

Improvement of Pedagogical Skills of Teachers of the Institution of Higher Education

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Abstract

One of the prerequisites for solving the important and difficult task of training competitive specialists in all branches of the economy is the effective development of the pedagogical excellence of a tertiary school teacher.

The problem to be solved within the framework of this study is the assessment of the priority and importance of factors, forms and means of formation of pedagogical skills of teachers of higher education institutions.

In the course of the research, an analytical method, synthesis, comparison of information, was used to study the scientific literature on the formation and development of the pedagogical excellence of teachers of higher educational institutions, as well as a questionnaire survey for practical clarification of certain practical aspects of achieving the optimal level of pedagogical excellence of a tertiary school teacher.

According to the results of the research, based on the analysis of scientific studies and the conducted survey, the factors, criteria and tools that can be applied to achieve the optimal level of pedagogical excellence of teachers of higher educational institutions were studied.

Consideration of this problem allows us to come to the conclusion that the purpose of the academic paper is to clarify the theoretical fundamentals and determine the standpoints of teachers, heads of departments and faculties of higher educational institutions regarding the features and factors of the development of the pedagogical excellence of a tertiary school teacher in order to increase the effectiveness of his professional activity.

Keywords: pedagogical excellence, a tertiary school teacher, professional and pedagogical knowledge, criteria of pedagogical excellence, forms and methods of improving pedagogical excellence

1. Introduction

The integration of domestic education into the global educational space requires the substantiation of theoretical, methodological and organizational concepts, systems and learning technologies, among which in modern realities the leading place is occupied by innovative pedagogical technologies designed to ensure the personal and professional development of the teacher. The development of a teacher, his professional and social mobility, competitiveness in the labour market, flexibility of adaptation to changes in the modern educational space can be possible under one condition: the teacher should possess a high level of development of pedagogical competence – the most important attributive component of pedagogical activity. Mastering pedagogical excellence is a complex and dynamic process of forming a system of pedagogical competencies, especially those that allow teachers, who are engaged in professional self-development of their own skills, to conduct their professional activities as effectively as possible.

In the theoretical part of the present research, the concept, components, development factors and ways of forming the pedagogical skill of a tertiary school teacher are substantiated.

The practical part of the research includes an assessment of the most effective factors of developing the pedagogical excellence of teachers of higher educational institutions. These are the forms of work of specialists aimed at improving their own pedagogical excellence, the conditions that should be created at the stage of obtaining pedagogical education by a future teacher, and that affect the formation of his high pedagogical level. In the process of the survey, the viewpoint of the respondents regarding the criteria of the pedagogical excellence of the tertiary school teachers was also evaluated and the most effective types of trainings sessions for its improvement were identified.

Based on the results of the research, conclusions were made regarding the issues raised. In particular, it was found out that, according to the survey participants' viewpoint, among the factors for the development of pedagogical excellence, the respondents singled out the experience of displaying personal qualities in professional and educational activities and the effective choice of a model of internal behaviour. In the process of studying the effectiveness of activities aimed at improving the pedagogical excellence of a modern teacher, the research participants have chosen continuous professional development, active participation in scientific and practical conferences, forums, creative meetings with leading scientists and exchange of experience with colleagues. The most important conditions for a specialist, contributing to a high level of pedagogical excellence, according to the standpoint of the respondents, include the theoretical training, the acquisition of skills in the technique of interaction, and the mobilization of a specialist for professional analysis of various pedagogical situations. Expediency, productivity, and optimal choice of working tools have been identified as the main criteria of teachers' pedagogical excellence. By the way, the respondents have highlighted the following most effective types of training sessions towards improving this type of excellence of a tertiary school teacher, which will be especially in demand in the future, namely: discussions, trainings, "round tables", dialogue debates, seminars - workshops, discussion of the achievements of psycho-pedagogical theory and practice, modern pedagogical technologies, varieties, systematic consultations, demonstration of samples of pedagogical work techniques.

2. Literature Review

The development of the pedagogical excellence as a complex organizational system is essential for determining the role and functions of this skill in the system of higher education, which includes the process of formation, renewal and development of the teacher's personality.

Pedagogical activity is carried out in several directions: teaching, education, directing the activities of students. The pedagogical excellence of a tertiary school teacher can be manifested and in each of these areas (Slipchysyn, Honcharuk, Anikina, Yakymenko, Breslavska, Yakymenko, & Opria, 2022).

Competences of doctoral and post-graduate students in the digital world were studied. Dutchak, S., Opolska, N., Shchokin, R., Durman, O., & Shevtsiv, M. (Dutchak et al., 2020), studies in narrow specialties were engaged in by Tsaras, K., Papathanasiou, I. V., Vus, V., Panagiotopoulou, A., Katsou, M. A., Kelesi, M., & Fradelos, E. C. (Tsaras, et al., 2020) and Andrievsky, S. M., Wallerstein, G., Korotin, S. A., Kovtyukh, V. V., Khrapaty, S. V., Rydyak, Y., Huang, W. (Andrievsky, et al., 2018).

Some scientists consider pedagogical excellence as a set of professional skills of a teacher, which directly depend on his professional orientation. Consequently, pedagogical excellence can be legitimately presented as a set of certain qualities of a teacher's personality, which are determined by the high level of his psychological and pedagogical training, the ability to optimally solve pedagogical tasks (Braund & Reiss, 2019).

It should be noted that researchers do not have a unanimous opinion concerning the structure of pedagogical excellence. It is possible to distinguish the following approaches of scientists to the definition of the main characteristics of the "pedagogical excellence" concept:

- by result (high level of organization of students' activities);
- by the psychological mechanisms of pedagogical activity (a manifestation of the creative activity of the teacher, which, in turn, ensures the creativity of students);
- by internal personality properties (personal properties that ensure self-organization of pedagogical action) (Abel & Alvarez, 2020; Andrade, 2018).

In order to understand the sources of the development of pedagogical skill, ways of professional self-improvement as a factor in increasing the academic mobility of tertiary school teachers, pedagogical excellence can be defined as a complex of personality properties that ensure a high self-monitoring of professional activity on a reflective basis (Bozkurt, 2019).

A. Cueva and E. Inga (2022) have identified gnostic, constructive-projective, organizational, communicative, perceptual-reflective components as the most important structural components of developing the pedagogical excellence.

The professional readiness indicators of a graduate of a higher educational institution are considered as the basis for the development of the pedagogical excellence of a tertiary school teacher, which, as a result, are transformed into professional competence (Cueva & Inga, 2022).

The substantiated structure of the pedagogical excellence of a modern teacher of a tertiary school includes professional competence (a system of necessary knowledge, abilities and skills), mastery of modern technologies and strategies for solving didactic tasks, presentability of personal experience, the ability to absorb and implement the necessary information, readiness for creative professional activity, pedagogical abilities, pedagogical technique (language, facial expressions, dramatization, organization of pedagogical interaction, adequate communication, etc.) (Ulferts, Willermark, Cooc, & Kim, 2021).

S. G. Asl and N. Osam (2021) consider the acmeological mechanisms of developing the pedagogical excellence of future teachers in the professional environment of an educational institution and single out such important components in the structure of pedagogical excellence as professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills, pedagogical competence, and pedagogical technique. By the way, the scholars note that spiritual education is the basis of the pedagogical excellence formation. It is manifested in the pedagogical competence progress, a high level of development of knowledge, abilities, skills, the acquisition of pedagogical techniques and creative experience, and the development of an emotional and valuable attitude to professional activity, the presence of a high motivation for the professional growth. This is a complex structural mechanism that ensures the stable achievement of high labour productivity, the production of labour products in accordance with modern social requirements for the profession.

3. Aims

The purpose of the research is to clarify the theoretical fundamentals and determine the standpoints of teachers, heads of departments and faculties of higher educational institutions regarding the features and factors of the development of the pedagogical excellence of a tertiary school teacher in order to increase the effectiveness of his professional activity.

4. Materials and Methods

Table 1. Age, Gender And Geographic Distribution of Study Participants

Age		Ivano-Frankivsk region		Lviv region		Chernihiv region		Zhytomyr Region		Kyiv region		That's all	
		Teachers	Heads of faculties and departments	Teachers	Heads of faculties and departments	Teachers	Heads of faculties and departments	Teachers	Heads of faculties and departments	Teachers	Heads of faculties and departments	Teachers	Heads of faculties and departments
Up to 25 years	Male	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
	Female	6	0	3	0	4	0	6	0	2	0	21	0
25-35 years old	Male	1	0	2	0	3	2	1	0	3	0	10	2
	Female	5	1	4	6	13	8	18	6	11	4	51	25
35-45 years old	Male	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
	Female	16	6	14	6	21	7	19	5	27	12	97	36
More than 45 years	Male	2	1	1	2	3	0	0	0	3	1	9	4
	Female	3	9	12	11	2	4	18	6	13	9	48	39
That's all	Male	6	2	4	2	7	2	1	0	6	1	241	107
	Female	30	16	33	23	40	19	61	17	53	25		

A practical study of modern trends in the process of developing the pedagogical excellence of teachers in institutions of higher education was conducted by surveying 241 teachers and 62 heads of faculties and departments of 14 higher educational institutions in Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Chernihiv, Zhytomyr and Kyiv regions of Ukraine.

When forming the sample of the study, the proportional gender, age and professional ratio of the teaching and management staff of the educational institutions on the basis of which the study was conducted was taken into account.

The survey was conducted in September-November 2022 in online mode with the provision of organizational and informational online support to respondents by the authors of this study.

The distribution of the number of survey participants is shown in Table 1.

As can be seen from Table 1, the largest number of all respondents are female teachers of higher education institutions of Chernihiv, Kyiv and Zhytomyr regions. Heads of departments and faculties are mainly represented by specialists from the Lviv, Zhytomyr and Kyiv regions.

The research was conducted using the Survey Planet service.

5. Results

According to the standpoint of survey participants, currently, in the conditions of increasing requirements for the quality of educational activities, the pedagogical excellence of tertiary school teachers, it is significant to understand the components and factors of the development of teachers' pedagogical excellence. Answering during the survey to a block of questions related to the factors of the development of pedagogical excellence, the respondents have singled out the most important ones, namely (Figure 1).

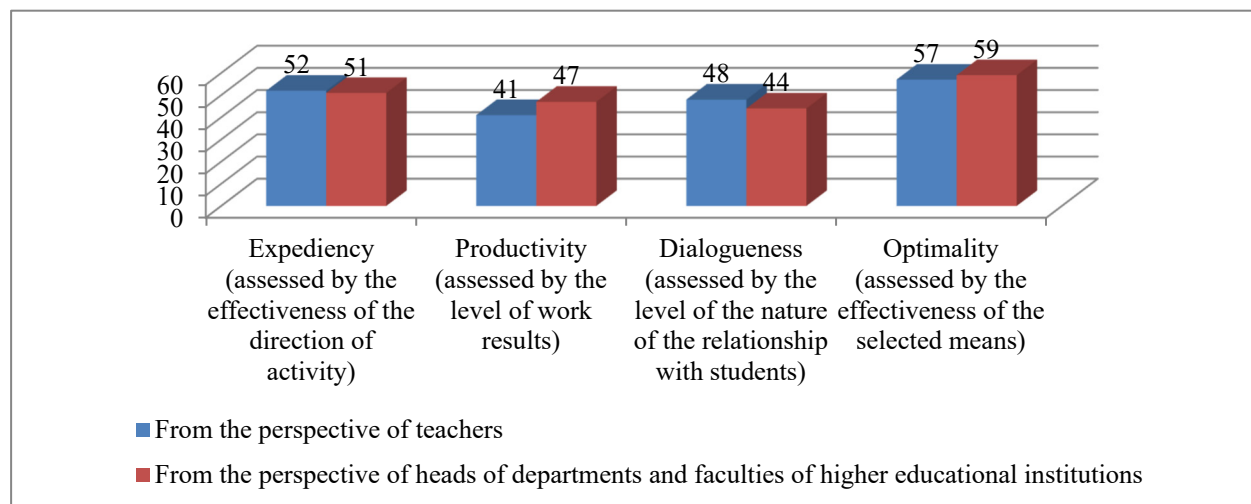


Figure 1. Forming Factors of Pedagogical Excellence of Tertiary School Teachers, %

Source: compiled by the authors.

- experience in the manifestation of personal qualities in professional and educational activities;
- the model of internal behaviour.

In the course of the survey, the respondents determined the effectiveness of the following forms of activities aimed at improving the pedagogical skills of a modern teacher (Figure 2).

As it can be seen from Figure 2, in order to optimize the educational process in a higher educational institution, the most effective forms of work on improving the pedagogical excellence of a modern teacher are as follows: continuous professional development, active participation in scientific and practical conferences, forums, seminars, webinars, master classes, trainings of various levels, creative meetings with leading Ukrainian and foreign scientists, exchange of experience with colleagues, etc.

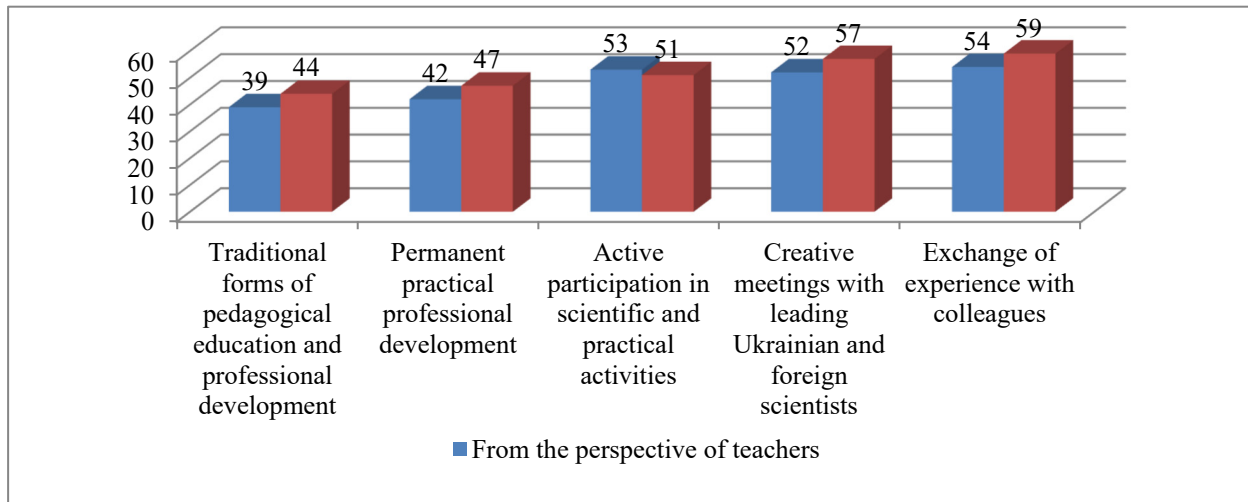


Figure 2. Forms of Work of a Tertiary School Teacher on Improving One’s Own Pedagogical Excellence, %

Source: compiled by the authors.

An important component of the research is the study of the standpoint of scientists regarding the creation of conditions for a specialist even in the institution of pedagogical education, which should contribute to the effective creation of prerequisites for developing a high level of pedagogical excellence (Figure 3).

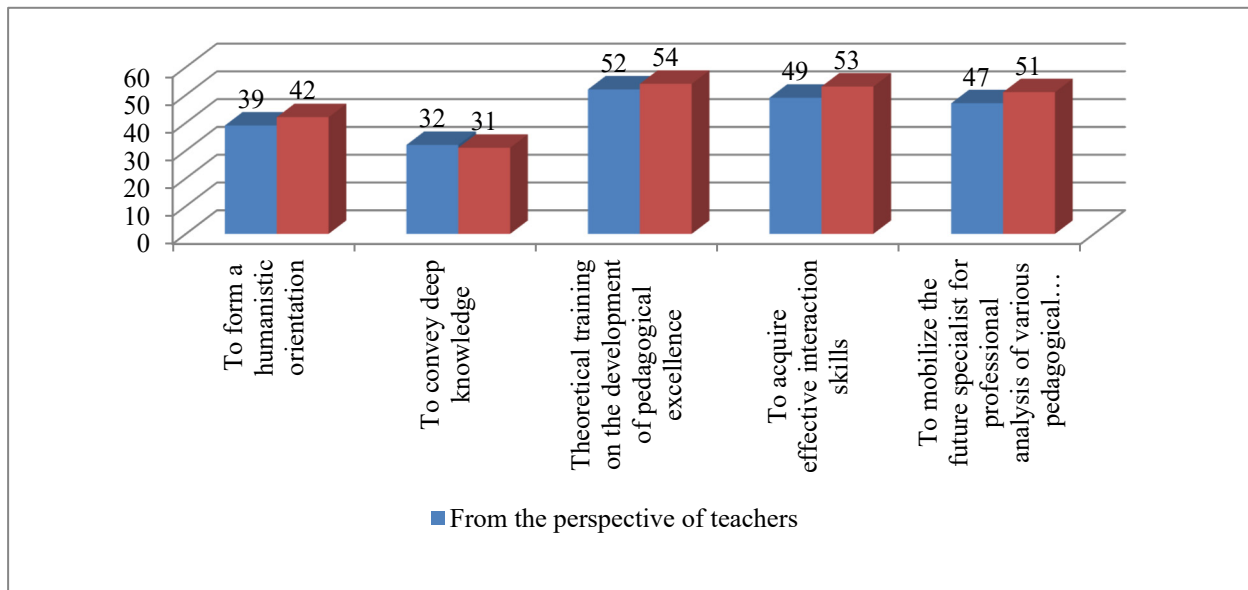


Figure 3. Conditions That Should Be Created at the Stage of Obtaining Pedagogical Education by a Future Teacher, and Which Influence the Development Level of Pedagogical Excellence, %

Source: compiled by the authors.

As the results of the survey have shown, such conditions of particular significance are as follows: theoretical training on the development of pedagogical excellence, acquiring skills in interaction techniques, mobilizing a specialist for professional analysis of various pedagogical situations.

In the course of research, respondents were asked to identify the criteria of pedagogical excellence of teachers, which are the most effective and in demand in practical activities (Figure 4).

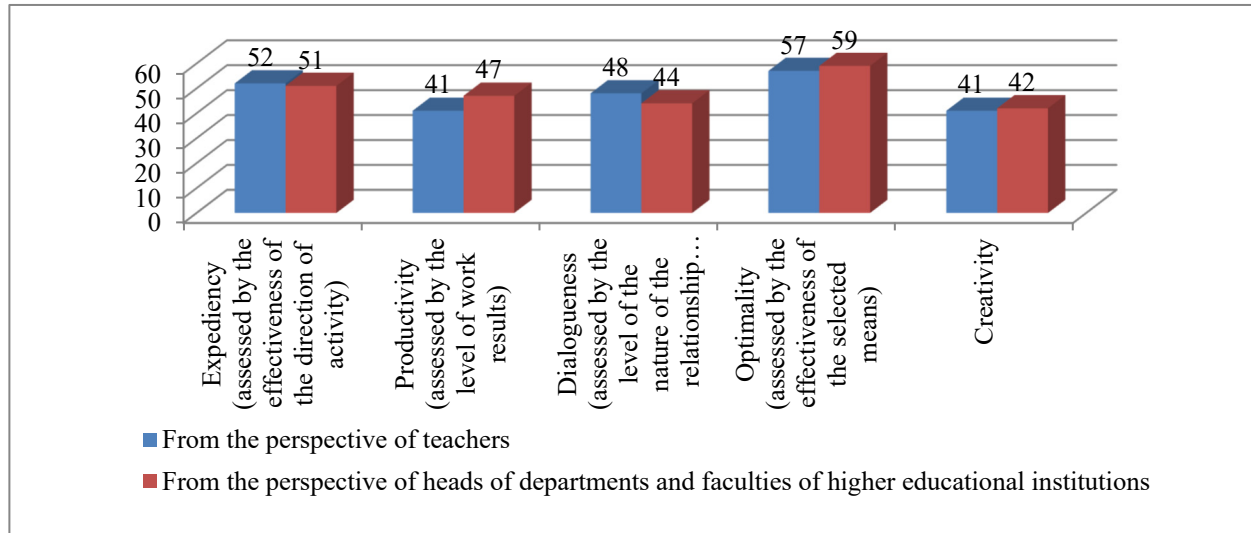


Figure 4. Criteria of Pedagogical Skill of Teachers, Which Are the Most Effective and in Demand in Practical Activities, %

Source: compiled by the authors.

As it can be observed from Figure 4, such criteria are: expediency, productivity, optimality of the choice of working tools.

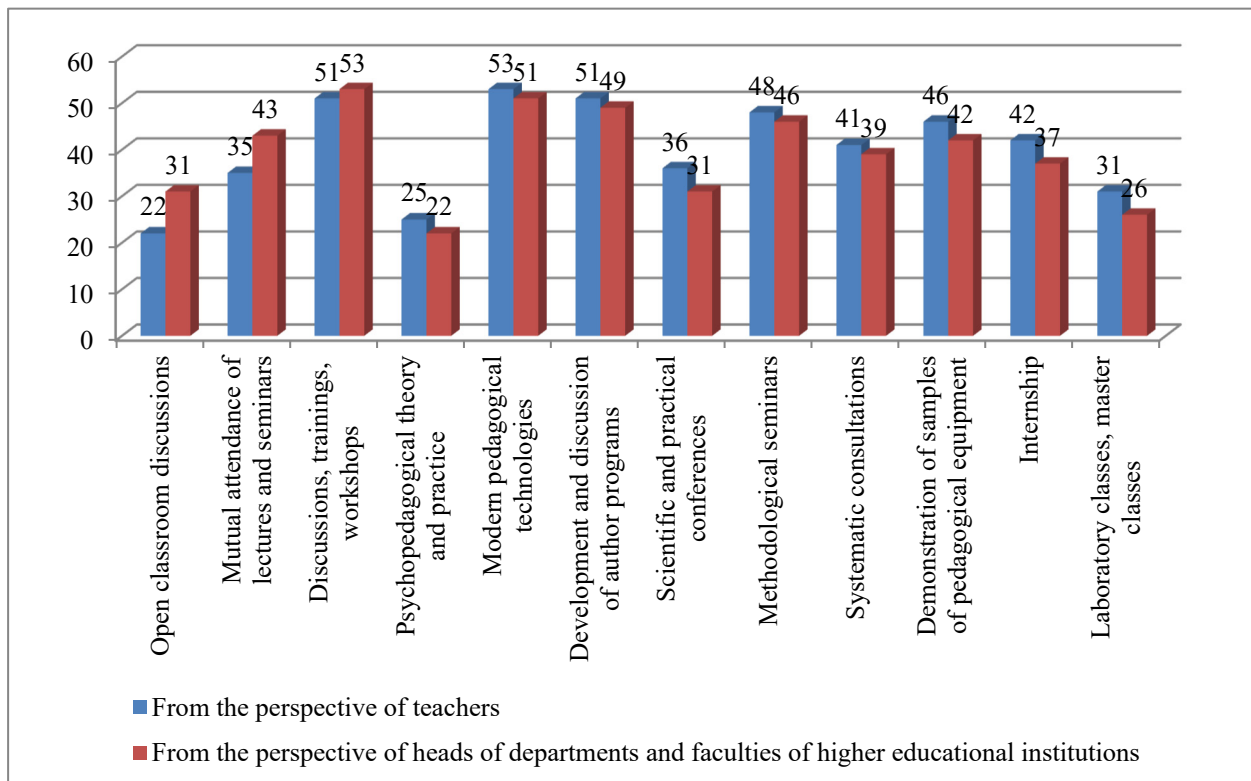


Figure 5. The Most Effective Types of Training Session on Improving the Pedagogical Excellence of a Tertiary School Teacher, Which Will Be Most in Demand in the Future, %

Source: compiled by the authors.

Along with this, the respondents highlighted the most effective types of classes for improving the pedagogical excellence of a tertiary school teacher, which, according to the survey participants' standpoint, will be especially in demand in the future (Figure 5).

As the survey has shown, the respondents have singled out discussions, trainings, "round tables", dialogue debates, seminars - workshops, discussion of achievements of psycho-pedagogical theory and practice, modern pedagogical technologies, varieties, systematic consultations, demonstration of samples of pedagogical techniques as the most effective types of training session contributing to the development of the pedagogical excellence of a tertiary school teacher and those that will be in demand in the future.

6. Discussion

The pedagogical excellence of the teacher is considered as the high art of implementing the motivational educational activities based on the acquired systematic knowledge, abilities and skills, personal qualities and pedagogical experience, and it is manifested in the comprehensive solution of the tasks of education and development.

The basis of pedagogical excellence is its initial, that is, basic professional competence, readiness for professional activity (Avalos-Bevan, 2018).

Pedagogical excellence is considered as a complex, dynamic, integrated personality development. It includes a person's persistent desire to work in the pedagogical field, the presence of special knowledge, abilities and skills, as well as a complex of individual mental and characterological properties that ensure high quality of pedagogical work (Bold et al., 2017).

The analysis of the scientific literature on the topic under study has proven that various forms of methodical work are used to improve the skills of tertiary school teachers, namely:

- scientific and practical pedagogical conferences on the problems of implementing the concept of continuous professional education, scientific and methodical principles of training specialists;
- general conferences of pedagogical staff of higher educational institutions, at which the state of the educational process in higher educational institutions, at faculties, as well as prospects for the development of specialities are discussed;
- meetings of the academic council of the university, at which the technical level of students, the state of educational work at the faculties, the anticipated plan of the university activities on individual topics are analysed in detail (for instance, scientific research work of students, methods of working with teachers, etc.);
- methodical seminars;
- alignment meetings, at which the university administration provides information on the state of educational work, the results of meetings or the need for measures regarding the professional education of students;
- departmental meetings where the results of teachers' work are discussed in order to improve pedagogical work with students;
- educational and methodical meetings of faculty deans;
- individual self-educational work of a teacher of a higher educational institution;
- individual and group consultations of heads of departments and teachers in order to fulfil the managerial tasks or for targeted methodical support of departments in planning activities, determining the content, forms of scientific, organizational and methodical work (Kuhl et al., 2019; Sonmark et al., 2017).

The integrated use of active forms and teaching methods contributes to the consolidation of theoretical knowledge, equipping teachers with the necessary methodological arsenal for solving modern educational problems of higher education. It forms the ability to reflect, the ability to use the information received in new conditions, to improve one's intellectual, philosophical and communicative qualities (Blömeke, Jentsch, Ross, Kaiser, & König, 2022; Schmid, Brianza, & Petko, 2020).

Based on the analysis of scientific literature, scientists' studies and the students' survey results, we have identified three groups of factors contributing to training future teachers and developing their pedagogical skills: social - economic, technological and personal (Blazar & Kraft, 2017).

We consider it expedient to single out the primary tasks aimed at improving the professional excellence of scientific and pedagogical personnel, namely:

- updating and expansion of knowledge, formation of new professional skills in psychological - pedagogical, scientific - research and organizational - management activities;
- assimilation of innovative technologies, forms, methods and educational materials;
- gaining experience in creating educational content, taking into account its orientation, professional duties of pedagogical and scientific - pedagogical workers, previous education, experience of practical work and professional activity, interests and needs of the individual;
- study of pedagogical experience, modern production, methods of education management, familiarization with the achievements of science, technology and production and prospects for their development;
- the use of innovative technologies for the implementation of educational content, which involves their differentiation, individualization and the introduction of distance, information and communication technologies (Blömeke & Kaiser, 2017; Hill & Chin, 2018; Kurtz, 2018).

Along with that, as noted by J. Levy, M. Brunner, U. Keller & A. Fischbach (2019), the ways of developing pedagogical excellence include as follows:

- focus on the prejudgement of possible quantitative and qualitative social-economic and cultural features of the society development;
- taking into account trends in educational tasks;
- understanding and adaptation of processes of network globalization with simultaneous regionalization of education systems;
- ensuring the development of the individual as a subject of self-determination on the basis of person-oriented, competence-based approaches.

7. Conclusions

Therefore, based on the results of the research conducted, we can come to the conclusion that the formation of pedagogical excellence of tertiary school teachers takes place according to the general laws of the personality development of the teacher, who should subordinate his activity to the general goals and principles of pedagogical influence on the student with the aim of his comprehensive development.

Implementation of the development process and improvement of pedagogical skill is carried out through all forms of educational and extracurricular work in a holistic mode of educational activity of higher educational institutions. At the same time, the disclosure of the teacher's professional and educational potential is based on the need for self-fulfilment, conscious cognitive interest and self-identification.

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