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Pedagogical practice in the system of professional training for higher education students: Through the lens of contemporary realities

Abstract. The reform of higher pedagogical education in Ukraine requires teachers to attain a high level of professional competencies. In the modern period, it is essential to study pedagogical practice as it contributes to developing the necessary skills and competencies that are key to the successful professional formation of future specialists. This article aimed to explore the role and place of pedagogical practice in the professional training system for higher education students through the lens of contemporary realities. The research employed methods of analysis of scientific and pedagogical literature, comparison, systematisation, and generalisation of scientific approaches to the study of the problem. The study identified the goals of pedagogical practice, which include consolidating the theoretical knowledge acquired during studies, familiarising students with all aspects of their future profession, developing the ability to make independent, well-considered decisions in specific professional conditions, fostering the capacity for self-development and self-improvement, systematically deepening and applying one's knowledge, and mastering modern traditional and innovative methods by higher education students. Additionally, the article outlined the tasks of pedagogical practice within the system of higher education training, and substantiates its impact on the formation of professional competence, as pedagogical practice is instrumental in self-realisation, mobilising personal potential, and revealing the abilities of future teachers. The practical value of the research lies in its potential use by practice supervisors, faculty managers, methodologists, administrators, and teachers of general secondary education institutions, as well as higher education students in the system of practical training

Keywords: professional competence; future teacher; practical training; pedagogical activity; professional formation

INTRODUCTION

In the system of professional training for higher education students, the issue of organising pedagogical practice is of utmost importance, as it encompasses a combination of knowledge from professionally oriented disciplines, the ability to apply this knowledge in practice, and aims to

consolidate theoretical knowledge, familiarise students with all the nuances of their future profession, gain experience in independent work under conditions as close to professional as possible, develop critical and conscious thinking, and the ability to systematically deepen knowledge

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and skills, as well as implement them in practical activities. Pedagogical practice in general secondary education institutions is a crucial component between theoretical education and the future profession, as it allows for the assessment of a higher education student's readiness for independent pedagogical work and creates conditions for the development of the future teacher's creative potential.

Pedagogical practice is interpreted by scientists as a form of professional training in higher education institutions, aimed at the practical mastery of future specialists in the principles and laws of labor activities, and the development of key professional skills and abilities. Proper organisation of pedagogical practice and its connection with theory is one of the key pathways to forming the professional competence of future teachers. It is during practice that higher education students can ultimately affirm the correctness of their career choice. A critical stage in this process is professional formation when the student becomes an active participant in a new activity and practically masters the functional aspects of pedagogical work.

A. Protsenko (2020) notes that pedagogical practice is a significant stage in the professional training of higher education students, as it allows them to demonstrate their capabilities in real professional settings. Pedagogical practice causes the development of professional competencies in future teachers by integrating its motivational, personal, content, and activity elements. A detailed study of scientific and methodological literature and professional journals indicates that the issue of pedagogical practice is discussed by both Ukrainian and foreign scholars. For instance, R.V. Sathasivam *et al.* (2024) in their scientific publication, state that well-organised practice ensures the connection between the pedagogical knowledge acquired at university and practical experience. At present, there is a significant gap between theory and practice, which, according to scholars, threatens the desire of higher education students to remain in the profession. S.B.V. Bustamante (2020) in the context of this research notes that the use of innovative technologies during practice, along with consideration of interdisciplinary connections, is crucial as it enables students to rethink the role of knowledge from professionally oriented disciplines and the ability to apply them practically in professional activities. E. Zangani *et al.* (2021) highlight that the professional development of a higher education student is based on acquiring solid knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Scientific-theoretical knowledge and pedagogical practice significantly contribute to the professional formation of future teachers. The authors' scientific publication aimed to explore the connections between the theoretical knowledge acquired in higher education institutions and educational practice, as there are certain gaps in the scientific literature regarding this issue. The research revealed that professional competence directly depends not only on the preparation of the future teacher in higher education institutions but also on their access during pedagogical practice to modern technologies and the availability

of educational materials in basic education, as schools do not always meet the demands of the 21st century. In turn, L. Vakhovskyi (2023) offers a new perspective on the relationship between educational philosophy and educational practice, emphasising the crucial role of pedagogical practice in the training of future specialists.

Scientists like O. Dolska & N. Godz (2021) focus on education and the use of online learning in modern conditions. Online education allows for a broader view of its transformations and highlights the urgent need for changes in classical educational theory and practice, and even significant changes within it. This led to the choice of the research topic. Pedagogical practice in educational institutions lacks a systematic and comprehensive approach. Specifically, aspects of a teacher's work, such as communication with parents, handling documentation, and conducting extracurricular activities, are often overlooked by both higher education students and practice supervisors. The purpose of this article was to explore the role and place of pedagogical practice in the system of professional training for future teachers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The article is based on the scientific perspectives of scholars regarding the role of pedagogical practice in the system of professional training for higher education students. To achieve the aim of the publication, theoretical research methods were employed, including analysis, synthesis, classification, comparison, generalisation, and systematisation. Theoretical analysis and synthesis enabled the review of the latest literature from 2019 to 2024, encompassing general and specialised works in pedagogy, methodology, periodicals, reference materials, documents, monographs, and methodological recommendations necessary for determining the role of pedagogical practice in contemporary contexts.

The analysis of scientific and pedagogical literature facilitated the study of key aspects: the primary goals and tasks of pedagogical practice (Yevtukh, 2019), which involve higher education students mastering modern methods and forms of organising the educational process, consolidating theoretical knowledge, and developing professional skills essential for independent decision-making in real professional conditions; the functions related to the formation of pedagogical competencies (Vorovka & Protsenko, 2020); the requirements for base institutions that must provide proper conditions for higher education students to fulfill the specific practice program, ensuring close interaction between the leadership of higher education institutions and general secondary education institutions, as well as maintaining safe and healthy conditions that meet sanitary and hygienic standards and occupational safety requirements during the practice, providing students access to library resources and various documentation necessary for the practice program, and the organisation of pedagogical practice in a remote format, including the use of online services (Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Skype, Google

Meet, and others) through which practice is conducted in modern conditions. The article also addresses aspects and issues that have been thoroughly researched by scholars, as well as topics that are still under scientific debate and require resolution and implementation in the system of professional training for future teachers.

In this scientific publication, the methods of synthesis and classification were applied, focusing on the analysis of the structural components of organising practice in general secondary education institutions, examining them in their entirety and interrelation, which inevitably leads to results. The comparison method was used to contrast the organisation of practice in the past with its current state, allowing for the identification of both positive and negative changes, thus observing the dynamics of the process in the system of professional training for higher education students. Different approaches to solving the research problem were also compared, enabling the drawing of parallels and identification of effective aspects of organising pedagogical practice through the lens of contemporary realities that require detailed consideration in the context of the professional training system for higher education students. The method of systematisation contributed to organising and compiling the main substantiated and verified scientific findings on the organisation of pedagogical practice in the system of professional training for higher education students, and their interpretation in this scientific publication. Through the method of generalisation, the most essential information was distilled from a large amount of data, leading to the formulation of clear conclusions for the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An important stage in the professional development of higher education students is undergoing pedagogical practice, which qualitatively differs from academic activities in terms of its goals, content, and methods. During this practice, the process of professional self-identification of future specialists intensifies, involving their identification with a new social role. There is intensive learning of all aspects of the future profession, development of essential professional competencies, and recognition of the need for professional self-development. The distinctive features of pedagogical practice are that it aims to enhance self-realisation prospects, enrich personal potential, reveal hidden talents of higher education students, form skills and abilities to solve pedagogical problems arising in the work process and understand the significance and role of the future profession. The effective formation of professional competence in higher education students is directly dependent on well-organised practical training and its connection with theory, as it is through practice that future specialists have the opportunity to become closely acquainted with all aspects of their chosen profession.

M. Yevtukh (2019) notes that general secondary education institutions expect a modern specialist of the new generation who possesses the attributes of general professional

culture, and pedagogical thinking, and is independent of past stereotypes and political and ideological pressures. In preparing such a specialist, the role of pedagogical practice is exceptional, characterised by the independent execution of full-fledged professional activities by higher education students. According to scholars, pedagogical practice is the most effective form of preparing future teachers for work in schools, serving as a leading link in the system of acquiring professional skills and abilities, during which they develop personal qualities, gain a clear understanding of the age and cognitive abilities of secondary school students, learn to build mutual relationships with them and their parents, set goals, develop organisational skills, etc.

Research indicates that at the present stage, there is a low level of readiness among higher education students to address educational tasks during pedagogical practice in general secondary education institutions. Difficulties for students arise with tasks related to calendar-thematic planning, formulating the triadic goal of a lesson, preparing lesson plans, selecting content and scope of educational material according to the lesson topic, forms and methods of organising educational activities, as well as the age and cognitive development of secondary education students, among other aspects. This is primarily due to the insufficient number of hours allocated to studying individual educational components of professional activity, the complexity of organising practice, and the inadequate interaction between higher education institutions and pedagogical practice bases. There is a certain mismatch between the demands of the labor market and the level of professional preparation of higher education students, which causes difficulties in their adaptation to the educational process in modern general secondary education institutions, applying the acquired knowledge in explaining new material to students, and so on. Thus, in the context of updating the modern educational system, it is necessary to focus on and address these issues, improve the process of pedagogical practice to ensure high-quality preparation of future teachers, mastery of professional subjects and teaching methods, a high level of culture and professional competence, and the ability for lifelong self-education and self-improvement.

O. Barna & G. Genseruk (2020) note that the goal of practice is to master modern methods and forms of organising educational activities in the future field of expertise; to develop professional skills and abilities, decision-making capabilities in real conditions; to apply acquired professional competencies in the educational process; and to cultivate a need to continuously update knowledge and apply it in practice, among other aspects. G. Genseruk & M. Boyko (2022) believe that in the current stage of societal development, a teacher must possess a high level of professional competence. During their education, higher education students should develop the appropriate professional pedagogical abilities, including theoretical, methodological, and practical preparation. According to scholars, pedagogical practice is a link between theoretical training

and the future profession, as it is during pedagogical practice that the theoretical and practical preparation of higher education students for independent work is assessed, and opportunities are created to ensure the creative potential of future specialists. O. Kryvonos (2021) points out that the success of addressing educational process tasks in general secondary education institutions directly depends on the level of professional competence of the teacher, their readiness for interpersonal communication, their ability to motivate secondary education students to learn, and self-improvement, and their persistent self-work, among other factors. According to the author, teachers should approach their professional activity creatively, as each student is unique; the circumstances of organising the educational process are also unique, as are the various situations in which teachers must make decisions.

Therefore, constantly new methods of solving professional tasks are required. At the same time, each teacher must maintain their individuality and uniqueness and adapt to modern realities. In the context of the researched issue, V. Kovalchuk (2023) argues that pedagogical practice is a logical and consistent continuation of theoretical training, during which higher education students learn the fundamental content and tasks of the science underlying their future profession. For higher education students, the theory includes social sciences, psychological-pedagogical disciplines, and sciences, the basics of which they will teach in general secondary education institutions depending on their specific specialty. L. Moskovchuk (2023) notes that practice should ensure the continuity and consistency of developing general and special competencies and the professional development of higher education students. According to L. Donchenko *et al.* (2019), pedagogical practice deepens and consolidates theoretical knowledge, skills, and abilities of higher education students in general-professional and specialised disciplines. It also develops their professional and pedagogical skills, and abilities to work in the educational process with secondary education students. The demands placed on contemporary teachers require them to master innovative teaching technologies, and pedagogical skills, and to develop the need to systematically update their knowledge and apply it creatively in practical activities, as well as to cultivate their abilities. All these professional skills and competencies should be developed during the training of future teachers at higher education institutions, with pedagogical practice providing the initial opportunities to implement them (Decree of the President of Ukraine No. 347, 2002; Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 379, 2002; Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 776, 2018).

The organisation and implementation of practice for higher education students are regulated by Ukrainian legislation, including Law of Ukraine No. 2145-VIII (2017), the State national program "Education" Ukraine of the XXI century (1994), and Regulations on conducting internships for students of higher educational institutions of Ukraine (1993). According to Law of Ukraine

No. 1556-VII (2014), practical training for students is one of the main forms of organising educational activities, alongside other forms such as lectures, practical classes, independent work, and tests. Practical training is conducted according to agreements on pedagogical practice in general secondary education institutions. According to the Regulations on conducting internships for students of higher educational institutions of Ukraine (1993), the practice of higher education students should be continuous and consistent at all educational qualification levels, ensuring the acquisition of the necessary practical knowledge and skills. The content, sequence, objectives, forms, and methods of control, reporting, and expected results of pedagogical practice are determined by a program developed by the faculty head according to the curriculum for each educational program at the corresponding level of higher education. A single program is created for different forms of study (full-time and part-time). Practice programs are reviewed at department meetings, approved by the guarantor of the educational program, developed for the duration of the curriculum, and updated annually before the start of the new academic year. The practice program should include the following key information: the name of the practice, the number of credits (hours) and duration; the goal, content, and objectives of the practice; a tentative list of practice bases; the procedure for its implementation; requirements for the practice; individual tasks and tasks for students' independent work; a list of reporting documentation, requirements for the report, criteria for evaluating the results of the practice; recommended sources (Regulations on Conducting Industrial..., 2023). The effectiveness of student practice depends on the successful selection of the practice base, the optimal choice of methods and techniques for specific professional conditions, the methodological level of the teacher who encourages students to complete practice tasks by example, and promotes a conscientious attitude toward work, responsibility, and goal-orientedness. According to N. Yuriychuk (2023), one of the authors of this publication, the following requirements are placed on practice bases: firstly, the ability to ensure the execution of a given practice program; secondly, the availability of non-harmful, safe conditions that meet sanitary, hygienic, and occupational safety standards during the practice; thirdly, the proper level of supervision of higher education students' practice; fourthly, the provision of access to library resources, various documentation necessary for the implementation of the practice program; and fifthly, the possibility of further employment for university graduates, subject to available vacancies, on general terms. The positive outcome of the practice depends on the well-organised work and close interaction between the management of higher and general secondary education institutions, the practice supervisor from the faculty, the methodologist, teachers, class tutors, and, ultimately, the interns themselves. Practice is characterised by gradualness, continuity, consistency, and systematisation. It becomes increasingly complex, starting from familiarisation

with the general secondary education institution, observing the educational process, and analysing the information obtained, progressing to more complex tasks. The effectiveness of the practice and the subsequent adaptation of students to their future profession depends on the content, proper choice of forms, methods, techniques, and technologies for organising educational activities. According to M. Yevtukh (2019), during practical training, important techniques for activating higher education students' creative thinking include a clear system of tasks that facilitate the application of pedagogical theory in practice, such as substantiating the triadic goal and structure of the lesson, determining the lesson type, methods, and forms of organising educational activities, preparing lesson plans, choosing methods for studying and characterising a student or an entire class, etc.

During their practice, higher education students perform tasks related to educational and developmental work, conduct scientific research defined by the departments of pedagogy and psychology, summarise advanced pedagogical experience from leading teachers, conduct surveys of students and their parents, carry out pedagogical experiments, and perform psychological and pedagogical observations of students, among other activities. Students report on the results of their practice at summary conferences on pedagogical practice. The educational program, curriculum, and schedule of the educational process at the higher education institution define the list of all types of practice, their duration, and timing. The main goal of pedagogical practice is for higher education students to master modern methods and forms of organising the educational process, consolidate the theoretical knowledge acquired during their studies, develop professional skills according to the educational program necessary for making independent decisions in real conditions, and to enhance their ability to systematically update their knowledge and apply it creatively in pedagogical activities. Depending on the educational program, the practice may be instructional (didactic, introductory, etc.) or production-oriented (instructional-production, research, pre-diploma, technological, etc.). The tasks of pedagogical practice include: 1) enriching the theoretical knowledge of higher education students in pedagogy, psychology, professional disciplines, and methods of their teaching and practical application; 2) mastering innovative and traditional forms, methods, and technologies of teaching; 3) conducting lessons using various forms of online communication, preparing teaching aids, and organising individual work with students; 4) developing pedagogical skills such as working with current educational programs and textbooks, preparing calendar plans, lesson plans, etc.; 5) acquiring skills as a class teacher, conducting educational work in the classroom, preparing psychological and pedagogical profiles of students; 6) developing creative initiative and personal research potential, undertaking independent actions in the educational process, forming pedagogical mastery and professionally significant personal qualities, developing a need for

pedagogical self-education and systematic self-improvement, continuously updating knowledge and skills, and working on one's professional growth. These tasks are aimed at the comprehensive formation of professional competence and preparing future teachers for effective work in modern educational practice. During pedagogical practice, as noted by M. Vorovka & A. Protsenko (2020), all aspects of the future profession are intensively assimilated, a conscious attitude toward knowledge is formed, professional skills and competencies develop, the need for self-development and self-improvement is manifested, and interest in working in schools increases.

Practical training is a crucial component in the system of developing professional competence for future teachers. Educators and higher education students must work closely together in the preparation for professional activities. Pedagogical practice allows students to definitively determine the correctness of their career choice. A true teacher integrates psychological, pedagogical, and specialised knowledge with pedagogical skills. However, during the preparation of higher education students, there is often an insufficient emphasis on the need for each lesson and educational session to be engaging, original, and tailored to the student's characteristics, including their preparation for lessons and attitudes toward educational activities. Practice should not be limited to merely replicating the work of other teachers; it should focus on reinforcing and developing the ability to independently find solutions to pedagogical problems, using the knowledge and skills acquired during the study of psychological, pedagogical, and professional disciplines at the higher education institution.

The effectiveness of pedagogical practice for higher education students depends on several factors: first, the quality of the educational and methodological support provided by the higher education institution; second, the level of skills and competencies developed by future teachers, and their use of teaching methods for professionally oriented disciplines; third, the encouragement of students to engage in psychological and pedagogical research; fourth, the motivation and assistance provided by faculty supervisors and teachers in helping students adapt to professional activities; and fifth, the systematic analysis and control, and objective evaluation of the practice outcomes. Summarising the scientific approaches to the issue of pedagogical practice, we agree with the view of M. Vorovka & A. Protsenko (2020) that it is a critically important component of the professional training of higher education students and serves several functions in developing pedagogical competence: adaptation: familiarising students with various types of educational institutions and working within them; adapting to the educational environment of a specific institution; adjusting to school conditions; getting to know the students in the class; understanding the challenges that arise and the opportunities for self-realisation in pedagogical activities; educational: strengthening the knowledge acquired at the higher education institution; developing basic practical skills and abilities; developmental:

engaging in self-education and self-improvement; understanding the significance of the teaching profession and its role in the development of future generations; striving to understand students of all ages; supporting their development and self-realisation, and nurturing universal moral qualities; research: developing research and inquiry skills; learning to find necessary scientific information from a large volume of sources and working with it; professional: enhancing motivation for pedagogical activities and professional skills in real professional situations; projective: developing skills in planning personal activities to implement the pedagogical practice program; selecting innovative technologies; preparing calendar plans, lesson plans, and educational activities; communicative: creating a favorable psychological climate in interactions with students and their parents; diagnostic: assessing one's own professional skills and their alignment with the needs of pedagogical activities; studying the cognitive characteristics of students; choosing directions for educational and developmental work; reflective: self-analysis of the practice program execution process, personal pedagogical skills; understanding oneself as a future specialist; integrative: systematic use of theoretical knowledge and skills; applying them to solve professional tasks and achieve set goals.

As a result of a detailed study of scientific and pedagogical literature, authors agree with the views of scholars (Velykdan, 2019; Koloskova & Nazarenko, 2021; Yuriychuk, 2024) that one of the main tasks of pedagogical practice in modern realities is the development of future teachers' skills in using digital technologies in their professional activities. This development contributes to the advancement of productive learning systems and the enhancement of educational service quality. The organisation of pedagogical practice in a remote format is facilitated by online services such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Skype, Google Meet, etc. (Vasylchenko & Shatska, 2022). Students are provided with methodological guidelines, participate in video conferences, and receive individual consultations online. Mixed and remote forms of practice require certain changes in the content of tasks and reporting formats for students (Yershova, 2023).

Thus, a characteristic feature of pedagogical practice is the use of the latest achievements in pedagogy, psychology, and other sciences, as well as modern digital learning technologies. During practice, students develop research and inquiry skills, which include lesson analysis, studying class dynamics and individual students, preparing reports and essays, and gathering materials for research work. Throughout the practice, students learn under the careful guidance of faculty supervisors and methodologists. They perform all types of teacher duties, conduct trial and evaluation lessons, carry out educational activities, fulfill

the responsibilities of a class tutor, and interact with the school staff and students' parents. Pedagogical practice is a powerful factor in the preparation of higher education students and a decisive means of self-improvement and development of individual capabilities in professional activities.

CONCLUSIONS

The synthesis of a broad range of theoretical and methodological sources, combined with personal pedagogical experience in the context of the studied problem, leads to the conclusion that the preparation of highly qualified specialists is a crucial task for higher education institutions. The primary goal of pedagogical practice is for higher education students to master modern methods, forms, and technologies for organising the educational process, consolidate theoretical knowledge, and develop the professional skills necessary for making independent decisions, also it aims to foster the ability to systematically update their knowledge and creatively implement it in pedagogical activities. Pedagogical practice directly impacts the professional preparation of future teachers who are capable of self-education and self-improvement; teachers who quickly adapt to changes in any area of public life, especially in education; teachers who possess a broad scientific worldview, a high level of culture, and developed professional competence. At the modern stage, the preparation of higher education students does not fully ensure their competitiveness, as there is a certain mismatch between labor market demands and the quality of the practical training system for future teachers, of which pedagogical practice is a crucial component.

The main aspects of organising and conducting pedagogical practice include: strengthening the relationship between higher and general secondary education institutions; combining theoretical and practical training; increasing attention to the methodological and professional development of future specialists, etc. Prospects for further research are to develop a comprehensive system for organising pedagogical practice for higher education students, as well as to determine the criteria for evaluating all components of practice based on a rating system that meets European requirements.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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Педагогічна практика в системі фахової підготовки здобувачів вищої освіти: крізь призму сучасних реалій

Анотація. Реформування вищої педагогічної освіти в Україні вимагає від учителів високого рівня професійних компетентностей. У сучасний період особливо важливо досліджувати педагогічну практику, оскільки вона сприяє формуванню необхідних навичок та компетенцій, що є ключовими для успішного професійного становлення майбутніх фахівців. Мета статті полягала у дослідженні ролі та місця педагогічної практики в системі фахової підготовки здобувачів вищої освіти крізь призму сучасних реалій. У науковій розвідці використано методи аналізу науково-педагогічної літератури, порівняння, систематизації та узагальнення наукових підходів до вивчення досліджуваної проблеми. У процесі дослідження було визначено мету педагогічної практики, що полягала в закріпленні теоретичних знань, здобутих протягом навчання, ознайомленні з усіма деталями майбутнього фаху, розвитку вмінь приймати самостійні, виважені рішення в певних професійних умовах, формуванні здатності саморозвиватися та самовдосконалюватися, систематично поглиблювати та застосовувати власні знання, оволодінні здобувачами вищої освіти сучасними традиційними та інноваційними методами тощо. Крім цього, у статті були виокремлені завдання педагогічної практики у системі підготовки здобувача вищої освіти, обґрунтовано її вплив на формування професійної компетентності, оскільки саме завдяки педагогічній практиці здійснюється самореалізація, мобілізується особистісний потенціал та проявляються здібності майбутнього вчителя. Практична цінність наукової розвідки полягала у тому, що її результатами можуть послуговуватися керівники практики, факультетські керівники, методисти, адміністрація та вчителі закладів загальної середньої освіти, а також здобувачі вищої освіти у системі практичної підготовки

Ключові слова: професійна компетентність; майбутній учитель; практична підготовка; педагогічна діяльність; професійне становлення