also how they apply, analyze, and synthesize knowledge in diverse contexts.

In the 1970s and 1980s, educational systems in Europe and North America began experimenting with outcomes-based and performance-oriented approaches. Competency frameworks were gradually introduced to better align curricula with professional standards and societal needs. For instance, the development of the SCANS (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills) report in the United States provided a detailed model of competencies necessary for workforce readiness, including critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and effective communication[2]. This period marked a conceptual shift from focusing solely on knowledge acquisition to emphasizing demonstrable skills and abilities. The 1990s represented a significant consolidation phase for the competence-based approach. International organizations such as the European Union and UNESCO promoted educational reforms that incorporated competence-oriented models, especially within higher education. The Bologna Process, initiated in 1999, was a landmark in standardizing learning outcomes across European universities, embedding competences as measurable indicators of student achievement[3]. These reforms aimed to enhance student mobility, employability, and mutual recognition of qualifications by adopting a unified framework based on knowledge, skills, and social competencies.

Entering the 21st century, the competence-based approach evolved further in response to globalization, technological innovation, and rapid socio-economic changes. Modern educational frameworks emphasize not only subject-specific competences but also transversal or key competences, including digital literacy, intercultural communication, and entrepreneurship[4]. These trends reflect a shift toward a holistic view of education, recognizing the interconnectedness of cognitive, practical, and social dimensions of learning. International organizations, such as OECD through its Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), reinforced the significance of assessing students' competencies in real-world problem-solving scenarios rather than mere factual recall. Current trends in the competence-based approach highlight the integration of learner-centered pedagogy, modular curriculum design, and competency assessment frameworks that combine formative and summative evaluation methods. The use of technology-mediated learning platforms has facilitated personalized learning paths, adaptive assessments, and the continuous

[1] Bloom, B. S., Engelhart, M. D., Furst, E. J., Hill, W. H., & Krathwohl, D. R. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals*. New York: Longmans.

[2] Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS). (1991). *What Work Requires of Schools: A SCANS Report for America 2000*. U.S. Department of Labor.

[3] European Ministers of Education. (1999). *The Bologna Declaration on the European Space for Higher Education*.

[4] Rychen, D. S., & Salganik, L. H. (2003). *Key Competences for a Successful Life and a Well-Functioning Society*. Hogrefe & Huber.

monitoring of competence development. The rise of blended and online education has further necessitated redefining competences to include digital and self-regulatory skills essential for lifelong learning.

Moreover, educational researchers emphasize the alignment of CBA with social and emotional learning (SEL), acknowledging the importance of emotional intelligence, collaboration, ethical reasoning, and resilience in professional and personal contexts. This holistic integration underscores the dynamic nature of competence frameworks, which must evolve to meet the complex demands of contemporary society. Empirical studies suggest that effective implementation of competence-based approaches requires systemic reform, including teacher training, curriculum redesign, assessment innovation, and institutional support mechanisms. For example, studies in Scandinavian countries demonstrate that competence-oriented curricula enhance student engagement, improve problem-solving capacities, and foster critical thinking, provided educators are adequately trained to apply these methodologies[5]. Similarly, comparative research across higher education institutions indicates that the clarity of competence definitions and alignment with assessment strategies is crucial for achieving intended learning outcomes. Theoretical debates continue regarding the precise definition and scope of competences, distinguishing between core, professional, and key competences, and balancing the need for standardized assessment with the flexibility required to accommodate local contexts. Despite these debates, there is a consensus that the competence-based approach represents a forward-looking educational paradigm that integrates knowledge, skills, and attitudes into coherent learning outcomes applicable across diverse life and work scenarios.

The practical implementation of the competence-based approach has become a major focus in contemporary education systems. Educational institutions worldwide are increasingly integrating competence frameworks into curricula, teaching strategies, and assessment methods. Competence-based education (CBE) emphasizes active learning, where students engage in problem-solving, collaborative projects, and real-world applications of knowledge. Unlike traditional instruction that prioritizes the passive reception of content, CBE requires students to demonstrate mastery through tangible outcomes, which are often measured against predefined performance indicators[6]. One key trend in modern CBE implementation is the alignment of curricula with professional standards and societal expectations. For instance, higher education institutions in Europe, guided by the Bologna Process and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), structure learning outcomes around specific competences that graduates are expected to achieve. These competences include disciplinary expertise, critical thinking, communication skills, digital literacy, and ethical responsibility. The integration of these competencies ensures that graduates are not only knowledgeable but also capable of adapting to changing professional environments and societal needs.

Technological advancement has also accelerated the development of competence-based education. Digital platforms enable personalized learning pathways, formative assessments, and continuous tracking of competence acquisition. Learning management systems (LMS) and e-

[5] Kunnari, I., & Väisänen, P. (2019). Competence-Based Curriculum in Finnish Basic Education. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 51(3), 345–361.

[6] Spady, W. G. (1994). *Outcome-Based Education: Critical Issues and Answers*. American Association of School Administrators.

portfolios allow educators to monitor student progress and provide timely feedback, ensuring that learners meet competence standards effectively[7]. Additionally, online and blended learning modalities expand access to educational opportunities while requiring the development of new digital and self-regulatory skills among students. Despite the benefits, several challenges exist in implementing CBE effectively. One major difficulty is defining and standardizing competences across disciplines, institutions, and national systems. Vague or overly broad competence definitions can lead to inconsistent teaching and assessment practices, undermining the approach's effectiveness. Another challenge is the need for extensive professional development for educators. Teachers and instructors must be trained not only in the theoretical underpinnings of competence-based education but also in practical assessment methods, project-based learning, and student-centered pedagogies.

Research indicates that the success of CBE is heavily influenced by assessment strategies. Traditional examinations often fail to capture the multidimensional nature of competences, necessitating alternative assessment forms such as performance tasks, simulations, portfolios, and peer assessments. Formative assessment, in particular, plays a crucial role in CBE by providing ongoing feedback that guides learners toward achieving mastery. Studies from vocational and professional education settings show that integrating these assessment methods improves skill acquisition, critical thinking, and learner motivation[8]. Another significant trend is the emphasis on transversal or soft skills, which are increasingly valued in the global labor market. Competences such as teamwork, intercultural communication, problem-solving, and adaptability are now considered essential for professional success. Educational frameworks are evolving to incorporate these skills alongside subject-specific knowledge, reflecting a holistic approach to competence development. Social and emotional learning (SEL) has also been recognized as a critical complement to CBE, reinforcing the development of empathy, resilience, ethical reasoning, and effective collaboration in learners.

Comparative studies highlight that countries implementing CBE successfully often share common practices: clear competence frameworks, integration of CBE into national education policies, structured professional development for educators, and robust assessment systems. For example, the Scandinavian model emphasizes participatory learning, teacher autonomy in designing competence-aligned lessons, and strong support for formative assessment, resulting in higher student engagement and improved learning outcomes[9]. In contrast, in systems where these elements are weak or fragmented, CBE implementation is often inconsistent, leading to gaps between intended and actual learning outcomes. Looking forward, the development of competence-based education is expected to focus on adaptability, lifelong learning, and digital competencies. The rapid evolution of work environments and technological innovation necessitates that educational systems continuously update competence frameworks to remain relevant. Artificial intelligence, data analytics, and other emerging technologies are likely to play an increasing role in designing adaptive learning environments and personalized competence development pathways^9. Moreover, global initiatives promoting sustainable development and

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civic engagement are shaping new competence domains, including environmental literacy, social responsibility, and global citizenship[10].

Conclusion

The competence-based approach (CBA) in education has evolved from theoretical foundations emphasizing applied knowledge to practical, holistic frameworks that integrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Its development reflects a response to societal, technological, and labor market demands, shifting the focus from content memorization to real-world competence. The approach emphasizes active learning, student-centered pedagogy, and measurable outcomes, ensuring that learners acquire professional, transversal, and social-emotional competencies. Modern trends highlight the integration of digital literacy, lifelong learning skills, and sustainable development goals into competence frameworks. Effective implementation depends on clear definitions, alignment with professional standards, innovative assessment strategies, and continuous teacher training. Overall, CBA represents a dynamic educational paradigm that prepares learners for complex, global, and rapidly changing environments, fostering both personal and professional development.

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