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## *Development Factors of Higher Pedagogical Education in Ukraine*

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Czynniki rozwoju wyższego szkolnictwa pedagogicznego w Ukrainie

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### ABSTRACT

The article focuses on the conditions and factors of functioning of modern Ukrainian pedagogical education. The author characterizes its structural components and forms; emphasizing that the system of teacher training is multi-level (bachelor's, master's, doctor of philosophy) and institutional (formal and non-formal). The article presents both external (mass character, European integration, international cooperation, academic mobility, diversification, accessibility, flexibility, autonomy, adaptability, digitalization, inclusion, innovation) and internal (implementation of standards, updating the content of teacher training with a focus on the formation of different types of competencies, improvement of practical training, cooperation with educational and public institutions, continuous professional development, psychological and pedagogical support of teachers, focus on morality and the affirmation of Ukrainian psychological, mental and behavioral characteristics, improvement of student learning conditions, educational emigration, insufficient level of financing, development of Ukrainian and world science and culture) factors that influence the development of the higher pedagogical education system in Ukraine.

**Keywords:** higher education; pedagogical education; pedagogical universities; teacher training; factors of the development of pedagogical education

### INTRODUCTION

Economic, political, technological, environmental, and social conditions of human existence are stimulating radical changes in various spheres (professional,

material, spiritual, physical, intellectual, etc.) of human life. The accelerating speed at which new information is created, collected, and spread is leading people to focus more on personal development and self-discovery. In this context, higher education is becoming increasingly important and strategic for individuals. It is becoming more widespread and accessible. Obtaining a higher education opens up opportunities for stability, career advancement, and recognition.

A significant number of professions nowadays require high qualifications and a proper level of competence. Among them, a special place is given to teaching staff, whose mission is to educate the younger generation. Increasing importance is attached to their culture, creativity, innovation, communication skills, ability to learn throughout life, and teamwork. The teachers of different levels, who must be able to update their knowledge, be ready to adapt and act in a rapidly changing social environment.

The pedagogical education system must be effective and of high quality, despite the war making its development difficult, and in some cases, impossible due to: a decrease in the number of students and faculty; deterioration of the psychological state of teachers; destruction of university buildings; threats of bombing; power outages and lack of internet; limited funding, etc. We understand that the success of the struggle against Russian expansion depends on those who will work in the education sector, as teachers establish the necessary authorities and are the conductors of new ideas. Their education and competence influence the vectors of progress in education as a whole. New demands require new approaches and adaptive ways of modernizing higher pedagogical education. It should contribute to the development of Ukrainian psychological, mental, and behavioral traits in future teachers, who would oppose the influence of the “Russian world” and could educate young people in the spirit of fortitude, self-awareness, defending their own identity, and overcoming the inferiority complex.

Therefore, the research of scientists is aimed at finding the optimal balance between fulfilling societal demands and the possibilities of implementing the content of training and organizing the learning of students in pedagogical universities. First of all, it is necessary to identify the factors that influence the functioning, sustainability, and development of the higher pedagogical education system in order to find ways to support and improve it.

## STRUCTURE OF HIGHER PEDAGOGICAL EDUCATION IN UKRAINE

Pedagogical education in Ukraine is an integral and open system that combines various components. Today, it must be stable, adaptive, and flexible. Therefore, the state pays special attention to its alignment with global trends and social demands, enabling it to respond to existing challenges. In particular, to enhance the attractiveness and maintain the status of the profession, the state provides support for those acquiring pedagogical education.

Teacher training is conducted sequentially, involving formal higher education at the first (bachelor's), second (master's), and third (educational and scientific) levels. Students study in pedagogical colleges, universities, academies, and specialized and multidisciplinary higher education institutions of all ownership types, gradually mastering their chosen educational specialty. To ensure consistency, professional standards have been established and are used by institutions when developing educational programs for students (*Profesiyni standart za profesiiamy...*, 2020; *Profesiyni standart "Vykhovatel..."*, 2021). Student learning is assessed using the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), which is cumulative and allows for the quantification of workload and comparison of results in credits (*Metodychni rekomendatsii...*, 2017). This simplifies the process of continuing education at the next level or transferring to another institution within the country while preserving the national authenticity of teacher education.

The Concept of Development of Pedagogical Education in Ukraine also orients citizens towards non-formal forms of qualification acquisition, allowing everyone to realize their own path of professional growth. It focuses on ensuring the diversity of educational programs, training models, and the implementation of mechanisms for recognizing their results, as well as the realization of self-education. This makes it possible to support the desire of young people who want to influence the development of the education sector and contributes to a better selection of professionals for preschool, general, vocational, and extracurricular education (*Kontseptsiiia rozvytku pedahohichnoi osvity...*, 2018).

The first step to becoming a teacher is obtaining a higher education diploma in a relevant pedagogical specialty. This qualification allows individuals to work in specific educational institutions such as preschools, secondary schools, extracurricular programs, vocational schools, universities, and so on. Notably, teaching in upper grades of secondary schools and vocational institutions requires at least a master's degree.

The next step for a teacher is to begin working and adapting to the profession, gaining practical experience. This is followed by continuous professional development through various forms of training. Specifically, individuals who are appointed to a teaching position for the first time in the school are required to undergo a one-year pedagogical internship. They are assigned a mentor who helps them complete the internship program, guides them to participate in activities that develop competencies, and helps them achieve the necessary level of pedagogical skill. As a result, the teacher-intern receives a document that is a prerequisite for obtaining qualification categories or positions (*Pro zatverdzhennya Polozhennya...*, 2021).

The school provides ongoing professional development opportunities for its teaching staff. It is implemented through formal, non-formal, and

informal education, and the results are accumulated in an electronic portfolio. Certification of specialists is mandatory and conducted at least once every five years to maintain the quality of education. It involves completing officially recognized courses, programs, and webinars that meet established standards and requirements. Additionally, on a voluntary basis, a teacher may undergo certification to assess their competencies through independent testing and a review of practical experience.

Therefore, the pedagogical education system in Ukraine is state-regulated (standards, qualification requirements), multi-level (bachelor's, master's, doctor of philosophy), and institutional (formal and non-formal). Self-education (informal learning) occupies a separate place – continuous, self-organized acquisition of competencies throughout life.

#### EXTERNAL FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

The training of teachers, as highly qualified specialists, primarily reflects the overall changes taking place in higher education. Therefore, it is influenced by European integration processes and global factors. It ensures fairness and transparency in university admissions, inclusivity, and financial support for various categories of citizens.

The massification of higher education, on the one hand, has led to difficulties in state financing of the teacher education system, the emergence of private universities, a decrease in the state's centralized governing role, an increase in the workload of teachers, and other challenges that may affect the quality of specialist training and make it more difficult to monitor compliance with educational standards. On the other hand, the widespread network of universities promotes equal access and increases opportunities for improving the educational level of the population. Increased competition among universities encourages a focus on the quality of educational services; the search for ways to diversify the content of teacher training programs, combine specializations; rationalize the infrastructure of institutions, equip premises and territories, improve student learning conditions, and more.

Despite the accessibility of higher education, maintaining an informational and cultural balance and supporting social diversity remain problematic. Due to the war, a significant number of young people are enrolling in universities in other countries. Poland is a leader in this, with simplified admission requirements for Ukrainians. While this positively impacts activation, integration, and deepening international cooperation, it negatively affects the intellectual, cultural, and professional potential of our country. Student exchange programs between countries during studies (such as the Erasmus program) in pedagogical specialties

are widespread. However, due to the war, foreigners are less interested in familiarizing themselves with the achievements of our culture and education. The trend towards educational emigration is exacerbated by unsatisfactory employment opportunities in Ukraine, as well as the development of distance learning systems, including those abroad, where universities have better rankings.

Due to the informatization of the educational process, the autonomy of universities and colleges is increasing, which necessitates the mobility of both teachers and students. However, these processes face difficulties. Typically, the costs associated with professional development, self-improvement, and career growth are borne by the participants of the educational process themselves, limiting opportunities for research, participation in scientific conferences, and so on. Low levels of funding and insufficient opportunities for self-realization also contribute to the outflow of talented young people from Ukrainian universities and research establishments.

The updating and modernization of teacher training aligns with the contemporary level of development of Ukrainian and world science and culture. The idea of the unity and interdependence of national and universal values remains important. The challenge lies in orienting towards European standards of higher education without substituting the traditional fundamentality of knowledge with its applied nature, as well as preserving the national identity of higher pedagogical education and its ability to respond adequately to national and economic needs. This involves revising the list of academic disciplines in which students will acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for their future profession.

In general, pedagogical professionals are oriented towards acquiring higher education and improving their professionalism. To this end, state standards are being introduced that are oriented towards a new philosophy of sustainable development, modern trends, and challenges. For example, among the total number of entrants, the number of those who chose the field of study Education/ Pedagogy is 27% for universities and 7.4% for colleges (*Stratehiia rozvytku vyshchoi osvity...*, 2020, p. 15), which indicates due attention to the profession. The main task is to preserve the integrity and sustainability of the pedagogical education system, taking into account the need for continuous improvement of graduates' competencies, the formation of critical thinking, communication skills, and others.

The system of teacher training is influenced by general factors in the development of higher education: legislative and state support; institutional funding; management autonomy; digitalization and technological progress; innovative research; campus infrastructure renewal; international cooperation, academic mobility of students; and the link with the labor market. External factors influencing its functioning include the massification of higher education, integration into the European space, diversification, flexibility, and adaptability.

## INTERNAL FACTORS THAT DETERMINE THE FUNCTIONING OF HIGHER PEDAGOGICAL EDUCATION

Standardization of the content of pedagogical education occurs through the search for the optimal ratio between the socially determined invariant “core” (state component) of education and differentiated components (regional, school). This allows for consideration of the conditions of a particular universities, reflection of the natural and socio-cultural features of the region, and provision of specialized training. Thus, the principle of flexibility in constructing the content of educational material for student teachers is realized. Educational standards for them reflect a social ideal, taking into account the capabilities of the individual and the pedagogical education system to achieve it. The content of training undergoes qualitative changes under the influence of various factors (the state strategy for the development of education as a whole; the dynamics of social and scientific achievements, the achievements of pedagogy; the variability of social demands and personal goals of citizens), which directly affect the personal and professional development of students, the formation of their worldview, the development of an active life position, and readiness for life and work.

Teacher training is aimed at developing a variety of competencies in learners, tailored to their specific pedagogical specialization. Depending on the type of educational institution in which they will work, they are oriented towards performing specific job functions: teaching students of a particular age, partnering with other participants in the educational process, participating in the organization of a safe and healthy learning environment, managing the educational process, continuous professional development, and others. Therefore, in universities, future specialists improve their language-communicative, subject-methodological, information-digital, psychological, emotional-ethical, pedagogical-partnership, inclusive, health-preserving, design, predictive, organizational, evaluative-analytical, innovative, and reflective competencies, as well as the ability to learn throughout life (*Profesiinyi standart za profesiiamy...*, 2020). These abilities form the basis for developing a teacher’s professionalism, enabling them to effectively perform their duties and contribute to the development of Ukrainian society. Being competent means being able to mobilize acquired knowledge and experience in a specific educational situation, make optimal decisions, possess analytical and critical thinking, understand and perceive the point of view of colleagues, generate new ideas, preserve and multiply the moral, cultural, scientific values and achievements of humanity.

Particular emphasis is placed on meeting societal demands regarding the level of teachers’ competence, the implementation of new educational technologies and teaching methods. In this context, teacher training is being updated to address the needs of individuals with special educational needs, which

means being aware of their specific psychophysical development and possessing special methodologies (*Kontseptsiiia rozvytku pedahohichnoi osvity...*, 2018). When developing educational programs in universities, current qualification requirements are also taken into account. The diversification of education for them is developing: streamlining flexible curricula; creating individual learning trajectories, courses, and specializations; using innovative teaching methods (distance learning, interactive projects, virtual laboratories, practical classes, etc.) and improving practical training (internships abroad, research projects, cooperation with educational institutions). Attention is focused on improving the content, organization, quality, and functioning conditions of higher pedagogical education.

The war has heightened attention to this issue. Teaching staff must be able to quickly adapt to the conditions of full-time, distance, and blended learning. For example, the All-Ukrainian Online School platform is well-known, as it helps both students and teachers, providing free access to educational resources and necessary learning content (*Vseukrainska shkola...*, 2024). Therefore, pedagogical education takes into account emerging problems, and students master new forms and means of learning, combining normative (defined by the state standard) and variable requirements. Specialists use platforms and resources for online learning in Ukraine: New Ukrainian School, EdEra, Prometheus, Coursera.

The constant threat to life unfortunately complicates the work of teachers in educational institutions. Students of all ages, from kindergartens to colleges, require additional support and guidance in these dangerous circumstances. Such a situation negatively affects the psychological state of the Ukrainian population, in particular, students, who do not always find the conditions and opportunities for high-quality learning. It is high time to create institutes of psychological and pedagogical assistance (mental health support) for various categories of people (combatants; victims of physical and/or psychological violence; internally displaced persons; the injured; relatives of the killed/captives, etc.) (Sobolieva et al., 2023).

At the same time, the task of pedagogical universities is to maintain the professional orientation and motivation of students. It is important to consider the internal factors of students' development, which include interest in knowledge, cognitive, scientific, and professional activities, independent work, self-control, and the desire to achieve goals. This also includes a propensity for pedagogical activity, values, character, intellectual, moral, and ethical qualities. Essential aspects for a teacher are the awareness of their role in society and the desire for self-improvement and self-education. And the authority and competence of the teacher as an external factor in relation to the student play a significant role.

The following internal factors influence the functioning of higher pedagogical education: implementation of state standards; focus on continuous improvement



of competencies and self-education; improvement of practical training and the application of modern teaching technologies for students; research and innovation in the field of education; the quality of the teaching staff; psychological and pedagogical support aimed at adapting to changes in society; focus on fostering moral values and beliefs, and affirming the Ukrainian national character in future teachers.

## CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, the mission of modern pedagogical education in Ukraine is to ensure the development of a system of universities, various forms of training specialists for their continuous professional and personal development. To do this, it is important to consider its dependence on the mutual influence with society, interact with other educational institutions and social institutions (for which specialists are being trained), and respond promptly to the requests and needs of citizens.

The successful functioning of higher pedagogical education is influenced by both external and internal factors. External factors include integration into the global higher education system, international partnerships, student and faculty exchange, orientation towards achievements in science, culture, and practice, funding, state support, and autonomy of management. Internal factors include the approval of standards, cooperation with educational, scientific, and public institutions, and psychological and pedagogical support for teachers. However, the distinction between these factors is conditional. For example, international cooperation, as an external factor, actualizes the problem of management and financing of an educational institution (also an external factor). This, in turn, stimulates the work of teachers and students in the field of studying foreign methods and testing innovative technologies (an internal factor) to improve the pedagogical education system as a whole. It is obvious that the mentioned factors are closely interconnected and are crucial for creating a high-quality system of pedagogical education that should prepare competent and responsible teachers.

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## ABSTRAKT

W artykule zanalizowano warunki i czynniki wpływające na funkcjonowanie współczesnego ukraińskiego systemu kształcenia nauczycieli. Opisano jego strukturę i formy, podkreślając, że system kształcenia nauczycieli jest zróżnicowany ze względu na poziomy kształcenia (licencjat, magister, doktor filozofii) i instytucjonalne (formalne i nieformalne). Przedstawiono zarówno czynniki zewnętrzne (umasowienie, integracja europejska, współpraca międzynarodowa, mobilność akademicka, dywersyfikacja, dostępność, elastyczność, autonomia, adaptacyjność, cyfryzacja, inkluzja, innowacyjność), jak i wewnętrzne (wdrażanie standardów, aktualizacja treści kształcenia nauczycieli z naciskiem na rozwój różnych kompetencji, doskonalenie kształcenia praktycznego, współpraca z instytucjami edukacyjnymi i organizacjami pozarządowymi, ustawiczne doskonalenie zawodowe, wsparcie psychologiczno-pedagogiczne nauczycieli, kształtowanie morale itp.).

**Słowa kluczowe:** szkolnictwo wyższe; kształcenie nauczycieli; wyższe uczelnie pedagogiczne; czynniki rozwoju kształcenia nauczycieli

