



About The Concept Of Competence

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Abstract

In today's rapidly developing society, the concept of competence holds great significance for the all-round development of individuals and for achieving both professional and social success. The general concept of competence refers not only to having knowledge, skills, and abilities, but also to the capacity to apply them in practice. Originally emerging from the fields of linguistics and psychology, the concept of competence later entered other domains such as pedagogy, management, and vocational education.

This article explores the integration of the concept of general competence into science, its theoretical foundations, structural components, its importance in education and professional development, as well as the processes of its formation and methods of development.

Keywords: general competence, individual, education system, knowledge, skills, qualification, professional development, innovative teaching methods, scientific foundation, management, expertise, educational fields, personal growth.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, competence has become an integral part of modern education, and it also plays a significant role in professional development. The concept of competence refers to the ability of an individual to effectively apply personal knowledge, skills, and experience in various areas of life. The modern education system is focused on developing general competence, which plays a crucial role in both professional and personal growth. The term "competence" was first introduced in linguistics by Noam Chomsky and later became widely applied in psychology, pedagogy, and vocational education.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that today's education system aims to prepare competitive, highly qualified, proactive, morally and physically healthy specialists for society. The Action Strategy for Further Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017–2021 emphasized the task of nurturing a highly educated and intellectually advanced generation and building a reserve of competent scientific-pedagogical staff in higher education institutions. The concept of competence entered scientific discourse through psychological research. Therefore, competence also includes a teacher's ability to behave appropriately in non-standard and unexpected situations, solve problems effectively, engage in communication, choose new approaches in interaction with others, execute uncertain tasks, and make use of ambiguous information in complex and dynamic environments.

Competence refers to the possession of knowledge that enables sound reasoning regarding specific situations, and is a term that reflects individuals' levels of proficiency in a particular field. It is a complex combination of individual traits and conditions that represents a synthesis of knowledge, skills, and experience in a specific area. The term "competence" is derived from English and essentially means "ability." Conceptually, it refers to the practical ability to utilize theoretical knowledge effectively, demonstrate high-level professional skills, and exhibit expertise and talent. The term first appeared in linguistics and was introduced by American linguist Noam Chomsky in 1965 as "competence" to describe a person's internal



language ability. Later, the concept was adopted in psychology and pedagogy, where it began to be used to describe students' ability to apply their knowledge and skills in real-life situations. This shift occurred in the 1960s and 1970s.

In 1973, American psychologist David McClelland introduced the concept of "competence" as a criterion for evaluating effectiveness in professional activities. He emphasized the importance of practical skills and abilities over academic degrees and theoretical knowledge. Today, the concept of competence holds a vital place in the education system, focusing not only on theoretical knowledge but also on students' ability to apply what they have learned in practice. This approach aims to foster independent thinking and problem-solving skills in learners.

Scientifically, competence is studied based on the following fundamental principles:

- Cognitive Psychology: Competence is linked to mental development and cognitive processes. The ability to apply knowledge in practice is a result of intellectual growth.
- Sociology: Competence is influenced by social factors, including social capital and the cultural environment, which shape an individual's level of competence.
- Educational Theories: Competence develops through the formation of knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Professional Development Theories: Competence is considered a key factor in achieving success in professional activities.

According to scientific literature, competence is typically analyzed through the following core components:

1. Knowledge – theoretical and practical understanding of a specific field.
2. Skills – the ability to apply knowledge effectively in real-life situations.
3. Motivation – personal interest and enthusiasm for one's professional activities.
4. Values and Attitudes – ethical norms, social attitudes, and professional ethics.
5. Emotional Intelligence – the ability to manage one's emotions and communicate effectively with others.

Differences Between Competence and Competency. The terms competency and competence are often confused, yet there are clear scientific distinctions between them:

- Competency refers to the set of existing knowledge, skills, and experiences possessed by an individual.
- Competence, on the other hand, refers to the ability to effectively apply this knowledge and these skills in real-life situations.

Example: Having linguistic knowledge is considered a competency, while being able to communicate fluently in a foreign language using that knowledge is considered competence.

Competence-Based Educational Approach

In the 21st century, the competence-based approach has become widely implemented in educational systems. This approach includes the following principles:

- Moving away from traditional rote learning methods.
- Developing students' independent thinking skills.
- Delivering knowledge through practice and experience.
- Teaching students to solve real-life problems.



Professional competence refers to a specialist's mastery of knowledge and skills related to their field. This includes professional knowledge, practical abilities, occupational values, communication skills, and the capacity to solve problems independently.

The term professional competence was first introduced by American psychologist David McClelland in 1973. In his article "Testing for Competence Rather Than for Intelligence", he emphasized the importance of practical abilities over academic knowledge and formal qualifications.

Key Components of Professional Competence:

1. Cognitive Component – Understanding of professional knowledge and information;
2. Operational Component – Practical skills and hands-on experience in the profession;
3. Motivational Component – Interest and initiative in the professional field;
4. Personal and Ethical Component – Responsibility, dedication to the profession, and work ethics.

Social Competence

Social competence refers to an individual's ability to engage in effective communication with society. The concept was first developed in the 1980s by G. Salovey and P. Mayer within the framework of emotional intelligence. It also has its roots in Lev Vygotsky's theory of social development, which asserts that psychological development occurs through social interaction and activities.

Key Components of Social Competence:

1. Communicative Skills – The ability to communicate effectively and respectfully;
2. Collaboration Skills – Ability to work in a team and participate in social projects;
3. Empathy – The capacity to understand and share others' feelings;
4. Responsibility – A sense of accountability for one's actions and decisions;
5. Adaptability – Ability to adjust to different social environments.

Cultural Competence

Cultural competence is the ability to work with individuals from different national and cultural backgrounds. It comprises moral, social, and communicative skills necessary for living, studying, and working in multicultural societies. The term originally emerged in the fields of healthcare and psychology, and later spread to education, management, and sociology.

Geneva Gay (2000) introduced the concept of "Culturally Responsive Pedagogy", emphasizing that teachers must possess cultural competence to work effectively with culturally diverse students.

Key Components of Cultural Competence:

1. Cultural Awareness – Knowledge about one's own and others' cultures;
2. Cultural Sensitivity – Ability to recognize and respect cultural differences;
3. Cultural Communication Skills – Taking cultural aspects into account in communication;
4. Flexibility – Adapting behavior to suit the cultural context.

Information and Technological Competence

Information and technological competence refers to the ability to work with modern digital technologies. It includes digital literacy, the ability to search for, process, evaluate, and present information.

This form of competence has been actively developing since the late 20th century, driven by global digitalization processes in fields such as education, administration, healthcare, and more.

In 2008, UNESCO developed a Framework for ICT Competency Standards for Teachers, incorporating digital literacy as one of the essential competencies for the modern era.

Information and Technological Competence



Information and technological competence encompasses the following areas:

- Information Literacy – The ability to locate, analyze, and select necessary information;
- Application of Digital Technologies – Proficiency in using computers, the internet, office software, graphic and multimedia tools;
- Adoption of Innovative Technologies – Skills in utilizing artificial intelligence, cloud services, and distance learning platforms.

Personal Competence

Personal competence refers to an individual's ability for self-regulation and self-development. It reflects a person's readiness to realize their inner potential, develop continuously, and live independently within society. This type of competence has been widely studied in the fields of psychology and pedagogy. In Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, intrapersonal intelligence (self-awareness) is recognized as a foundation of personal competence. Similarly, Daniel Goleman's theory of Emotional Intelligence places personal competencies at its core.

Key Components of Personal Competence:

- Self-awareness – Recognizing one's strengths and weaknesses;
- Self-regulation – Controlling emotions, moods, and impulses;
- Responsibility – Acknowledging accountability for one's actions;
- Life Goals – Setting goals, planning, and striving to achieve them;
- Self-development – A continuous drive to learn and improve oneself.

Methodology

This research is based on theoretical analysis and an empirical approach to exploring the directions and significance of developing general competence. The study relied on textbooks, scholarly articles, and statistical data to define the concept of general competence and its place in the education system. Additionally, various pedagogical models were examined to identify factors influencing the formation of competence. Methods such as comparative analysis, content analysis, and pedagogical diagnostics were used.

Results

The analysis revealed that general competence includes the following core elements:

- Theoretical knowledge and academic foundations;
- Practical skills and professional qualifications;
- Problem-solving abilities;
- Communicative and teamwork competencies;
- Innovative thinking and critical analysis capabilities.

In the modern educational process, a competence-based approach helps enhance the quality of education and enables students to apply their knowledge to solve real-world problems. The use of pedagogical technologies and digital tools has been identified as a key factor in the development of competence.

Discussion

To foster the development of general competence, it is essential to implement innovative educational technologies and interactive methods. Research shows that integrating theoretical knowledge with practical activities in the learning process significantly enhances educational effectiveness. In this context, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and problem-solving skills are of particular importance.



Educational institutions and professional development programs must be oriented toward developing general competencies.

CONCLUSION

General competence is one of the fundamental principles of the education system and has a positive impact on both personal and professional development. The findings of this study suggest that to effectively develop general competence, it is necessary to employ practical exercises, interactive teaching methods, and innovative technologies. In the future, it is important to conduct broader research in this area and develop specific recommendations for enhancing competence. Advancing competence not only promotes individual growth but also improves the overall effectiveness of the educational process.

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