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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE EXISTING PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE OF FUTURE TEACHERS

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Abstract

Similar to future teachers' attitudes toward their profession, their perceptions, opinions, and attitudes regarding the use of technology have become one of the central topics of numerous studies. An analysis of the scientific literature indicates that most existing studies have examined future teachers' attitudes toward the use of technology in the educational process in terms of specialization fields, as well as factors such as gender, academic year, age, previous educational background, university attended, and computer and internet usage skills.

Keywords

Subject Matter Knowledge, Classroom Management Skills, Technology Integration, Instructional Strategies.

In this study, we considered it appropriate to analyze the extent to which future teachers' attitudes toward the use of technology in the teaching-learning process and toward their profession can be examined. To achieve this objective, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What is the level of future teachers' attitudes toward the use of technology in education and toward the teaching profession?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference between future teachers' attitudes toward the use of technology in education and variables such as gender, age, field of study, overall academic achievement, and place of residence?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference between future teachers' attitudes toward the teaching profession and variables such as gender, age, field of study, overall academic achievement, and place of residence?

At a time when information and communication technologies are influencing almost every sphere of human life, educational institutions and teachers bear significant responsibility in preparing competitive and highly qualified specialists who can meet the demands of society and the labor market. From this perspective, it is particularly important in higher education institutions that train pedagogical

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personnel to expand future teachers' knowledge and understanding of technology, while fostering positive attitudes and a high level of awareness regarding the application of modern technologies. Furthermore, preparing teachers who can use technology appropriately, purposefully, and effectively in teaching and learning processes has become one of the priority tasks of contemporary education systems.

The pedagogical competence of future teachers varies considerably depending on several factors, including educational background, teaching experience, continuous professional development, and regional educational policies. This comparative analysis examines the key areas in which these differences are most evident.

1. Subject Matter Knowledge and Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

Subject Matter Knowledge: Primary school teachers generally require a broad understanding of multiple subjects. Variations exist among teacher education programs, with some countries placing greater emphasis on subject-specific knowledge.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK): PCK involves understanding how to teach specific content effectively. Teachers who have access to continuous professional development opportunities often demonstrate higher levels of PCK by adapting their teaching methods to diverse learning styles and student needs.

2. Classroom Management Skills

Experience-Based Competence: Teachers with more years of teaching experience typically exhibit stronger classroom management skills. They employ a variety of strategies to maintain order and create a positive learning environment.

Training and Support: Formal training in classroom management varies considerably. In some educational systems, novice teachers receive comprehensive training and mentoring, whereas in others they may learn primarily through trial and error.

3. Technology Integration

Technologically Competent Teachers: Teachers who have been trained in or have experience integrating technology into instructional practices are generally more proficient in using digital tools to enhance learning.

Availability of Resources: Access to technology and educational resources significantly influences teachers' ability to integrate digital tools into their pedagogical practices. Schools located in well-funded districts often provide greater opportunities for teachers to develop these competencies.

4. Instructional Strategies

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Diverse Methods: Effective primary school teachers utilize a variety of instructional strategies to engage students. These include hands-on activities, collaborative learning, and differentiated instruction tailored to individual student needs.

Innovative Practices: Teachers who remain informed about educational research and emerging trends are more likely to implement innovative practices that promote active learning and critical thinking.

5. Assessment and Feedback

Formative and Summative Assessment: Teachers with strong assessment skills employ both formative and summative assessment methods to measure student understanding and guide instruction. Their ability to design and interpret assessments varies according to their training and experience.

Feedback Techniques: Providing effective feedback is essential for student development. Teachers who are skilled in this area use feedback to support learners, encourage improvement, and foster a growth mindset.

6. Cultural Competence and Inclusivity

Understanding Diversity: Teachers who have received training in cultural competence are better equipped to address the diverse backgrounds and needs of their students. They create inclusive classroom environments where all students feel valued.

Inclusive Practices: The ability to differentiate instruction to accommodate learners with varying abilities, including those with special educational needs, is crucial. Teachers working within inclusive education systems often demonstrate more advanced skills in this area.

7. Adaptability and Continuous Improvement

Professional Development: Teachers committed to lifelong learning and regular professional development tend to demonstrate greater adaptability in their teaching practices. Such adaptability enables them to incorporate new instructional methods, technologies, and research findings effectively.

Responsiveness to Feedback: Teachers who actively seek and respond to feedback from colleagues, students, and administrators are often more successful in improving their pedagogical competence and enhancing student outcomes.

8. Collaboration and Community Engagement

Team Collaboration: Teachers who collaborate with colleagues, participate in professional learning communities, and engage in team teaching are often more effective. Such collaboration facilitates the sharing of best practices and supports problem-solving in the classroom.

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Parental Involvement: Effective communication and collaboration with parents and the wider school community are essential. Teachers who establish strong partnerships with parents are better able to support students' learning and well-being.

Comparative Factors

1. Initial Teacher Education Programs

Curriculum Quality: The comprehensiveness and quality of initial teacher education programs significantly affect teachers' pedagogical competence. Programs that provide a balanced combination of theoretical knowledge and practical experience tend to produce more competent educators.

Admission Requirements: Rigorous admission criteria for teacher education programs help ensure that candidates possess the aptitude and capabilities necessary for the teaching profession.

2. Continuous Professional Development

Mandatory Training: In some regions, continuous professional development is compulsory, ensuring that teachers regularly update their knowledge and skills. This contrasts with regions where such development is voluntary and less frequent.

Focus Areas: The focus of professional development programs varies. Some emphasize specific competencies such as technology integration, while others prioritize classroom management or inclusive practices.

3. Support Systems and Resources

Mentorship Programs: Access to mentorship and support from experienced teachers can significantly enhance the pedagogical competence of novice educators. Schools that provide structured mentoring programs often foster faster and more effective professional growth.

Availability of Resources: Access to educational resources, including technology, instructional materials, and professional support, plays a crucial role in the development and application of pedagogical skills.

4. Cultural and Social Influences

Educational Policies: National and regional educational policies influence the priorities and practices of teacher education and professional development. Policies that support innovative teaching methods and provide adequate resources contribute to the development of more competent teachers.

Societal Expectations: Social expectations and the value placed on education can also influence teachers' motivation and their commitment to developing pedagogical competence.

The effectiveness of future teachers is shaped by the interaction of their knowledge, skills, and opportunities for continuous professional development. Differences in pedagogical competence often reflect variations in the quality and scope of initial teacher education, access to professional development opportunities, and the availability of resources and support. A comprehensive approach that emphasizes lifelong learning and adaptability to emerging educational challenges is essential for enabling teachers to meet the diverse needs of their students effectively.

The pedagogical competence of future teachers is formed through a complex interaction of factors, including initial teacher education, continuous professional development, support systems, and societal influences. Comparative analysis demonstrates that although certain competencies are universally valued, the methods used to develop and emphasize them may differ substantially. Ensuring that teachers have access to high-quality education, resources, and support is critical for fostering effective teaching practices that address the diverse needs of learners.

The results of our pedagogical experimental research conducted with students majoring in pedagogy at higher education institutions revealed that future teachers demonstrate a high level of positive attitude toward the teaching profession. The analysis of scientific literature also supports this finding. Several studies have reported that future teachers' attitudes toward the teaching profession are generally characterized as "supportive," "positive," or "above average," indicating a favorable perception of the profession.

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