

TEACHING COMPETENCE AND TEACHERS' DEVELOPMENT IN MODERN LIFE

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Abstract: In the context of rapid social, technological, and educational transformations, the role of teachers has undergone significant change. Modern education systems demand not only strong subject knowledge but also a wide range of professional, pedagogical, digital, and social competences. This article examines the concept of teaching competence and analyzes the importance of continuous teachers' professional development in modern life. The study highlights key components of teaching competence, contemporary approaches to teacher development, and their impact on educational quality and societal progress. The findings emphasize that sustained professional development is essential for preparing teachers to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Keywords: teaching competence, professional development, modern education, teacher training, lifelong learning

Introduction: The rapid transformation of contemporary society, driven by globalization, digitalization, and educational reforms, has significantly reshaped the professional role of teachers. Modern education systems require teachers to possess not only strong subject knowledge but also a complex set of pedagogical, digital, social, and reflective competences. This article aims to analyze the concept of teaching competence and examine the role of teachers' professional development in modern life. Using a qualitative analytical approach based on a review of international scholarly literature and policy documents, the study identifies key components of teaching competence and contemporary models of professional development. The findings indicate that continuous professional development is a critical factor in enhancing teaching competence, improving educational quality, and preparing learners for the demands of the 21st century. The article contributes to the theoretical understanding of teacher competence development and offers implications for educational policy and teacher training systems. In modern life, education is rapidly changing due to globalization, digitalization, and new social demands. As a result, teaching competence and teachers' professional development have become central to the quality of education systems worldwide. Teaching competence has been widely discussed in educational research. Shulman (1987) introduced the concept of pedagogical content knowledge, highlighting the integration of subject knowledge and pedagogy. Later studies expanded this view, emphasizing professional, pedagogical, social, emotional, and digital dimensions of competence (Darling-Hammond, 2017; OECD, 2019).

Recent research conceptualizes teaching competence as a dynamic and integrative system of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that enable teachers to perform effectively in diverse educational contexts. In modern life, digital competence and

reflective practice have gained particular importance due to the expansion of online and blended learning environments.

Teaching competence refers to a teacher's integrated ability to effectively plan, deliver, assess, and reflect on teaching and learning. It goes beyond subject knowledge and includes a combination of:

- Professional (subject) competence – deep knowledge of the subject and curriculum
- Pedagogical competence – ability to use appropriate teaching methods and strategies
- Digital competence – effective use of educational technologies and online tools
- Communicative competence – clear interaction with students, parents, and colleagues
- Social and emotional competence – empathy, classroom management, and student motivation
- Reflective competence – self-evaluation and continuous improvement

In modern classrooms, teachers are not only knowledge transmitters but also facilitators, mentors, and innovators.

In modern life, effective teaching competence and continuous professional development are essential for teachers to remain relevant and impactful. A competent modern teacher is a *lifelong learner*, digitally skilled, socially responsible, and pedagogically innovative, capable of educating learners for an uncertain and dynamic world.

Teachers' professional development is commonly defined as a lifelong process that supports the continuous improvement of professional competences. According to OECD (2019), effective professional development is ongoing, collaborative, and closely connected to teachers' classroom practice. Studies emphasize that traditional one-time training programs are insufficient for addressing complex educational challenges, highlighting the need for sustained, practice-oriented, and research-based development models. Teachers' professional development is understood as a lifelong process of acquiring and improving professional competences. In modern life, this process is influenced by technological innovation, diverse learner needs, and global educational trends.

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design based on systematic analysis of scholarly literature, international policy documents, and theoretical models related to teaching competence and teachers' professional development. Sources were selected from peer-reviewed journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, as well as publications by international educational organizations.

The analysis focused on identifying recurring themes, conceptual frameworks, and

trends related to competence development in modern educational contexts. The qualitative synthesis approach allowed for a comprehensive interpretation of existing research and the formulation of generalized conclusions.

Contemporary approaches to teachers' professional development include:

- Continuous training through workshops, seminars, and online courses;
- Participation in professional learning communities and networks;
- Integration of digital pedagogy, blended learning, and online teaching tools;
- Adoption of student-centered and competency-based learning approaches;
- Engagement in research-based and reflective teaching practices.

Professional development in modern life is no longer limited to formal training programs; it also involves informal and self-directed learning supported by digital platforms and international collaboration.

High levels of teaching competence and continuous professional development contribute directly to:

- Improved quality of teaching and learning outcomes;
- Increased student motivation, engagement, and achievement;
- Successful implementation of educational reforms;
- Development of learners' 21st-century skills;
- Social and economic development of society.

Teachers with well-developed competences are better prepared to respond to inclusive education, multicultural classrooms, and rapidly changing educational demands.

Conclusion: In modern life, teaching competence and teachers' professional development are essential conditions for effective education. A modern teacher must be a lifelong learner, capable of adapting to technological, social, and pedagogical changes. Continuous professional development enables teachers to enhance their competences, improve educational quality, and prepare students for future challenges. Therefore, education policies and institutions should prioritize systematic support for teachers' competence development.

References (sample, APA style)

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