

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE BASED ON THE INTEGRATION OF INTENSIVE SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND DIGITAL METHODOLOGY

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In our country, the education system is continuously improving. In particular, significant attention is being paid to the development of students' emotional intelligence in the process of teaching English. Although scientific achievements have long been considered the main focus of education, today the importance of developing emotional intelligence among higher education students is increasingly being recognized. Why, then, is emotional intelligence so important in education? Researchers have proven that emotional intelligence is a crucial factor not only in academic success but also in overall well-being and success in life.

This dissertation aims to explore the importance of emotional intelligence in education, to examine its role in fostering healthy relationships between students and teachers, improving learning effectiveness, and preparing students for the complexities of the modern world.

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which individuals develop self-awareness, manage their emotions, collaborate with others, communicate effectively, and acquire social skills. This form of education not only contributes to academic achievement but also strengthens an individual's social and emotional well-being. The primary goal of social-emotional learning is to foster social responsibility through understanding oneself and others, and to support effective functioning within a social environment. This type of learning begins in childhood and continues throughout life, playing a vital role in both personal and professional success.

Within this educational process, children and adolescents learn to identify their emotions and respond to them appropriately. At the same time, they develop skills for managing emotions, remaining patient in difficult situations, and coping with stress. Understanding the emotions of others fosters empathy, which in turn enhances the ability to collaborate and improves teamwork. As a result, social-emotional learning contributes to success in social interaction.

Social-emotional learning has a positive impact on an individual's interests and behavior. It encourages individuals to follow social norms, avoid comparing themselves with others, and

instead focus on developing their own unique abilities and talents. A learner or student acquires the ability to find their place in society, accurately assess their capabilities, and use them effectively. Through this type of education, opportunities expand for proper personality development, overcoming challenges, and achieving sustainable success in life.

Furthermore, social-emotional learning plays an important role in preventing conflicts within society. Misunderstandings, disagreements, and disputes often arise due to individuals' inability to understand emotions or accept others' perspectives. Social-emotional learning helps address these issues by developing emotional awareness. As a result, individuals cultivate communication skills based on mutual respect and trust.

The relevance of social-emotional learning is steadily increasing today. In particular, the rapid development of technology and the emergence of new situations related to social media highlight the importance of emotional maturity and social communication skills among young people. Therefore, integrating social-emotional learning into the education system plays a crucial role not only in enhancing individual well-being but also in promoting social welfare. It contributes to achievements ranging from personal self-regulation to overall social stability.

Digital methodology is an approach to teaching based on the use of modern technologies and digital resources in the educational process. This methodology involves the exchange of information between students and teachers through digital devices and the internet. Digital methodology is not limited to the mere use of technology; it also aims to improve the quality of teaching, personalize the learning process, and ensure flexibility. In this context, various digital platforms, software programs, mobile applications, and interactive tools are actively utilized in the educational process.

One of the main features of digital methodology is making the learning process more interactive and engaging. For example, through online classes, video lectures, virtual laboratories, and simulations, students gain the opportunity to study topics visually and through practical experience. Such tools not only differ from traditional teaching methods but also accelerate the process of acquiring and applying knowledge. At the same time, digital technologies simplify the assessment of knowledge, for instance, through online tests and automated evaluation systems.

Another advantage of digital methodology is the ability to individualize the learning process and adapt it to the personal needs of each student. In traditional education systems, a uniform approach to all learners is common; however, digital methodology enables the creation of individualized learning plans based on each student's characteristics, level of knowledge,

and learning pace. For example, digital platforms allow for monitoring students' progress, identifying their weaknesses, and providing targeted practice or additional materials accordingly. Thus, students can choose learning methods that best suit them.

Digital methodology is important not only in the educational process but also in teacher training and professional development. Teachers need to learn how to use digital resources and master modern pedagogical tools. For this purpose, various online courses, webinars, and platforms are available. In addition, digital methodology assists teachers in lesson planning and the development of instructional materials. For example, they can create electronic textbooks, interactive presentations, and digital tests to make lessons more engaging and effective.

Digital methodology is one of the key directions in modernizing the educational process. This approach makes learning interactive, personalized, and flexible, while also contributing to the professional development of teachers. Moreover, digital tools ensure high efficiency in education, facilitate knowledge acquisition, and provide quick and convenient access to information. Therefore, digital methodology is becoming an integral part not only of the current but also of the future education system.

Professional competence is a set of knowledge, skills, and abilities within a specialist's field of expertise. It includes not only professional knowledge but also practical experience, communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and the capacity to adapt to the requirements of one's profession. Professional competence ensures that a specialist achieves effective and high-quality results in their professional activities. This concept encompasses not only technical knowledge but also personal qualities and social skills, as modern labor markets require multifaceted abilities to remain competitive.

The main elements of professional competence include theoretical knowledge, technical skills, practical experience, communication abilities, leadership, and problem-solving skills. Together, these elements help a specialist succeed in their profession. For instance, theoretical knowledge provides an understanding of the foundations and principles of professional activity, while technical skills enable the practical application of that knowledge. Practical experience further enhances professional skills and contributes to confidence and efficiency in work performance.

Professional competence requires continuous development, as technologies and processes are rapidly evolving. Acquiring new knowledge and skills increases a specialist's competitiveness in the labor market. This process is known as professional development and is achieved through advanced training courses, seminars, webinars, and practical experience.

Professional competence is important not only for working in a specific profession but also for remaining competitive in the overall labor market, regardless of the field.

Another important aspect of professional competence is that it includes personal and social competencies. Self-management, time management, teamwork skills, and leadership abilities play a significant role in achieving professional success. A specialist should not only perform their duties effectively but also collaborate efficiently with colleagues, manage teams, and inspire others to achieve common goals. Additionally, they should be able to apply creative and logical approaches in problem-solving situations.

Professional competence is not merely a set of knowledge and skills but a determining factor in an individual's overall professional success. It enables a person to be independent, responsible, and effective in their work. Every specialist must continuously learn, stay informed about innovations, and develop their skills to achieve high results in their profession. Therefore, professional competence is considered one of the most important qualities in modern society and the labor market.

The integration of social-emotional learning and digital methodology is the combination of two different approaches aimed at making the educational process more effective and personalized. While social-emotional learning focuses on developing students' emotional growth, empathy, stress management, and social communication skills, digital methodology enhances the teaching process by making it more interactive and engaging through the use of technology. The integration of these two approaches enriches the educational process and ensures not only academic but also emotional and social development of learners. This combination equips students with essential life skills.

One important aspect of this methodology is the development of emotional and social skills through digital tools. For example, through interactive simulations, virtual group activities, and online project-based work, students develop teamwork skills, mutual understanding, and collaborative problem-solving abilities. Additionally, online platforms provide opportunities for self-assessment and learning methods for managing emotions. In this process, students can monitor their emotional well-being through digital tools and seek support when necessary.

Among the advantages of integrating digital methodology and social-emotional learning is the opportunity to create a personalized learning process. With the help of digital tools, it is possible to monitor students' emotional states and social skills and develop them according to their individual needs. This provides an individualized approach to each learner. For example,

students can use specialized applications to independently track their emotional well-being. At the same time, teachers can monitor each student's progress through online platforms and provide additional support tailored to their weaknesses.

Another advantage of this integration is the ability to use a wider range of resources for teaching emotional and social skills in a digital environment. For instance, digital platforms enable students to explore different cultures, languages, and communities, participate in international collaborative projects, and connect with teachers and learners worldwide. This allows students to develop global communication skills and gain an understanding of diverse cultures. Additionally, through online projects and forums, students learn to listen to others' opinions and express their own ideas openly.

The integration of social-emotional learning and digital methodology not only makes the educational process more innovative and interactive but also enhances students' emotional and social well-being. This approach enables learners to develop skills in managing emotional health, engaging in effective social communication, and working collaboratively through digital tools. In the future, this integration will play a significant role in education and contribute greatly to students' personal and professional development. Therefore, combining digital methodology with social-emotional learning is of strategic importance in the education system.

The development of students' professional competence is one of the primary objectives of the educational process, aimed at preparing future specialists for successful professional activity. Professional competence represents a set of professional knowledge, skills, and abilities that enable students to apply them in practice, perform their tasks effectively, and remain competitive in the labor market. This process is based not only on theoretical knowledge but also on practical experience, personal qualities, and continuous self-development.

The content of professional competence development consists of several components. First and foremost, it involves deepening students' theoretical knowledge. Achieving success in any profession requires a solid understanding of subject-specific knowledge. In addition, through the development of technical and practical skills, students master the technologies and processes necessary for their profession. These competencies, in turn, help them perform their tasks effectively and achieve the desired outcomes. By learning to apply theoretical knowledge in practice, students become successful professionals in the future.

One of the distinctive features of developing professional competence is the significant role of practical training in the educational process. Through practice, students consolidate their professional knowledge and acquire the ability to apply it in real-life situations. For example,

students are provided with opportunities for internships, project-based work, and solving real-world problems. During practice, students become familiar with the working environment and test their knowledge and skills, which prepares them for future professional activities.

Another important aspect is the integration of professional competence with personal and social skills. In today's labor market, not only technical knowledge but also communication skills, teamwork abilities, problem-solving skills, and leadership qualities are highly important. By developing skills such as collaboration, accepting others' viewpoints, analyzing complex situations, and finding solutions, students increase their chances of professional success. At the same time, time management, stress management, and self-development skills strengthen students' professional readiness.

The essence and content of developing students' professional competence lie in deepening theoretical and practical knowledge, developing personal and social skills, and ensuring adaptability to the modern labor market. Throughout this process, students acquire all the necessary competencies for their professional activities and develop personal qualities that transform them into successful specialists. The development of professional competence is closely linked to continuous learning and self-improvement, which enables students to remain in demand not only today but also in the future labor market.

Emotional intelligence, derived from the English terms *emotional quotient* or *emotional intelligence* and abbreviated as EQ, refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, analyze, and manage their own emotions, as well as to understand and influence the emotions of others. EQ encompasses a range of skills, including self-awareness, self-regulation, social skills, empathy, and motivation. In the context of classroom education, emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in shaping students' interpersonal relationships, communication abilities, and overall social and emotional well-being.

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