

## EDUCATIONAL OR SCIENTIFIC CAREER?

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### Abstract

One problem that arises when teaching in higher educational institutions is conducted by university professors is that the educator spends most of the time on their own scientific activities, to the detriment of the pedagogical orientation of the learning process and methodology. In addition, their requirements for research and publication activity are constantly increasing, and so we often encounter the concentration of teachers' attention on a scientific orientation. As a result, these teachers sometimes neglect the process of teaching students, which leads to a loss in the importance of the pedagogical component of the educational process. The overall nature of the problem lies in the importance of teaching in universities, which must be places where teaching is considered a priority activity, comparable to science and research. Therefore, in our environment, we can observe a gradually increasing offering of programs to strengthen the pedagogical competencies of teachers. In this article, we decided to focus on the pedagogical component of the educational process of teachers of higher educational institutions of the Chuvash Republic and their participation in the educational program.

Purpose of the study: to analyze how university teachers perceive and evaluate their pedagogical competencies, that is, how university teachers perceive themselves as a teacher, and at the same time how they evaluate professional development programs that are focused on systematic improvement of the level of their pedagogical competencies. The research problem lies in the dilemma between the pedagogical development of university teachers (participation in professional development programs) and their concentration on the research component of teaching.

The central point of this entire study is the perception of university teachers of their own pedagogical development and the assessment of the quality of professional development programs. We chose to conduct detailed interviews with 25 teachers from the Chuvash State University of the Chuvash Republic as the central method for data collection.

The respondents perceive other university professors not only as scientific experts in their discipline, but also as teachers capable of providing high-quality teaching. At the same time, none of the respondents called themselves a scientific expert in their field. All respondents would like to reduce the scientific component in

their pedagogical work, leaving it for some specialized scientific centers. Also, all respondents would like to pay more attention to the pedagogical process of teaching students - transferring knowledge, communicating with students or teaching students logical thinking, and forming high-quality professional competencies in their pupils. They also pointed out that attempting to save time in the learning process of students forms a "time bomb," which will further negatively affect the socio-cultural development of our society. Most of the respondents believe that the best way to develop their pedagogical competencies is to regularly communicate with their mentors, who are people who they deem as more professionally competent. They do not believe that the use of advanced training programs is of paramount importance.

**Keywords:** pedagogical competence of university teachers, scientific activity of university teachers, advanced training of university teachers.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of teachers who have decided to take up research work, which in turn advances their career growth. Of course, this criterion is still relatively small in the system of advanced training, but still there is a noticeable increase in the number of teachers who want to form their own competencies through research (Legostaeva, 2009, pp. 33–37; Maralova, 2013, pp. 73–80).

Each person has a career choice. Someone decides not to "conquer" the career ladder and work for their own pleasure, and some try to advance in their position by any means necessary. To do this, one must plan their academic activities. Only then will their own scientific and pedagogical career will become manageable.

One of the problems associated with teaching by university professors in higher educational institutions is that the teachers spend most of their time on their own scientific activities, to the detriment of the pedagogical orientation of the educational process and methodology. In addition, the requirements for research and publication activity are constantly growing, and we often encounter the concentration of teachers' attention on the scientific direction. As a result, these teachers sometimes neglect the process of teaching students, which leads to the loss of the importance of the pedagogical component of the educational process (Pan'kova, 2013, pp. 4–13).

Today's teaching career requires special attention. The developing community does not care who will work as a teacher, whether it is an impassive performer or a professional striving to reveal his own creative potential to a greater extent (Reznik, Makarova, 2010; Nikolaev, 2012). This dictates the need for research and implementation, in the educational sphere, of concepts, programs, and models for building the careers of the teaching staff, which are aimed at helping, supporting, encouraging and applying all the real skills of career growth (Reznik, 2011, pp. 49–54).

If we consider the career growth of a teacher as a dynamic process, then it should be noted that it is directly related to professional growth, as well as to the readiness of the individual for self-development and self-improvement, within the framework of their own professional activities (Reznik, 2010, pp. 70–76).

The most important thing in professional growth is the teacher himself, as well as their expectations, ideas about his working future – the future as a teacher or researcher.

The general nature of the problem lies in the importance of teaching in universities, where teaching is considered a priority activity, comparable to science and research. Therefore, in our pedagogical environment, we can observe a gradually increasing offering of programs to strengthen the pedagogical competencies of teachers, as well as increasing requirements for the scientific component of the pedagogical process (Reznik, Vdovina, 2013).

In this article, we decided to focus on the pedagogical and scientific component of the educational process of teachers of the Chuvash State University and evaluate their participation in educational programs (advanced training programs).

## 2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Analyze how Chuvash University teachers perceive and evaluate their pedagogical competencies; that is, how teachers perceive themselves as a teacher and a researcher, and at the same time, how they evaluate professional development programs aimed at systematically increasing the level of pedagogical competencies in the career and growth structure.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The central point of this entire study is the perception of university teachers of their own pedagogical development and the assessment of the quality of advanced training programs. As the main method of data collection, we chose a detailed interview with 25 teachers of the Chuvash State University of the Chuvash Republic. The respondents were 25 University professors, of whom 15 were women and 10 were men. The average age of the respondents was  $65 \pm 3.2$  years.

In the structure of the questionnaires, the following questions were posed: 1) Does the HR department of the University deal with planning the career of teachers (that is, the personal profile that the teaching staff has or does not have contain a continuing education trajectory for teachers, e.g., a calendar of professional development for the teacher)? 2) Does the training program contribute to the development of teacher's pedagogical competencies? 3) Did they expect, during their postgraduate studies, that they would be engaged in scientific and pedagogical activities at the volume in which they are currently engaged? 4) What prevents teachers from engaging in scientific activities. 5) Are they satisfied with your teaching work? 6) What do they consider important to advance your career. 7) What motivated them to choose scientific and pedagogical activity.

### **4. RESULTS AND THEIR DISCUSSION**

During the analysis, it was noted that 35% do not know the answer to the question "does the University HR department do career planning for teachers?", 53% believe that the HR department is not involved in teacher career planning, and only 12% answered the question positively.

We believe that the results obtained indicate a problem in structuring the activities of teachers within the walls of the University. It is more difficult for teachers to keep track of constantly changing training programs to expand their competencies, since the number of these programs is constantly increasing. Teachers are not able to keep track of, and keep abreast of, these programs, in view of their pedagogical and scientific workload.

On this issue, the following conclusion can be drawn – the University Human Resources Department should independently organize the planning of continuing education programs for the University's teachers. Moreover, the University can expand the necessary level of competencies among teachers, required at a given time and in a specific discipline, to create the conditions for improving the educational process of the University.

On the second question of the interview, the majority of respondents (78%) believe that the best way to develop their pedagogical competencies is to regularly communicate with their mentors – more professionally competent people. They do not believe that using training programs is so important.

If we consider the career growth of a teacher as a dynamic process, then it should be noted that it is directly related to professional growth, as well as the readiness of the individual for self-development and self-improvement within the framework of his own professional activity. The teacher himself is of fundamental importance in professional growth, as well as his expectations and ideas about their working future.

A comprehensive approach to solving this problem is necessary. We believe that for professional growth and to improve pedagogical competencies, it is necessary both to create discussion round tables with university mentors and to use various programs to improve qualifications.

On the third question of the interview, the majority of the respondents (83%) did not plan to engage in scientific and pedagogical activities in the volume in which they are engaged at a given time, 15% of the respondents coincided with reality, 2% found it difficult to answer this question.

We can draw the following conclusion that, while studying for a postgraduate program, future teachers are faced with a small amount of work that concerns both teaching and research activities. As a rule, the "life" of doctoral students does not coincide with the actual workplace requirements for teaching and research activities.

Thus, during the training of doctoral students, it is necessary to bring them closer to the real requirements of a scientific and pedagogical career. It is possible to realize these real conditions by increasing the load on pedagogical activity and scientific and publication activity.

On the fourth and fifth question, all respondents indicated only one reason – lack of time. They would all like to devote more time to the pedagogical component of their work.

If we want to achieve better results in the scientific component in a pedagogical career, then the results

obtained must be taken into account when compiling the teaching load along an hourly trajectory for each teacher; that is, the hourly load of the pedagogical component must be reduced. This is possible by increasing in the number of staff members in the structure of the department or the university as a whole. This problem opens up a number of tasks for the leadership of the University and the departments under the jurisdiction of which this University is located. However, all respondents (100%) would like to reduce the scientific component in their pedagogical work, leaving it to separate specialized scientific centers.

Also, almost all respondents (93%) would like to pay more attention to the very pedagogical process of teaching students – transferring knowledge, communicating with students or teaching students logical thinking, as well as the formation of high-quality professional competencies in their students. They also noted that attempting to save time in the process of teaching students creates a "time bomb", which will negatively affect the socio-cultural development of society in the future (94% of respondents expressed this sentiment).

On the sixth question, the opinion of respondents about the methods of promotion was revealed, which were distributed as follows: On the 1<sup>st</sup> place is "The ability to be in sight of the authorities", on the 2<sup>nd</sup> – "Getting to know the right people", and of 3<sup>rd</sup>-place importance to the interviewed teachers is the belief that promotion can be obtained if there is professional competence and knowledge and good work results; On the 4th place is "The ability to show initiative and responsibility." On the 5<sup>th</sup> place – "High working capacity". This arrangement of methods, especially 1<sup>st</sup> place, is more likely due to the fact that the current situation in the country enforces upon teachers such an idea of moving up the career ladder.

From the analysis of the motives that made the teachers choose scientific and pedagogical activity, it should be noted that 5% of the respondents noted the possibility of self-realization, for 60% – the social usefulness of work, 10% – the possibility of a creative approach to work, 20% – the relative stability of the workplace, 5% useful contacts, acquaintances.

It was interesting for us to analyze the choice of motives based on gender. Women have 10% more opportunities for self-realization than men, and for women, a creative approach to work is also more important. The paradox of the motive was that for men, labor activity is not an opportunity for "part-time work." In general, we can conclude that the woman is more inclined to analyze.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

How to answer this question – in a scientific or pedagogical career, everyone decides for themselves. As a result of the questionnaire survey, it was revealed that teachers would like to engage in scientific activities, but they do not have enough time. At the same time, in the completion of their activities, they become a part of the pedagogical process – they participate in the transfer of knowledge and communication with students or teaching students logical thinking, as well as in the formation of high-quality professional competencies of their students. They also noted that an attempt to save time in the process of teaching students forms a "time bomb", which in the future will negatively affect the socio-cultural development of society. And in order to improve the pedagogical component, it is necessary to use not only advanced training programs, but also closer communication with university mentors when organizing the educational process. It is impossible, however, to point out the priority path, whether it be continuing education programs or closer communication with mentors, since the development of scientific and pedagogical competencies is possible with an integrated approach. At the same time, advanced training, vocational training, and retraining of scientific and pedagogical personnel are today one of the priority areas in public policy, and also become the "strategic goal of creating an innovative university"

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