

FORMATION OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF FUTURE BACHELOR OF ECONOMY IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract. Based on the competence approach, such meta-educational constructs as competence and professional competence are revealed in the article. It is stated that the formation of professionally significant competencies of future Bachelor of Economics is focused on the humanistic style of interaction between students, lecturers and employers. The purpose of the article is the formation of professional competence of future Bachelor of Economics in higher educational institutions. It is aimed at developing self-and mutual evaluation of the most significant results for future professional activity, creative – is associated with the purpose, content, activity of lecturers and students, developing – focusing on the maximum development of students' reflexive and creative abilities. The factors that determine the professionally significant qualities of future Bachelor of Economics are determined. The necessity of forming professionally significant qualities in future Bachelor of Economics (ability to navigate information flows; learn, filling in the missing knowledge; have competitiveness and mobility, to solve non-standard professional tasks and strive for self-actualization in the chosen professional field) is proved. It is also aimed at developing students' personal functions (motivation, orientation to the future profession, self-realization). The following prospects for further research have been identified: revealing of relationships between the level of professionally significant competences formation of future bachelor's of Economics and their career growth; conceptual and methodological foundations of continuous education of bachelor's of Economy in the context of competence approach; productive interaction between university and employers in improving the efficiency of professional training of future bachelors to work.

Keywords: formation, competence, professional competence, future Bachelor of Economics, professionally significant qualities, competence approach, higher education institutions.

JEL Classification: I 23, I 29

Formulas: 0; **fig.:** 2; **tabl.:** 0; **bibl.:** 15

Introduction. Modern socio-economic conditions require the preparation of professionals who are competitive in the job market, which entails a change in the educational objectives of higher education as a whole. Considering the ongoing shift in the paradigm of economic knowledge, reflected in the economic culture of society and the economic competence of the contemporary individual, the modernization of the process of professional training for economics bachelor's degree holders becomes particularly relevant. At the same time, the low competitiveness of economics bachelor's degree holders, due to the lack of essential production-related competencies in the majority of them and the inadequacies of contemporary

enterprises' human resource policies, negatively impacts the employment prospects of higher education graduates, contributing to higher youth unemployment rates.

Employers seek employees who are ready to independently engage in production processes and capable of practically solving the life and professional tasks assigned to them. This depends not only on the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired during the learning process but also on the competencies developed in graduates of higher education institutions.

Literature review. The development of competencies in students that are in demand in the job market is a pertinent task for modern higher education institutions. This is evidenced by the fact that the new generation of state educational standards is based on the ideology of education content formation "from the outcome," with competencies becoming a key component. The theory of competency formation in higher education has been substantiated in the works of N. Bibik [1], O. Bila [2], O. Vnukova [3], O. Zablotska [7], B. Mokin [9], V. Petruk [11], M. Rud [13], and others. The notions of economic competency, economic thinking, and economic culture have been studied and presented in the works of V. Volyk [4], S. Horobets [5], L. Dybkova [6], Ya. Kazarnytskova [8], Yu. Pavlov [10], and others. The authors argue that the competency-based approach should be based on the development of requirements in the state standard, curriculum, and educational programs. Moreover, contemporary demands for an individual and a professional should reflect the profound essence of the profession, which is not solely defined by the functional aspects of a specific professional activity but also by its socio-cultural and temporal context.

Indeed, the problem of developing professional competence among future economics bachelor's degree holders in higher education institutions has been overlooked by researchers in the field of professional education theory and methodology. The solution to this situation seems to lie in the modernization of higher education content, the optimization of educational process technologies, and a reevaluation of the purpose and outcomes of higher education based on the competency-based approach and competencies as the results of education.

According to the new paradigm, as viewed by O. Zablotska [7] and M. Rud [13], the goals of the modern higher education system should, first and foremost, involve creating conditions necessary for individuals to fully grasp the material culture and spiritual values accumulated by humanity. The second most important goal is to unlock internal potentials and assist in self-realization. The third goal, without which the achievement of the first two is impossible, is to stimulate self-discovery, the development of an individual lifestyle, and activities.

According to the research of O. Bila [2] and B. Mokin [9], a modern professional needs to be able to transform acquired knowledge into innovative technologies. They should possess self-education and continuous learning skills, be capable of working in teams and adapting to changes. Furthermore, it is crucial for them to possess essential civil and social competencies, which means being a responsible citizen in a democratic society.

The mission of a modern higher education institution (HEI) can be defined as providing broad access to qualitatively new and effective education for various segments of the population, while the mission of the higher education system is to achieve the integration of individual and societal needs. For both society and learners, the crucial outcome is readiness for activity. Hence, today, according to several researchers (V. Petruk [11], among others), the focus is on the "activity nature of knowledge," which means the readiness to perform activities that are reflected in the character of higher education, its goals, and its content.

The reform of Ukraine's economy has led to an increased interest in economic and legal specialties. Currently, having reached the peak of popularity, these professionals are not fully in demand, as the number of graduates in these fields has surpassed the demand in the job market. Despite the surplus of graduates in the aforementioned specialties, they remain popular among prospective students and their parents.

The government aims to regulate the balance between the admission of students and their subsequent professional demand in society by allocating more budgetary places to specialties where there is a proven necessity, as indicated by analytical data. Additionally, higher education institutions (HEIs) are opening new specialties that are in demand in modern society. One of such specialties is "Economics" (051). However, despite the evident demand for professionals in the field of "Economics," the psychological and pedagogical aspects of the learning process for economics bachelor's degree students are largely understudied. Therefore, it becomes crucial within the higher education system to explore aspects such as students' professional motivation, particularly for those pursuing newly introduced specialties, the dynamics of its development during the learning process, and the organizational and pedagogical conditions necessary for fostering students' competencies.

The educational program comprises several components, including a cycle of general education (humanities, fundamental subjects), professional training, elective courses chosen by the student, and practical training (internships or practical experience).

The set of professional competencies of graduates is determined by the level of their training. Graduates who have obtained the relevant qualifications should be prepared to carry out practical activities in their chosen field. They should be able to employ various techniques, methods, and tools to enhance the effectiveness of their preparation. Furthermore, they should continuously improve their professional skills, ensuring the efficiency of the production process.

In the context of discussing the professional training of future economics bachelor's degree holders, we have taken into account the concept that has developed in modern pedagogy regarding the necessity for the structure of an individual's personality, engaged in specific activities, to correspond with the structure of that particular activity (O. Vnukova [3], Ya. Kazarnytskova [8], B. Mokin [9]). This concept highlights the importance of aligning the personal traits, competencies, and skills of students with the requirements and demands of their chosen profession,

ensuring a better fit between the individual and the field of activity they intend to pursue.

Aims. The purpose of the article is the formation of professional competence of future Bachelor of Economics in higher educational institutions.

Methodology. The necessity for further examination of the process of forming the readiness of future economics bachelor's degree holders for professional activity is linked to the fact that existing research insufficiently considers the personal potential of these students and the conditions of the chosen professional sphere.

The analysis of scientific studies on the issue of defining professionally significant qualities of a specialist (V. Volyk [4], S. Horobets [5], among others) has enabled us to identify the factors that determine this significance (Fig. 1).

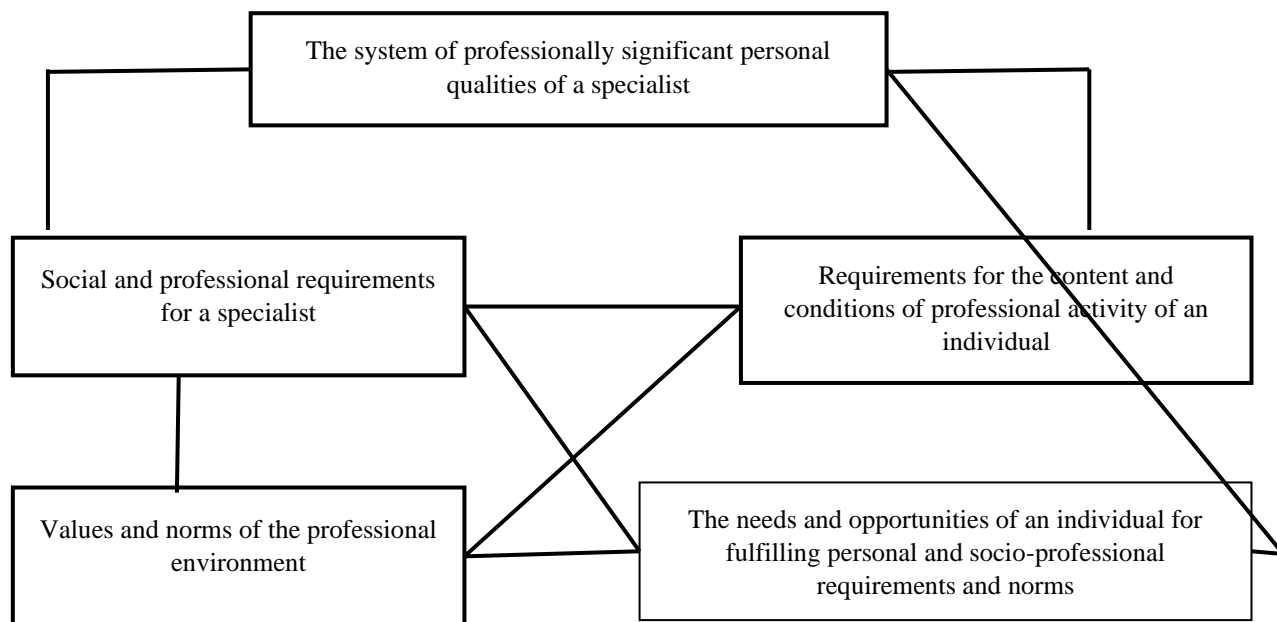


Figure 1. Factors determining professionally significant personal qualities of a specialist

The analysis of scientific literature allows us to conclude that up to the present moment, there is practically no unequivocal assessment of the significance of specific professional characteristics of a specialist. Each relevant characteristic is approached within different methodological frameworks, including the personality-activity approach, integrative approach, competency-based approach, and others.

Within the personality-activity approach, O. Vnukova [3] uses the model of a specialist's activity as the basis for the model of professionals, identifying the following basic components: problems (tasks) that a specialist has to address in their professional activity; types of activities as methods or approaches used to solve the formulated tasks; functions, which are generalized characteristics of the main duties performed in accordance with the profession's requirements; approaches to solving identified problems or tasks; theoretical or applied knowledge that a specialist employs in their activity; abilities and skills used to achieve desired results; personal

qualities that ensure the success of actions in the chosen field; value orientations and attitudes.

According to L. Dybkova [6], the personality component of the model of specialists encompasses a specific set of professional, social, moral, political, psychological, physical, and other traits of an individual – a combination of characteristics without which they cannot function in a specific role. These characteristics include professional orientation, the structure of professional motives, the level of professional activity at different stages of professionalization, and a description of the main indicators that characterize the productivity, quality, and reliability of an individual's functioning at various stages of professional development.

V. Volik [4] includes in the list of professionally significant personal qualities both the knowledge and skills that should be developed in specialists of any profession, as well as specific qualities that are dictated by the requirements of preparation for a particular specialty.

Several researchers emphasize the special role of experience, knowledge, skills, competencies, and personally and professionally significant qualities and abilities in professional activities. These qualitative characteristics (indicators) reflect the development of a specialist as a creative professional individual capable of self-improvement and self-development.

The researchers mentioned above have identified several approaches to studying the personality of a professional. The most common approach involves moving from activity to personality. Initially, any professional activity is studied, and qualities that determine its effectiveness are identified. Then, individuals who best match the identified parameters are determined. However, as pointed out by Ya. Kazarnytskova [8], this approach often limits the study of activity only from an external perspective. It relies either on observation of the work process or on expert opinions, leaving many essential characteristics undisclosed. As a result, the identified professionally significant qualities may not always be the ones that determine the success in mastering the studied activity. This approach is referred to as pragmatic, where the individual is "tailored" to meet the requirements of the profession.

V. Volik [4] refers to another approach as technocratic, in which the author assumes that during the process of learning and acquiring knowledge, skills, and competencies, the missing professionally significant qualities can be formed. However, according to the researcher, the obtained knowledge, skills, and competencies, as well as the individual style of performing activities and the presence of professionally significant qualities, may not correspond to the actual level of professionalism. In situations where frustration occurs or difficulties arise in carrying out professional activities, the researcher believes that true personality traits will manifest in professional behavior. This suggests that even though technical skills and knowledge can be developed through training, genuine professional competence and behavior are also influenced by an individual's personality and inherent traits.

As a basis for the model of a professional's personality, proponents of the humanistic approach (O. Vnukova [3], O. Zablotska [7]) consider personal

characteristics that determine the effectiveness of professional activity. They compare the personal traits of successful and unsuccessful specialists, as well as the personal qualities of effective professionals. Combining the individual's personality structure with the conditions of professional activity using this approach allows presenting a model of desired personal qualities for a specialist to effectively accomplish practical tasks.

The authors consider the following as objective personality factors: professional skill, experience, gender, nationality, level of education, qualification, erudition, value orientations, social background, abilities, and age. On the other hand, subjective factors include stable personality traits such as anxiety, sociability, neuroticism, aggressiveness, emotional stability, and so on.

O. Bila [2], L. Dybkova [6], and Ye. Pidlisnyi [12] consider the personality-activity approach as a fundamental component of the system of professional qualities through an individual's abilities. They interpret abilities as a set of personal attributes that determine a person's successful performance. Within this approach, activity, including professional activity, is viewed not only as a factor in the development of abilities but also as their substantive characteristic. Researchers believe that the development of abilities in one type of professional activity enhances the quality of performing other types of activities.

The mentioned personality-activity approach is the most common but also a rather simplified approach, as it considers only those personality traits that directly influence the outcomes of activities.

In the studies of advocates of the integrative approach to the content of professional education (V. Volik [4], Yu. Pavlova [10], and others), its principles, essence, and main directions of implementation in the higher education process are revealed: interdisciplinary, intrasubject, and intrapersonal integration. This approach forms the basis for designing the module-rating system of training for bachelor's degrees in economics.

The development of the competency-based approach in the education system is dedicated to the works of N. Bibik [1], O. Bila [2], O. Vnukova [3], O. Zablotska [7], B. Mokin [9], V. Petruk [11], M. Rud [13], and others. Supporters of the competency-based approach believe that it allows integrating the goals of education and professional activity, moving from knowledge reproduction to its application and organization in professional activities, guiding students to handle various professional and life situations, and expanding employment opportunities through the development of competencies. The competency-based approach is one of the responses of the higher education system to societal demands.

The generalization of our own research allowed us to define the key concepts of education modernization. The sense-forming units of professional standards are the key constructs of professional education. There is a close interrelation between these constructs: all of them include knowledge, skills, and abilities, as well as motivational and emotional-volitional components.

Results. For the higher education system, polytechnic, organizational-economic, and information-communication competencies are essential. Among the

basic competencies, we should consider a complex of universal knowledge characterized by a high level of generalization. These integral knowledge include general scientific and general professional categories, concepts, laws, principles, and regularities of science, technology, and society.

Since the implementation of competencies occurs in the process of students' various activities to solve theoretical and practical tasks, the structure of competencies includes not only procedural knowledge, skills, and abilities but also motivational and emotional-volitional aspects. The integration of individual actions, methods, and problem-solving approaches learned by students constitutes their experience. In our opinion, the effectiveness of educational, educational-professional, and social-professional activities is significantly determined by the renewal of students' cognitive and social-professional qualities.

The scheme of the main constructs of the competency-based approach presented by us, in our view, most comprehensively reflects their essence and can serve as the basis for detailing the competency model of graduates in a specific specialty (Figure 2).

Therefore, the competency-based approach is a priority orientation of education towards the ability to learn, self-determination, self-actualization, socialization, and the development of individuality in future professionals. As instrumental means to achieve these goals, fundamentally new educational constructs are introduced: competency and professional competency. In this context, the formation of professionally significant competencies in future economics bachelor's students is oriented towards a humanistic style of interaction among students, educators, and employers, aimed at developing self- and peer-assessment of the most significant outcomes for future professional activities; it is creative in terms of purpose, content, and the activity of educators and students; it is developmental, focused on maximizing the development of students' reflective and creative abilities and promoting success for each individual. This becomes possible with the presence of professionally significant qualities in future economics bachelor's students, such as the ability to navigate through information flows, self-educate to fill in knowledge gaps, possess competitiveness and mobility, solve non-standard professional tasks, and strive for self-actualization in their chosen professional sphere. These qualities are directed towards the development of students' personal functions, including motivation, orientation towards future professions, and self-realization.

Conclusions. We consider research on the interrelation between the level of development of professionally significant competencies in future economics bachelor's students and their career growth to be promising. Additionally, we find the conceptual and methodological foundations of continuous education for economics bachelor's students within the context of the competency-based approach to be of great interest. Furthermore, we see the productive interaction between higher education institutions and employers in enhancing the effectiveness of professional preparation for future economics bachelor's students for successful practical activities as a significant area for exploration.

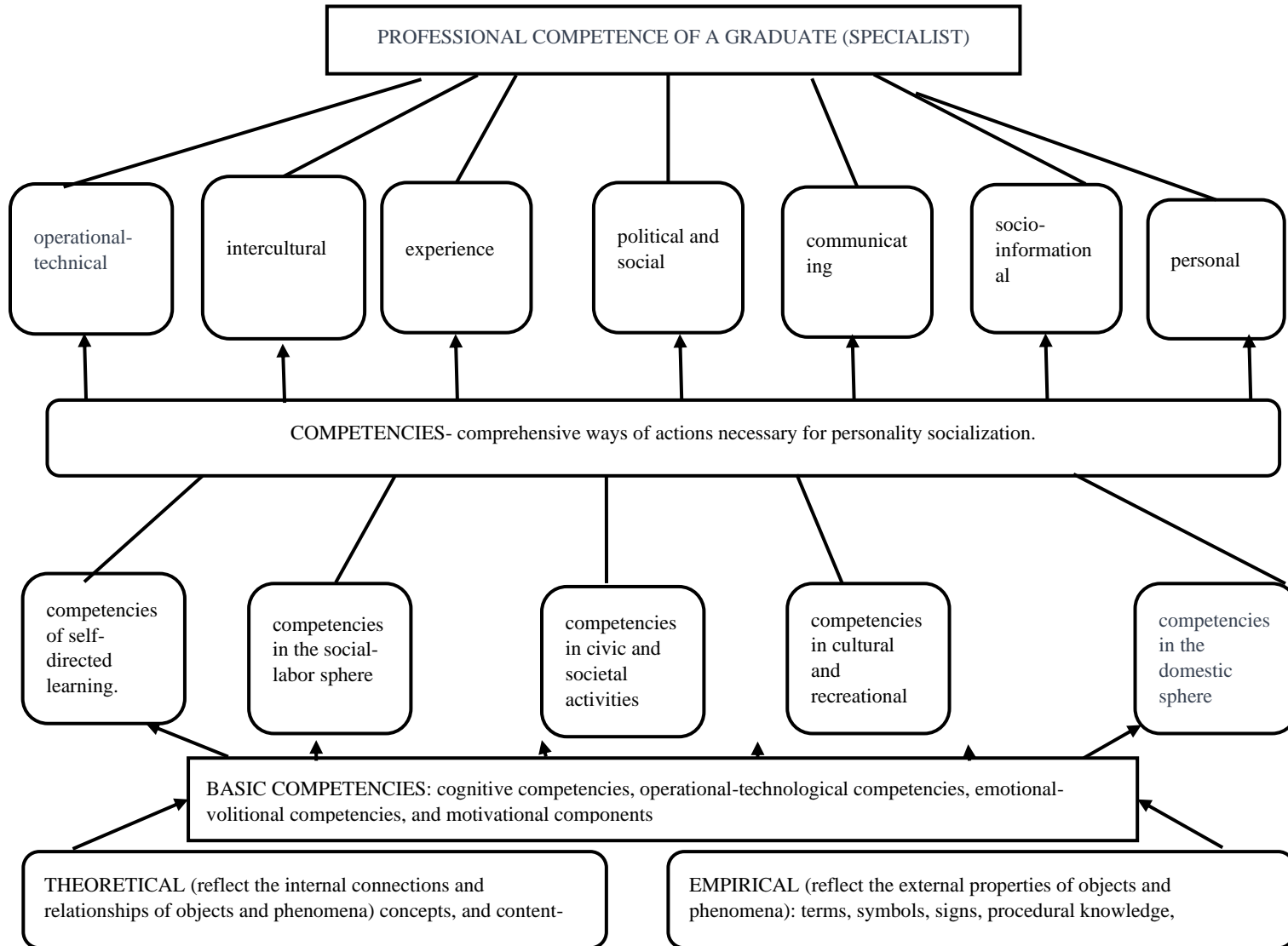


Figure 2. Diagram of the main constructs of the competency-based approach

Author contributions. The authors contributed equally.

Disclosure statement. The authors do not have any conflict of interest.

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