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Article

Preparing Future Educator-Facilitators for Professional Activity As A Pedagogical Problem

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Abstract: Globally, a significant body of scientific research focuses on developing a didactic system aimed at preparing future educators as facilitators in their professional and pedagogical activities. This process integrates the fundamentals of neuroscience in education and learning environment design to foster general cultural, artistic, and aesthetic abilities among students. Furthermore, utilizing art therapy tools is highly emphasized to further enhance their logical, creative, and independent thinking skills.

In particular, enhancing the methodical preparation of future educators based on facilitation qualities, enabling personal and professional development through Virtual and Augmented Reality (VR/AR) pedagogical technologies, and developing innovative and interactive software tools play a crucial role in students' professional growth, ultimately shaping children into well-rounded individuals. Concurrently, developing adaptive mechanisms to implement the didactic potential of preparing future educators as facilitators into an integrated system of intensive educational technology sessions remains one of the most pressing challenges today.

Keywords: facilitation, future educators, professional training, preschool education, pedagogical competence, innovative pedagogical technologies, professional readiness, didactic system, VR/AR pedagogical technologies, professional formation.

1. Introduction

In the 21st century, education is globally recognized as a core factor driving sustainable development. The international education concept established by UNESCO through 2030 identifies several priority tasks for vocational training: developing professional flexibility, promoting lifelong professional development, integrating digital technologies into professional activities, fostering occupations focused on sustainable development, and enhancing professional potential through creativity and critical thinking [1]. Advancing the professional knowledge of future educators requires cultivating their capacity for independent thought, optimizing the educational-tuition process, as well as developing innovative educational technologies and implementing them effectively into practice. To organize this process efficiently, it is essential to advance educators' professional skills based on contemporary educational approaches. Concurrently, there is a critical need to reinforce skills that play a pivotal role in pedagogical activity, such as critical thinking and problem-solving in challenging situations [2].

Today, the challenges encountered in the professional training of future educators necessitate the definition of precise strategies and the development of corresponding pedagogical approaches. These issues can be mitigated by enhancing the quality of the educational process and stimulating the creative activity of educators. Consequently,

harmonizing pedagogical activity with contemporary innovative technologies is becoming a primary task of the educational system.

The preparation of future educators for professional activity must be realized not only through advancing their knowledge and skills, but also by fostering their capacity for independent thought and the ability to apply modern innovations. This issue should be regarded as one of the fundamental pedagogical problems of modern education [3].

In this context, the insights of our President, Sh. Mirziyoyev, who stated, "It is precisely the attention paid to the sphere of preschool education that will create a solid foundation for the future development of our country", carry profound significance in elucidating the issues of professional training for future educators. High-quality education provided during early childhood and preschool years creates substantial opportunities for the future and contributes significantly to the social and economic prosperity of the nation. This, in turn, demands a rigorous professional preparation of future educators [4].

Hence, investments directed towards the upbringing and education of early childhood and preschool-aged children fully justify themselves in the future [5]. Therefore, training future educators based on the contemporary principles of preschool education stands as a crucial problem of modern pedagogy. It is essential to develop their skills in utilizing innovative technologies and optimizing the educational-tuition process.

This, consequently, imposes a significant responsibility on the pedagogical educators operating within the preschool education system. Concurrently, preparing future educators to fulfill these responsibilities is viewed as an urgent pedagogical problem. The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Preschool Education and Care," adopted on December 16, 2019, sets high standards for the pedagogical staff of preschool educational organizations. Pursuant to Article 39 of the Law, pedagogical educators are required to provide education and upbringing to children at a professional level, adhere to pedagogical ethics, and protect the honor and dignity of the child [6].

Therefore, in the training of future educators, specific attention must be directed toward complying with pedagogical ethics, respecting children's personal rights, and developing the professional skills necessary to implement state educational programs. Advancing their qualifications and shaping their pedagogical mastery is an indispensable component of modern pedagogical activity [7].

An educator’s qualitative performance in planning, appropriately organizing, executing, and evaluating educational and upbringing processes constitutes an integral part of their core professional readiness [8]. Future educators must possess rigorous professional training so that they are capable of fostering children's individual development, expanding their interests, and ensuring a favorable environment that yields substantial opportunities for them.

The pedagogical paradigms of developed nations place considerable emphasis on advancing the professional mastery and moral-ethical qualities of future educators. The preschool education system can be positively influenced by organizing well-structured professional training through the harmony of the higher education framework and the lifelong learning system. Consequently, it is essential to further optimize the professional training of future educators within higher education institutions and to expand its methodological infrastructure.

The preschool education system serves as a critical stage of continuous education, fostering not only tuition but also the moral, ethical, aesthetic, and physical development of children. In today's information technology era, the education sector is acquiring even greater significance in conjunction with the rapid development of society and the digital economy [9].

In this regard, improving the didactic potential of training future educators as facilitators within the process of preparing them for professional activity stands as an urgent scientific problem. Ultimately, the quality of the preschool education system can be enhanced by strengthening professional preparation based on contemporary pedagogical approaches.

Educating an individual to become a comprehensively developed person is an exceptionally complex process, the execution of which demands a high level of pedagogical qualification from educators. In the upbringing of the younger generation, an educator must possess a well-established moral-ethical culture, emerge as a mature specialist, and manage the educational process as a facilitator. By serving as a role model through personal example, the educator prepares learners for independent learning and fosters their creative thinking.

In Uzbekistan, a series of crucial resolutions have been enacted to prepare future educators for professional activity. While the Resolution No. PP-3261 of 2017 outlined the tasks for reforming the preschool education system, the Resolution No. PP-4312 of May 8, 2019, through the "Concept for the Development of the Preschool Education System of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030," explicitly envisions advancing educators' qualifications and integrating innovative technologies. Furthermore, the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education" No. LRU-637, enacted on September 23, 2020, establishes a robust foundation for training pedagogues based on modern requirements and elevating their professional status. An educator's superior professional-pedagogical mastery not only enhances the efficiency of the educational-tuition process but also defines their standing within society. Consequently, preparing future educators for professional activity remains one of the most pressing challenges in contemporary pedagogy [10].

Literature Review

The pedagogical, psychological, and methodical aspects of organizing students' learning activities have been investigated in the scientific research of scholars such as N.D.Sagindikova, Sh.Taylanova, A.A.Kholikov, S. Mamashokirov, I.A.Uzakov, H.X.Juraqulova, and I.S.Ergashev. Meanwhile, the psychological dimensions of preparing future specialists for pedagogical activity have been studied by researchers like N.S. Safayev and E.G. Goziyev. Additionally, the definition, analysis, and development of "professional competence" and "pedagogical competence" within professional activity have been comprehensively researched by Kh.B Khodjayev, A.V.Usmonov, Sh.A. Tursunov, N.A.Muslimov, Sh.S. Sharipov, Z.K.Ismailova, O.Q.Tolipov, Q.M.Abdullayeva, Z.Azimova, N.Abdullayeva, M.Artikova, among other scholars.

Scholars from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), including L.Vygotsky, O.A.Abdullina, N.V. Kuzmina, M. Joldasbekova, G.K. Nurgaliyeva, E.I.Perelman, I.Yu.Nikitina, N.G.Nychkalo, O.V.Savchenko, V.Slastyonin, A.Markova, Ye. Zeyer, and Yu. Mishina, have investigated issues such as pedagogical professional competence, vocational training, and facilitation qualities in their scientific endeavors.

In foreign research, the preparation of students for professional pedagogical activity, particularly regarding facilitation qualities and assisting in understanding and satisfying the needs of young children, has been explored in the scientific studies of prominent scholars. These include Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson, Maria Montessori, John Dewey, Pasi Sahlberg, Reggio Emilia, David Weikart, Seymour Papert, Jerome Bruner, Viktor Frankl, Sigmund Freud, Ann Langston, Ann Epstein, Paulo Freire, Carolyn Edwards, Lella Gandini, George Forman, and K.Rogers.

Alongside the concepts of profession and specialty, the notion of specialization holds a prominent position in the process of professionally training future educators. Specialization refers to the synthesis of knowledge, skills, and competencies attained through targeted training and practical experience necessary for specific professional tracks [7; p. 39]. International experience demonstrates that continuous education and professional development play a critical role in deepening specialization. According to UNESCO data, the evolution of specialization exerts a direct impact on the quality of education and the modernization of the pedagogical process.

The proper organization of the professional formation process for future educators is essential for the successful realization of pedagogical activity. Professional formation requires not only an individual's intrinsic interest and aptitude for a specific profession but also necessitates the conscious and deliberate development of professional readiness.

According to the research of D.N. Arzikulov, the professional formation of future educators is viewed as an integral component of the differentiated education system, and this process holds a decisive significance in enhancing the quality and efficiency of the educational process [10; p. 22].

Organizing the system and content of differentiated education, and studying its impact on career choice motivation, constitutes one of the crucial dimensions in the professional formation of future educators. Vocational training serves as a fundamental prerequisite for the effective adaptation of future educators to pedagogical activity and their subsequent success throughout their professional endeavors.

As psychologists emphasize, professional readiness is a subjective state linked to an individual's preparedness to execute a specific professional activity and their striving to perform it successfully. Concurrently, the professional readiness of educators is determined not merely by psychic dimensions (knowledge, skills, and competencies), but also by the levels of physical and spiritual-moral preparedness.

In advancing the readiness of future educators for professional activity, it is vital to develop their ability to quickly navigate problem situations, adapt to the psychological climate within a team, and resolve pedagogical challenges. At the same time, aspects such as appropriately evaluating one's own professional capacities and aligning personal qualities with the educational process define the readiness level of future educators [11].

A contemporary educator is a highly qualified pedagogue who ensures children's development and must possess organizational, communicative, creative, design, and constructive abilities. Rather than acting as a mere manager of the educational process, the educator emerges as a facilitator who ensures interactive and creative engagement with children. These capacities enable the educator to plan the educational process efficiently, develop children's creative abilities, and implement innovative approaches. Therefore, instructing the principles of facilitation in the professional training of future educators stands as an urgent task.

In preparing future educators for professional activity, pedagogical approaches are bifurcated into traditional and innovative types. The traditional approach is oriented toward enhancing the knowledge, professional potential, and methodical mastery of future educators. Conversely, the innovative approach is directed toward harmonizing the national consciousness of future educators with modern pedagogical and psychological insights [12].

Within the contemporary educational process, future educators are required to demonstrate superior pedagogical competence and creative approaches aligned with global educational demands. These attributes form the foundation for successfully executing pedagogical activity and working effectively with children.

Shaping the facilitation capacities of an educator carries substantial importance in ensuring that children receive quality education and in developing interpersonal socio-cultural communication. In preparing future educators for professional activity, it is essential for them to possess high pedagogical competence, adhere to professional ethics standards, and manage the educational process effectively.

In pedagogical science, the concept of a profession is defined as a synthesis of knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to execute professional activity as a result of specialized training and work experience. Professor J.Hasanboyev emphasizes that preparing future educators for professional activity must be directed toward enabling individuals to find their place in life and to apply their knowledge and skills in practice [13].

The formation of ethical qualities also holds great significance in preparing future educators for professional activity. According to Professor M.Ochilov, "professional ethics" necessitates the formation of moral norms and requirements within a specific sphere of activity [14]. Therefore, training future educators as ethically and socially mature individuals is a pressing task.

The pedagogue and scholar A. Kholikov noted, "The pedagogical profession is a stable system of socially significant qualities that acts as a driving force for a well-rounded

person" [15]. This insight further reinforces the necessity of shaping pedagogical competencies in the training of future educators.

Preparing future educators for professional activity is a complex and multifaceted process that requires the formation of professional culture, moral qualities, and professional mastery. Investigating the professional cultural relations of future educators, the scholar B.Kh. Rakhimov states, "Professional cultural relations serve as the primary vehicle for shaping positive interpersonal relationships" [16].

According to the researcher G. Boymurodov, deeply mastering theoretical knowledge and acquiring the ability to apply it in practice play a crucial role in ensuring the efficiency of professional training. Furthermore, Kh. Abdukarimov considers the formation of the following ethical qualities in future pedagogues to be highly urgent:

- loving children;
- being dedicated to one's profession;
- possessing the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice.

In the research of Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences B. Rakhimov, the necessity of forming a system of professional cultural relations and implementing it within pedagogical practice is strongly emphasized. In his view, the harmonious and consistent nature of professional-cultural relations is a demand of contemporary social life.

Professor N. Muslimov highlights the necessity of ensuring a step-by-step sequence in organizing professional activity, noting that an individual's professional qualities define their level of development as a fully formed specialist.

In preparing future educators for professional activity, professiography—which encompasses the psychological characterization of a profession and methods of professional designing—carries substantial importance. This approach enables a more profound development of professional mastery among future educators.

Preparing future educators for professional activity is one of the pivotal issues in modern education. In her research, M.Mahkamova emphasizes that during pedagogical practice, students should actively utilize the national and spiritual heritage of our people, the teachings of great historical figures regarding communication ethics, and contemporary best practices.

S. Bozorova defines professionally oriented teaching technology as "a technology that shapes essential personal qualities for future professional activity and ensures the fulfillment of functional responsibilities". These technologies enhance the capacity of future educators to apply theoretical knowledge within practical sessions.

The newly revised Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education" underscores the right of pedagogical staff to freely choose and utilize modern pedagogical forms and methods. This empowers future educators to implement creative and flexible pedagogical approaches.

In optimizing the professional readiness of future educators, it is essential to synthesize the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, the formation of professional-practical skills, and all methods and forms of organizing educational sessions. This process enables independent modeling in pedagogical activity and the efficient execution of innovative educational frameworks.

The application of the personal-activity approach within the educational process assists future educators in working independently to master professional pedagogical expertise and fosters their individuality. This approach is particularly urgent in students' professional self-education and their orientation toward humanistic values.

Shaping creativity and a reflexive approach carries profound significance in the process of preparing future educators for professional activity. These approaches serve to develop skills in independent decision-making in pedagogical activity, analyzing the educational-tuition process, and creating innovative creative projects.

2. Materials and Methods

To investigate the level of facilitation-related professional readiness among future educators, a pedagogical experiment was conducted at the Andijan State Pedagogical

Institute among third- and fourth-year students of the Faculty of Preschool Education (n = 84), divided into an experimental group (n = 42) and a control group (n = 42).

The research employed a combination of theoretical and empirical methods: analysis and generalization of scientific-pedagogical literature; pedagogical observation of practical and laboratory sessions; questionnaire survey designed to assess students' self-evaluation of facilitation qualities (communicativeness, creativity, reflexivity, and the ability to organize children's independent activity); expert evaluation conducted by experienced methodologists and supervising teachers; and a pedagogical experiment comprising ascertaining, formative, and control stages.

In the experimental group, the educational process was organized using innovative facilitation-oriented technologies, including interactive trainings, case studies, reflexive workshops, and elements of VR/AR-based pedagogical modeling, whereas the control group continued under the traditional methodical preparation system. The level of facilitation readiness was measured according to three criteria — low, medium, and high — based on a diagnostic scale adapted from K. Rogers' facilitation model and refined for the conditions of preschool pedagogical education.

3. Results

At the ascertaining stage, the initial diagnostics revealed that the majority of students in both groups demonstrated a low or medium level of facilitation readiness: in the experimental group, 38.1% of students showed a low level, 47.6% a medium level, and only 14.3% a high level; in the control group, the corresponding figures were 35.7%, 50.0%, and 14.3% respectively, indicating that the groups were statistically comparable prior to the experiment.

Following the formative stage, repeated diagnostics demonstrated considerable positive dynamics in the experimental group: the proportion of students with a low level of facilitation readiness decreased to 9.5%, the medium level increased to 45.2%, and the high level rose to 45.3%. In the control group, the changes were markedly smaller: the low level decreased to 28.6%, the medium level remained at 50.0%, and the high level increased only to 21.4%.

Expert evaluation of students' practical activity confirmed the questionnaire results: students in the experimental group displayed considerably greater independence in organizing children's creative activities, demonstrated higher reflexivity in analyzing their own pedagogical actions, and were more capable of adapting their methods to the individual needs of children. The comparative analysis indicates a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups ($p < 0.05$), confirming the effectiveness of the facilitation-oriented methodical preparation system.

4. Discussion

The obtained results are consistent with the theoretical positions outlined above, according to which the professional readiness of future educators cannot be reduced to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies alone, but must also encompass the development of reflexive, communicative, and creative qualities that characterize a facilitator.

The considerable growth of the high-level group within the experimental cohort confirms that the purposeful integration of interactive trainings, case-based tasks, and VR/AR-supported pedagogical modeling into the methodical preparation process substantially strengthens students' capacity for independent thinking and creative problem-solving, in line with the priorities formulated in the UNESCO Education 2030 framework.

At the same time, the relatively modest progress observed in the control group illustrates the limitations of the traditional approach, which remains predominantly oriented toward the transmission of theoretical knowledge rather than the formation of facilitation-related personal qualities. This finding corroborates the conclusions of D.N. Arzikulov and N.A. Muslimov regarding the necessity of a step-by-step, practice-oriented system for the professional formation of future specialists.

Nevertheless, the present study is limited by its relatively small sample size and its focus on a single higher education institution; further research involving a larger and more diverse sample, as well as a longitudinal design, would be valuable for verifying the long-term sustainability of the observed changes.

5. Conclusion

The conducted theoretical and experimental research confirms that preparing future educators as facilitators constitutes an urgent pedagogical problem whose solution requires a purposeful, system-based methodical approach. The analysis of scientific literature demonstrated that facilitation qualities — including communicativeness, creativity, reflexivity, and the ability to organize children's independent activity — represent an essential component of a future educator's professional readiness.

The experimental verification showed that the integration of interactive, reflexive, and VR/AR-supported pedagogical technologies into the methodical preparation process significantly increases the proportion of students demonstrating a high level of facilitation readiness, compared with the traditional methodical preparation system.

On this basis, it can be recommended that the curricula of pedagogical higher education institutions, particularly within preschool education programs, be supplemented with facilitation-oriented training modules, reflexive workshops, and innovative technological tools, in order to ensure that future educators are fully prepared to fulfil their professional and pedagogical activity as facilitators of children's comprehensive development.

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