

## INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS OF UNIVERSITY TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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### Abstract

**Purpose of the study:** Conditions of qualifications' dynamic development, rapid obsolescence of existing competencies actualize the need to create a system of continuous professional growth of teachers on staff training. The purpose of the article is to develop organizational mechanisms that contribute to the professional growth of the teacher inflexible response conditions of education to socio-economic changes.

**Methodology:** The research methodology relies on the lifelong education concept, defining the design principles of a teacher professional growth system: consistency, continuity, self-development, participative nature, pedagogical reflexing

**Results:** The system of the teacher's professional growth in the educational institution possessing properties of hierarchy, flexibility, and dynamism is developed. The principles and organizational mechanisms for this system's implementation are revealed: corporatism as a way to create targeted educational platform based on digital technology; tutoring as the insurance of the teacher's and the educational organization's interests through the accompany of career advancement; branding as a result of the teacher's and the educational organization's competitiveness in the market of educational services; road maps for planning, monitoring and support of the teacher's career development.

**Applications of this study:** The article is intended for teachers, managers, employees of personnel services of educational organizations.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** For the first time the self - learning system of the teacher professional growth is offered which is capable to exist and productively function in modern dynamic conditions at the expense of adaptive organizational mechanisms of reaction to social and economic changes.

**Keywords:** *educational environment, professional development, teacher education, institutional mechanisms.*

### INTRODUCTION

The most important global trend in the development of education is to improve its quality, as well as the recognition of the need for lifelong learning ([Beregovaya and Radomskaya, 2017](#)). In this regard, one of the most important areas of education modernization is the professional development of teachers as a factor in improving the quality of education. The results of University graduates' training, that is, the socio-economic and socio-cultural development of society, largely depend on the level of teachers' professional development.

Status of the problem's elaboration allows us to conclude that General patterns of teachers' professional development are reflected in the research of V.G. [Gimaliev et al. \(2018\)](#) and [N. Barinova et al. \(2018\)](#) the issues of professional ethics of the teacher and culture of his/her work ([Akishina et al., 2017](#); [Ryabchenko et al., 2018](#)), the possibility of improving the intellectual and business skills of teachers are revealed; the need to expand the professional competence necessary to perform professional and pedagogical functions are analyzed ([Tastan et al., 2018](#); [Kalimullina and Trotsenko, 2018](#)).

At the same time, the existing approaches aimed at retraining and advanced training of teachers are not fully capable of comprehensively solving the tasks of developing mechanisms for an adequate and flexible response of education to socio-economic changes, which are significantly complicated by the multidimensionality, dynamism, and activity of the considered education system itself. As a result, there is a decrease in the potential of innovation, low adaptability of education to the reforms, difficulties in implementing systemic transformations for the continuous professional development of teachers and significant update of the content of training programs for their professional development.

This aspect actualizes the issues of managing the development of the teacher and sets the task of creating a system of the teacher's professional growth, able to exist and function productively in a variable educational environment.

## METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

*Professional growth of the teacher* in the most General case is the purpose and process of knowledge, abilities, and ways of activity acquisition by the teacher allowing him/her to solve effectively tasks within the framework of the educational activity. It is important to note that the Russian feature is the heterogeneity of professional training and, accordingly, the differences in the professional positions of higher education teachers. Teachers may not have pedagogical education (or have a minimum amount of knowledge from the discipline *Pedagogy and psychology*), being graduates of specialized universities. The value of their subject-professional knowledge is quite high, as they possess the fundamental scientific foundations of the subject or have universal skills in the field of production, which makes them necessary specialists for the educational institution. Moreover, here we find the *first gap in professional growth: the lack of pedagogical readiness*. Despite the fact that the functions of a young teacher are very limited (for example, an assistant at the University), however, he carries out independently the educational process, acting, as a rule, according to his/her own ideas and patterns of pedagogical activity.

On the other hand, there may be a *mirror* situation when a graduate of a pedagogical specialty who fully owns the necessary pedagogical knowledge does not have such deep subject-based, scientific and practice-oriented knowledge as a graduate of a technical University or a classical University, and then a possible *second gap in professional growth* is determined: *the lack of subject-based readiness*.

Equally important are the *difficulties of a personal nature (the third gap in professional growth)*, which are found in the first and the second category of young teachers which occur in a collision with the pedagogical reality, arising from underdeveloped emotional and volitional stability, self-regulation of behavior, adaptive potential and significantly violate the normal course of the educational process.

The development of new forms and technologies on the formation of teachers' professional competence in the workplace, refresher courses, at a new stage of training in higher education (for example, in magistracy and postgraduate) should reduce the gap between the required and current levels of teachers' training while maintaining educational traditions. The continuous *professional growth of the teacher in staff training* supported both by the education system and his/her own aspirations in the aspect of career and personal development should serve as a response to the challenge in the conditions of rapid renewal of pedagogical and subject-based knowledge, transformation of the professional and personal characteristics required of the teacher.

We define *the system of professional growth of the teacher on staff training* as a subsystem of education, the functioning of which is due to the state, social and personal needs of the teacher's development in the professional sphere through the acquisition of the necessary set of competencies, experience and the formation of optimal pedagogical career strategies for the implementation of training, education and development of students.

Important properties of the system of the teacher's professional growth as an active dynamic system are its *balance* (stable existence with variable internal parameters due to the variety of trajectories of teachers' development); *functional stability* (the ability to perform their tasks in the pursuit of the objective function without structural changes) and *continuity* (state of continuous and constant operation).

The dynamic representation of the system of professional growth is due to the fact that its subject is a person, which means that it should be considered in the system relations *personality-environment*, where the adaptation of the teacher, his/her career strategy and its organizational and pedagogical accompany are the mechanisms of balance of the system and are analyzed with respect to the potential of the teacher and the environment of his/her professional development. The ability to interact intensively with the environment ensures the use of external and internal resources of the system, which demonstrates the impact of the education system's development and its subsystems on social and cultural development as a whole.

Regulatory and administrative resources provide system homeostasis here: requirements for training development; certification of teachers; local requirements for the effectiveness of pedagogical activity (indicators of publication activity, participation in research and development, participation in educational activities, etc.). This mechanism is activated *outside* the desires and needs of the teacher as a subject of the system, ensuring his/her self-regulation, provided the deficit or lack of the teacher's motivation and the level of training necessary and sufficient to adapt to environmental changes in the education system and contributing to the achievement of the system's goal of functioning.

Formal and informative accompany the requirements and resources of the system, *connecting* to the professional development of the teacher, contribute to the preservation of the balance between the individual and the environment with the difficulties of adaptation and integration of the teacher into the education system. From the point of view of social functioning, the system of professional growth of the teacher provides reserves for the elimination of systemic violations of the quality of education in General through the mechanisms of adaptation and integration, reflecting the mission of education through pedagogical activity as a way to preserve value patterns and regulate educational processes (Levina et al., 2015a). Thus, the *incompleteness* of the system, coupled with its *continuity* (as its properties), ensure its cyclical development, the dynamics of changes in the direction of continuous improvement in the mobile response to the situation-changing prospects and conditions of individual and social development.

The *conceptuality* of the designed system is based on the existing laws of education (structures, educational processes, and situations); its *prognostication* is implemented through strategic guidelines and goals of education development, as well as through the mission and vision of each educational institution; *feedback and reflection* are due to the cyclical nature of management, the need to monitor and correct the results of educational activities in order to continuously improve the quality of education.

The following principles that determine functional patterns of the system of the teacher's professional growth contribute to its practical implementation.

*The principle of consistency* implies:

- The establishment of a hierarchy of relationships that form the system for the professional growth of the teacher (external relations between the subjects of education, forming a state social order and forming requirements for the result; intra-links between professional, higher and additional education; interdisciplinary and inter-subject connections, causing the content of additional education, and so on.);
- Exploration of the possibilities and regularities to manage the development of professional growth based on organizational and personal influences on the motivation of the teacher and the definition of the boundaries of controllability;
- Determination of optimal methods to form the system of the teacher's professional growth in accordance with the needs of the educational institution, ensuring the preservation of the system's integrity;
- Building effective career strategies, development of plans and programs for professional growth, monitoring of development within the boundaries of the system.

*The principle of continuity* is based on the active role of the teacher in the educational process and the diverse trajectories of his/her career. Continuity determines the integrity of the system, consisting of separate discrete stages of professional growth, and is completed only at the end of employment, emphasizing the lack of discreteness *between the points* of growth of the teacher, the possibility of personal and professional development. Thus, continuity is considered as the prevention of *empty spaces* between *coming* knowledge, formed competencies of teachers and potential development of the educational process, which determine the interconnection of transitions from one point of professional growth of the teacher to another.

The *principle of self-development* focuses on personality-oriented positions and the ratio of cognitive activity of the teacher, its self-development and overcoming internal barriers. Self-educational need not only meets the needs of human creative development but also *works* on the ideology of the modern world, when the intensity of obsolescence of knowledge and methods of action is proportional to its information content. In these circumstances, the special organization of teacher training (additional education, training development) cannot be compared with the speed of self-education, taking place *here and now*, and requires only an internal personal organization, becoming the most important source of professional growth of the teacher.

*We consider the principle of participative nature* as the principle of formation of requirements to process and result in professional growth of the teacher from positions of subjects of education. Accentuation on their activities now ensures the functioning of the educational system, because this is how socio-cultural progress occurs through the formation of knowledge as a reflective factor contributing to personal and social transformation. This principle contributes to the harmonization of education workers' interests, creating conditions for their professional growth and forming a collective social responsibility of the educational organization through the achievement of the quality of education as a strategic and competitive advantage.

*The principle of pedagogical reflection* allows making self-identification of the teacher in the current conditions of occupational activity. Rethinking each pedagogical situation, its analysis from the standpoint of the requirements of the occupation and the margin of safety of their own knowledge and competencies leads to the experience of teaching and initiates cycles of professional growth.

In fact, pedagogical reflection is constant active research of the activity, one-elf as responsible person for quality of the subject of education providing "the teacher's mastering the psychological mechanism of professional self-improvement and self-actualization (retaining time frames of the past, present, and future)" (Shustova, 2018). From these positions, professional growth is a way to overcome possible professional difficulties, forming a readiness for a variety of pedagogical situations and strategies, optimal design of educational activities.

The principles of consistency, continuity, self-development, participative nature and pedagogical reflexing highlighted by us are the basis for the formation of the mechanisms of teachers' professional growth system.

## RESULTS

Organizational mechanisms are possible ways to implement the system of professional growth of the teacher in an educational institution and in a global sense are aimed at improving the quality of education, the resource of which is the

professional growth of the teacher.

The first of the mechanisms we have identified is **branding**, which is represented by us as the process of creating a personal brand of the teacher, the image of a fixed achievement of personal and professional qualities and the results of the teacher's activity to the actual requirements of a competitive educational environment.

According to Kh.K. Rampersad, who is a recognized authority in the field of personal branding, "a personal brand is a synthesis of all the expectations, images and perceptions that are created in the mental projection of other people when they see or hear your name." The personal brand of a teacher embodies identity (elements that make a person recognizable one), image (perception of a person by others), reputation (socially widespread and aggregated opinion about a person), high level of professional ethics, responsibility, self-motivation and developed interpersonal competencies as the most important characteristics for teachers who cultivate their own personal brand ([Bolgova and Vetrova, 2015](#)).

Branding technology includes the following steps:

1. Psychological and pedagogical analysis (possibly with the involvement of specialists) of personal and professional qualities of the teacher, identification of his/her strengths and weaknesses, competitive advantages;
2. Analysis of *competitive* brands (recognized teachers, their positions) and the needs of the market of educational services, including the analysis of predictive research in order to identify a competitive niche of the teacher;
3. Formation of the *image* of the teacher's brand as the teacher's definition of his/her own positioning in the educational environment, which is largely a consequence of the use of his/her own unique qualities and opportunities in occupational activity;
4. Development of a tree of goals to achieve the key positions of the teacher's brand (for example, a high level of vocationally subject-based knowledge, pedagogical intuition, professional flexibility, advanced thinking, stress resistance, high reflexivity, ethics, tolerance, responsibility, initiative, ability to solve professional problems of different levels of complexity and orientation, etc.);
5. Ensuring brand identity, that is, the achievement of the declared positions by the teacher in the course of occupational activity, additional education and self-development;
6. Positioning of the teacher as a unique professional and successful specialist in the previously chosen niche, contributing to the formation of *relations* of the brand with the consumer of educational services.

The creation of a personal brand significantly increases the teacher's ability to achieve professional growth and makes the personality of the brand owner visible, significant and perceived by others as having unique solutions to emerging occupational problems. Branding determines the compliance of the position of the teacher and his/her career strategy and is a way of feedback from the *target* audience – the subjects of education, increasing the competition of teachers within the educational institution, and thus contributing to the growth of its competitiveness.

The next of the mechanisms we have identified is *corporatism* as an organized agreement between a teacher, an educational organization and other social institutions of the education system (educational institutions of additional education, universities, clusters, etc.) in the field of joint implementation of professional growth of a teacher.

Corporatism, first, means the pooling of resources in order to expand opportunities and obtain a synergistic effect. Competitiveness of educational institutions, their positioning in the market of educational services suggests building a new type of intra-system interaction in order to reform the system of professional growth of the teacher. The essence of this interaction is to consolidate the variety of resources that support the professional growth of the teacher, which occurs with the planned systemic changes – the creation of a multifunctional educational space. All educational institutions capable to provide educational services, information, and other educational opportunities become participants of such *Corporation*.

The algorithm to create *educational Corporation* for the purpose of realization of the system of professional growth of teachers includes the following stages:

1. Socio-pedagogical audit of the regional educational space.
2. Analysis of compliance of available educational services with the educational needs of the teacher and the needs of the educational institution as his/her employer.
3. Review of the possible range of services and their analysis by key criteria (quality, time, cost, conditions, etc.).
4. Formation of classes of educational services in accordance with the career needs of the teacher and educational institution.
5. Determination of the spectrum of the main educational trajectories and conditions of their implementation.
6. Development and examination of additional professional programs' packages of the teacher's professional growth.
7. Implementation of additional professional programs' packages of the teacher's professional growth.

8. Monitoring the effectiveness of the teacher's professional growth.
9. Repeated socio-pedagogical audit.

Combining organizational resources of educational institutions is based on complementarity, suggesting the existence and interaction between complementary elements within the boundaries of certain socio-cultural integrity – the system of professional growth of the teacher, forming a wide range of invariants.

Thus, corporatism in the system of the teacher's professional growth in some way can be considered as a conditional *set* of resources and relationships associated with their exchange. However, depending on the type and amount of resources provided, each participant has a certain significance and, accordingly, the ability to influence their consumption. Despite the apparent commonality of interests, such interaction preserves competition between educational institutions and their own niche in the market of educational services. This is due to the uniqueness of development's trajectory of both the educational organization and the career strategy of each teacher, built in accordance with his/her interests and needs of the employer. Corporatism acts as a dynamic regulatory framework, developing competitiveness and forming the internal standards of the professional activities of employees, which are characteristic of it and necessary for the implementation of strategic objectives.

The third mechanism we have identified is the **tutoring** of teachers in the framework of the system of professional growth. It is a prolonged way to accompany and support the teacher in staff training in the implementation of professional growth's individual tasks in accordance with the career strategy. The educational institution as an employer of the teacher implements this mechanism.

Management role in the system of tutoring, in general, belongs to the administrative sector of the educational institution, performing phased functions:

1. Identification of personnel needs of the educational institution;
2. Analysis of professional needs and opportunities of the teacher at the current stage of his/her professional development;
3. Correlation of needs of the teacher and opportunities of the educational organization according to its strategy;
4. Definition of opportunities for professional growth of the teacher within the framework of the functioning of the educational space;
5. Development of individual road maps of the professional growth of the teacher;
6. Creation of a personality-oriented system of interaction between a tutor and a teacher aimed at the development of his / her professional potential;
7. Monitoring the implementation of individual development programs, analysis of problem points of growth and professional difficulties of the teacher;
8. Correction of the trajectory of the teacher's development, the definition of new goals and objectives of the next stage of professional growth.

The result of tutor support is the formation of the *I-concept* of the teacher, associated with his/her willingness to self-determination, setting individual goals, the development of programs of their own professional development in education throughout life.

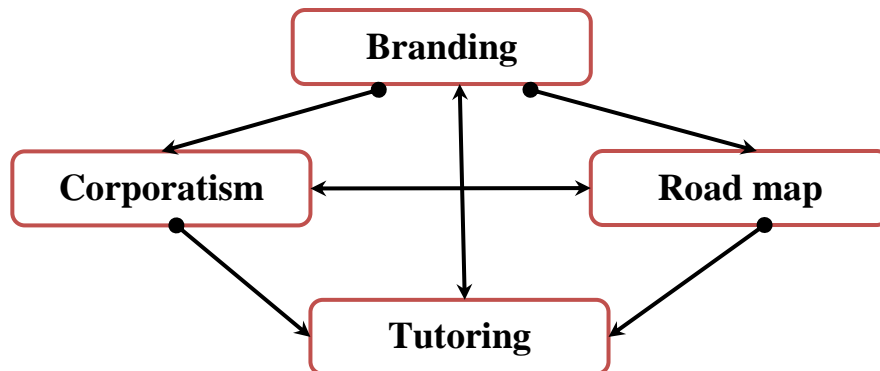
An individual *road map* of the teacher's professional growth is a step-by-step scenario of teacher activities, the successful implementation of which is necessary for the implementation of professional development tasks. The roadmap reflects the effective planning of all activities that, one way or another, are involved in the development of the teacher (methodical associations, the School of a young teacher, internship sites, conferences, project activities, etc.). At the same time, phased planning should have such an accurate characteristic as time, which is important for the head of the educational institution (represented, for example, by the Department of personnel policy), and for the teacher himself. Finally, the individual road map of professional growth of the teacher is a link between the strategy of the educational institution and the professional development of the teacher on staff training.

The technology of creating a road map of the professional growth of the teacher is the implementation of the following stages:

1. Defining the boundaries and time horizon of the road map;
2. Determination of the planned period's goals of professional growth;
3. Analysis and distribution of activities of the teacher to achieve key factors of professional growth;
4. Consolidation and allocation of resources necessary for teachers to achieve key factors of professional growth;
5. Step-by-step chain planning: *activity-resource-technology-key factor - control time* throughout the time horizon of the roadmap;

6. Formation of the procedure for monitoring the results of the plan of the teacher's professional growth.

The interrelations of the described mechanisms and technologies of their implementation are shown in figure 1.



**Figure 1:** Interrelations of mechanisms of professional growth of the teacher

Branding determines the starting point of the system of the teacher's professional growth; the result of planning the career development of the teacher is a road map that contributes to the step-by-step promotion of the teacher using the resources of the *educational Corporation*, through tutoring is accompanied by professional growth of the teacher at any stage of occupational development. The educational institution is fully interested in the career development of the teacher and his/her professional growth, so tutoring is also a way to consolidate the teacher in a particular educational institution in order to achieve its competitiveness.

The institutional arrangements (corporatism, tutoring, branding, road map) will contribute to the implementation of the objectives of the professional development of teachers under career strategies, the breadth and diversity of which requires the development of appropriate packages of educational programs using appropriate forms, methods, and technologies.

The development of additional professional programs (advanced training) is the development of *soft* infrastructure along with the training of teachers (disciplines of the professional cycle) in the core enterprise, professional development for mentors in enterprises in the framework of the implementation of dual training, the creation of a system of forecasting personnel needs and certification of personnel ([Tregubova and Shibankova, 2017](#)).

The main criterion for evaluating the effectiveness of the additional occupational program – is the focus of the program to improve and (or) obtaining new competence of the teacher necessary for his occupational activity, and (or) professional development within the existing qualifications. The successful solution of these tasks requires the use of modular additional occupational programs that provide the flexibility of training, adapting it to the individual needs of the student of the course program and the level of his/her professional training.

The diversity and breadth of career strategies of teachers require the same diversity of additional occupational education programs. In terms of training, it is proposed to structure educational programs into *packages of programs by levels*: the *Start* level; the level of *Candidate for the master*; the *Master* level; the level of *Researcher*. At each level, it is possible to allocate *plus* positions (for a more prepared category of students). The package of additional occupational programs is a set of modular programs for the implementation of career strategy at a certain stage of professional growth of the teacher on staff training. The distinctive features of the programs within the package are the totality, succession, continuity and logical connectivity. The modules of the extended matrix are movable; they can change their positions if necessary. The module-cumulative mode of the educational process in the implementation of training programs, involving a system of credit units, in order to eliminate the risk of repetition of modules is recommended.

Professional development and training programs in the system of additional occupational education, having the opportunity to respond quickly to the challenges of the time, can act as a driver for the development of the system of professional growth of the teacher training. Being an integral part of a single *tree* of continuing education, additional education forms teachers' readiness for new formats of occupational activity.

The presented organizational mechanisms, of course, are not the final set of tools and require adaptation to the current strategic goals and resource conditions of a specific educational institution of vocational and higher education.

## CONCLUSION

Representation of professional growth of the teacher as a system (a subsystem of education) provides organizational and pedagogical regulation of continuous education of teachers:

- Has a *global goal* – improving the quality of education and *local goals* – occupational and personal development of the student; professional and personal development of the teacher, improving the competitiveness of educational institution;
- It has a *unity* that integrates the diversity of elements of the education system to achieve this goal and the *coherence* of the elements of the system due to the organization of control actions at all levels of management;
- Provides *modularity* as an opportunity to modify or decompose the system of professional growth in the development of the career strategy of the teacher in one educational institution; in the transition from one educational institution to another; when changing the framework of the level of education (for example, from the system of secondary education to higher education), etc., causing the *hierarchy* due to a variety of opportunities for professional growth;
- Assumes the *evolutionary development* based on the identification of new needs of subjects of education, organizational and pedagogical knowledge and laws;
- Determines the possibility of *decentralization* due to the autonomy of educational institutions in terms of local regulation and opportunities for professional growth of the teacher;
- It sets the *uncertainty* expressed in the high turbulence of the external and internal environment of higher education, which enhances the coherence of the system.

The principles for the formation of the system of the teacher professional growth and its organizational mechanisms, presented in the article, orient the educational institution to the creation of its own systems of professional growth of the teacher and, of course, require careful selection and adaptation to its specifics.

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