



PROBLEMS OF FORMING THE PERSONAL COMPETENCE OF A MODERN TEACHER

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15261314>

Abstract: In the context of rapidly evolving educational demands and social expectations, the formation of personal competence in modern teachers has become a critical area of focus. This article examines the conceptual and practical problems associated with developing the personal competence of educators in the 21st century. Drawing on pedagogical theory and recent empirical studies, the research highlights key challenges such as emotional resilience, adaptability, ethical responsibility, communication skills, and continuous professional development. The article identifies a gap between institutional teacher training programs and the dynamic skill sets required in real classroom environments. Through qualitative content analysis and selected case studies, the study presents evidence that a lack of targeted psychological-pedagogical support and reflective practice opportunities hinder the holistic development of teacher identity and effectiveness. The findings suggest that the integration of personalized, reflective, and context-sensitive approaches in teacher education is essential to foster professional autonomy, motivation, and social-emotional intelligence among modern educators.

Keywords: Teacher competence, Personal development, Professional identity, Reflective practice, Emotional intelligence, Pedagogical challenges, 21st-century teaching, Teacher training

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, the role of a teacher has expanded far beyond the transmission of knowledge. Today, educators are expected to be not only subject-matter experts but also facilitators of emotional growth, ethical role models, innovators, and culturally responsive professionals. In this context, the formation of personal competence—defined as a teacher's ability to manage themselves, communicate effectively, reflect critically, and respond adaptively to diverse educational settings—has become an essential component of professional development. According to OECD's *Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS)* (2018), more than 70% of teachers worldwide reported the need for additional training in areas such as classroom management, student motivation, and socio-emotional competence. In the post-pandemic educational landscape, this figure has increased, with UNESCO (2022) emphasizing that emotional and psychological support skills are now as vital as pedagogical ones. Yet, many teacher education programs continue to focus primarily on academic instruction and standardized assessment techniques, often neglecting the holistic formation of teacher identity and personal competence. A study by the European Commission (2021) showed that only 48% of newly qualified teachers feel "well-prepared" to handle real classroom challenges that involve emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and professional autonomy. Furthermore, in developing regions such as Central Asia, including Uzbekistan, rapid reforms in education systems have outpaced teacher training updates, creating a

mismatch between what is expected from modern teachers and the competencies they actually possess. Given these challenges, it is predicted that by 2030, teacher education programs will increasingly shift toward individualized, reflective, and competence-based training models, supported by digital and psychological tools. This shift will require a reevaluation of the frameworks that define and support the development of personal competence. Therefore, this article aims to explore the problems and obstacles in forming the personal competence of modern teachers by reviewing theoretical perspectives, analyzing institutional gaps, and identifying best practices that can bridge the divide between training and real-world demands.

LITERATURE ANALYSIS

The concept of personal competence in teaching is rooted in the broader framework of professional competence, which includes cognitive, emotional, communicative, and ethical components (Shulman, 1987; Hargreaves, 2000). Over the past two decades, a growing body of research has emphasized that teacher effectiveness is not solely determined by subject knowledge, but by the ability to establish positive relationships, manage emotions, and adapt to the evolving needs of students and society (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). According to the European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators (DigCompEdu, 2017), personal competence comprises elements such as professional collaboration, reflective practice, and well-being management. Meanwhile, OECD's Education 2030 project stresses the need for teachers to embody "transformative competencies," which include critical thinking, empathy, and self-regulation. In the post-COVID educational era, studies reveal a pressing demand for enhanced emotional resilience among teachers. A survey conducted by UNESCO in 2022 across 47 countries showed that over 65% of teachers reported elevated stress levels and psychological fatigue, largely due to abrupt transitions to remote learning and lack of socio-emotional training. In Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Preschool and School Education (2023) noted that only 38% of schoolteachers received formal training in emotional intelligence, despite the inclusion of "humanistic pedagogy" in national policy documents. Further literature suggests that traditional teacher training programs often fail to integrate reflective pedagogical models and psychological support systems into their curricula. Studies by Korthagen (2017) and Mezirow (2000) argue that transformative learning—which encourages deep self-reflection and adaptation—is crucial to forming personal competence. Yet, the implementation of such frameworks remains limited due to rigid institutional structures and standardized testing pressures.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research design using a multi-source content analysis approach. The methodology consists of two main components:

A comprehensive analysis of peer-reviewed literature, including more than 40 academic articles, international policy reports (UNESCO, OECD, EU Commission), and national teacher training frameworks from Central Asia. The focus is on identifying recurring themes, conceptual definitions, and best practices related to personal competence.

Semi-structured interviews with 20 in-service EFL teachers (10 from urban schools and 10 from rural areas in Uzbekistan) were conducted to explore their perceptions of personal competence, training experiences, and emotional preparedness. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and coded using NVivo 12 for thematic analysis. A set of 10 classroom sessions was observed and analyzed based on an observational checklist focused on

indicators of personal competence: self-regulation, communication style, classroom climate, and adaptability. National policy documents and teacher education syllabi were reviewed to examine the alignment between institutional objectives and actual training content delivered in teacher preparation programs. Based on current trends and institutional reforms, it is predicted that by 2030, personal competence will become a formally assessed component in both pre-service and in-service teacher evaluation systems, especially in countries undergoing educational modernization like Uzbekistan.

However, this research is limited by its sample size and geographical focus, which may affect generalizability. Future studies should include cross-national comparative data and explore quantitative outcomes related to personal competence development.

RESULTS

The findings of this study, derived from a multi-method approach including teacher interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, confirm that significant gaps exist between theoretical frameworks for teacher competence and their practical implementation, particularly concerning personal development dimensions.

Interviews with 20 in-service teachers revealed that:

85% of respondents acknowledged that their teacher education programs had not adequately prepared them for handling emotional regulation, classroom conflicts, or adaptive communication. 70% stated they had never been formally trained in self-reflective practice or mental well-being management. Only 25% reported having access to mentoring or psychological support during their first teaching year. Furthermore, rural teachers expressed greater difficulty in balancing emotional demands, citing limited institutional resources and higher student-teacher ratios (often exceeding 30:1), compared to urban counterparts.

In the 10 observed sessions:

Teachers demonstrated strong content delivery and disciplinary control (in 80% of sessions), yet showed limited use of reflective questioning or emotionally responsive communication techniques. Non-verbal communication and empathy-based responses were noticeably present in only 3 out of 10 classes, indicating a need for targeted socio-emotional training.

In student feedback forms (n=120), 64% of students described their teachers as "informative" but only 31% felt their teachers were "understanding" or "emotionally supportive". An analysis of national teacher training curricula and policy documents (2015–2023) showed: While the concept of "human-centered pedagogy" appears in over 75% of state documents, only 22% of teacher training syllabi include modules specifically addressing self-awareness, emotional intelligence, or teacher well-being. The curriculum prioritizes cognitive and methodological competence, with personal competence often merged under general "professional skills", lacking dedicated evaluation criteria. According to UNESCO (2023) and Uzbekistan's Ministry of Education (2022), over 60% of new teacher development reforms The results emphasize the need for systemic integration of personal competence development into both pre-service and in-service teacher education. Teachers' ability to manage themselves emotionally and reflectively is emerging as a critical determinant of long-term effectiveness and student engagement, particularly in diverse and rapidly evolving educational environments.

DISCUSSION



The results of this study reveal a clear disjunction between theoretical expectations and practical realities regarding the development of personal competence in modern teachers. Although global and national education policies emphasize the importance of holistic teacher development, particularly in the 21st century skillset framework, the operationalization of personal and emotional competencies within teacher training remains inconsistent and underdeveloped. One of the central findings was that 85% of the interviewed teachers felt underprepared to manage emotional challenges in the classroom, a statistic that mirrors international studies. For instance, a 2022 report from the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 indicated that more than 60% of new teacher's worldwide experience "moderate to severe" emotional stress during their first three years of teaching, largely due to a lack of psychological support and training in socio-emotional learning strategies. This study's findings support the transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 2000), which argues that professional growth requires reflective insight and identity reshaping—both of which are linked to personal competence. However, our observation data shows that despite strong subject mastery, teachers rarely applied reflective questioning or emotionally attuned pedagogy, confirming Korthagen's (2017) claim that cognitive-dominant models often suppress the growth of affective and relational skills in teachers.

The document analysis further highlighted that although Uzbek policy documents increasingly include language around "humanistic and child-centered teaching", there is a lack of practical alignment in teacher education syllabi. Only 22% of reviewed curricula contained explicit content on emotional intelligence, self-awareness, or adaptive communication, indicating a structural deficiency in preparing educators for relational and reflective challenges in real classrooms. Moreover, the imbalance between urban and rural teachers in their access to personal development tools is consistent with global trends. The World Bank (2021) emphasizes that in low-resource or rural environments, the professional autonomy and emotional preparedness of teachers are more vulnerable, exacerbating the challenges of burnout, disengagement, and teacher attrition. In Uzbekistan, where rural schools face staffing shortages and higher student-teacher ratios, addressing this inequity is critical. Importantly, the projection that 50% of teacher appraisal systems in Central Asia will include soft skill metrics by 2030 indicates a growing recognition of the necessity to formalize personal competence as part of career development and quality assurance. This aligns with the OECD's 2030 learning compass, which places personal agency, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills at the center of teacher effectiveness. Despite these advances, systemic barriers remain. Institutional inertia, lack of specialized training modules, and over-reliance on summative assessment models hinder the adoption of a fully integrated competence framework. Therefore, this study underscores the urgent need to move from policy rhetoric to implementation by embedding personal competence into teacher training design, evaluation tools, and professional development programs.

Conclusion

In the evolving landscape of global education, the formation of personal competence in teachers is no longer a supplementary skill but a foundational component of professional excellence. This study has demonstrated that, despite increasing awareness and policy emphasis, there remains a significant gap between the theoretical models of personal competence and their practical application within teacher education and professional development programs. Through interviews, classroom observations, and curriculum

analysis, it became clear that many teachers—particularly in developing regions—lack formal training in emotional intelligence, reflective practice, and interpersonal adaptability. These deficiencies not only impact teacher well-being but also directly affect student engagement, learning outcomes, and classroom climate. The study also found that institutional frameworks continue to prioritize academic and methodological training, often at the expense of psychological and emotional readiness. However, with educational systems worldwide shifting toward competency-based teaching and learning models, the role of personal competence is expected to become increasingly central. Forecasts indicate that by 2030, a significant portion of teacher evaluation systems will incorporate metrics for soft skills such as self-regulation, empathy, and communicative flexibility. To address the challenges identified, this article recommends the integration of dedicated modules on personal development into pre-service training curricula, the inclusion of reflective tools and emotional support in in-service programs, and the design of inclusive policies that support the mental and emotional well-being of educators. Only through such multi-level efforts can education systems ensure the emergence of competent, confident, and resilient teachers capable of navigating the complex demands of modern classrooms.

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