METHODOLOGY FOR DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF TUTORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS DURING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: *This article analyzes the functional directions of tutoring activities in higher education institutions and compares them with the roles of mentors and teachers. The article elaborates on the tutor's functions in the digital education environment, including information-content, design, control-diagnostic, organizational-activity, reflective, technological, motivational, consulting, information-consulting, analytical, knowledge acquisition, communicative, monitoring and diagnostic, managerial, goal-setting and planning, and methodological functions. Additionally, the article highlights the implementation of the tutoring system in Uzbekistan and its advantages.*

Keywords: *tutoring, functions, mentor, teacher, professional competence, higher education, educational reforms, individualized education.*

Introduction

Developing students' all-round potential, fostering their independent learning skills, and enhancing their professional competence are among the main priorities of the modern education system in higher education institutions. From this perspective, the tutoring institution is becoming increasingly important. A tutor is

not only an individual who assists with academic matters but also a mentor who guides a student's personal and professional growth. This article aims to comprehensively analyze the functional directions of tutoring activities, compare them with the roles of mentors and teachers, and shed light on the implementation and development of tutoring in the education system of Uzbekistan.

Literature Review

A tutor operates in the following functional areas [see table below]. These functions serve to demonstrate tutoring activity not merely as an assistant to the teacher but as an independent and creative pedagogical endeavor. Tutoring plays a significant role in implementing a student-centered approach in education and is a crucial factor in developing students' independent learning skills.

Our theoretical analysis of scientific literature, based on the aforementioned components of readiness to provide tutoring support, allows us to analyze the differences in the duties and roles of a mentor, a teacher, and a tutor. It is specifically noted in existing literature that readiness to provide tutoring support is a qualitative, systemic, and dynamic state where motivational, cognitive, operational, and reflective components interact [1].

The tutoring system was formally recognized as an integral part of the English higher education system from the mid-17th century. From this period onwards, tutoring was viewed not only as a means of supervising university students but also as a system to support their intellectual and personal development [3]. According to T.M. Kovalyova, tutoring is a distinct type of pedagogical support that assists in the individualization of a learner in an open educational process [6].

The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated October 8, 2019, "On Approving the Concept of Development of the Higher Education System of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030" [Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, PF-5847], marked a significant step towards radical reforms in the country's higher education system. Based on this document, large-scale reforms are being implemented to improve the quality of education, introduce a new management system based on international experience, and enhance the pedagogical

process. Furthermore, in accordance with the tasks outlined in the Resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated December 31, 2020, No. 824 "On Measures to Improve the System Related to the Organization of the Educational Process in Higher Education Institutions" and dated September 9, 2021, No. 563 "On Measures to Increase the Level of Coverage of Students with Accommodation in Higher Education Institutions of the Republic," the tutoring system was introduced to replace the previously existing mentoring system, with the aim of supporting students' independent learning activities and ensuring their intellectual and professional development.

In the previous mentoring system, professors and teachers were obligated to mentor academic groups, which imposed an additional responsibility beyond their primary pedagogical activities. As a result, teachers often did not have the opportunity to work deeply with students outside of class hours, and mentoring duties were often performed in a formal manner. Group mentors usually limited themselves to brief meetings with students between lectures, inquiring about their attendance or daily problems. This, in turn, limited the possibilities for individual work with students and supporting their personal development.

Starting from September 1, 2021, the tutoring system was officially introduced in higher education institutions in Uzbekistan, replacing the existing mentoring system. The "Model Regulation on the Organization of Tutoring Activities in State Higher Education Institutions," approved by the Order of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education No. 412 dated September 30, 2021, was developed. According to this system, one tutor staff unit was allocated for every 120-150 students. The main responsibility of a tutor is to work individually with students, identify their learning difficulties, develop independent learning skills, and provide psychological-social support. Additionally, tutors engage in activities aimed at involving students in scientific research, providing academic counseling, and guiding their professional development.

Methodology and Results

The analysis of the functions of tutoring activities and the comparison of the duties of a mentor, a teacher, and a tutorare presented in the following tables:

Table 1.1.1. Functions related to tutoring activities

No.	Function Name	Function Content
1	**Information-Content Function**	Explaining educational content in a digital learning environment, filtering information, and adapting it to student needs.
2	**Design Function**	Planning and maintaining individual learning routes.
3	**Control-Diagnostic Function**	Analyzing student academic achievements and determining their development trajectory.
4	**Organizational-Activity Function**	Organizing and coordinating the educational process.
5	**Reflective Function**	Guiding students to analyze their learning process and make changes.
6	**Technological Function**	Effective application of educational technologies.
7	**Motivational Function**	Encouraging students to learn and fostering their intrinsic motivation.
8	**Consulting Function**	Providing advice on education, career, and personal development.
9	**Information-Consulting Function**	Collecting, analyzing, and presenting information.
10	**Analytical Function**	Analyzing the effectiveness of the educational process.
11	**Knowledge Acquisition Function**	Developing and implementing individual learning strategies.
12	**Communicative Function**	Ensuring effective communication between tutors and students, as well as within groups.

13	**Monitoring and Diagnostic Functions**	Continuous observation and analysis during the educational process.
14	**Managerial Function**	Managing and coordinating educational activities.
15	**Goal-Oriented and Planning Function**	Defining educational goals and developing strategies for their implementation.
16	**Methodological Function**	Selecting and implementing methods and tools for effective organization of the educational process.

Table 1.1.2. Comparison of the duties of a mentor, a teacher, and a tutor

Component Aspects	Mentor	Teacher	Tutor
Main duty	Personal development and upbringing	Teaching subjects, imparting knowledge	Providing personal guidance in the learning process
Goal	Instilling ethical values	Forming academic knowledge	Shaping and monitoring individual learning trajectories, fostering human development
Approach	Based on personal experience	Didactic and methodical	Student-centered, reflective, spiritual
Nature of activity	Informal, based on life advice	Formal, through planned lessons	Individual, based on advice and guidance
Role in education	Emotional, social, and physical supporter	Source of knowledge and controller	Guiding companion in the learning process

Functions	Shaping values, demonstrating personal example	Imparting information, testing and evaluating knowledge	Motivating, advising, encouraging reflection
Professional competence	Educational experience, personal influence	Subject knowledge, teaching methodology	Organizational, psychological, motivational, and reflective skills
Relationship with student	Life guide, elder friend	Teacher and evaluator	Companion, advisor, encouraging independence
Student's role	Learner, socializer, physically well-developed individual	Knowledge recipient (subject)	Independent learner, active participant
Form of relationship	Official, personal	Official, academic relationship	Collaborative, equal relationship
Form of work	Conversations, advice, sports training	Lessons, laboratory sessions, exams	Individual conversations, creating learning trajectories
Assessment method	Emotional judgment, personal observation	Rating, test, written and oral control	Based on reflection and self-assessment
Outcome	Ethical, physical well-being	Knowledge, skills, abilities	Self-managing, active, independent individual

Discussion

The analysis of the differences between a mentor, a teacher, and a tutor indicates that each has a unique role and responsibilities in the educational

process. A mentor primarily focuses on personal development, moral education, and instilling values, whereas a teacher is responsible for teaching a subject, imparting knowledge, and evaluating it. A tutor, however, in the new form of education, acts as a guide for a student's independent learning activities and a consultant who supports their personal development. They possess motivational, cognitive, operational, and reflective competencies and, through an equal and collaborative relationship with the learner, help shape their learning trajectory. In this regard, a tutor is a new type of educator in modern education, focused on supporting the individual, unlike a traditional teacher.

Currently, the tutoring system is widely applied worldwide. In particular, the tutoring system is developing with the aim of supporting students' independent learning, shaping their personal learning paths, and helping them achieve their goals. In the modern education system, a tutor plays an important role in developing students' personal development programs and fostering their self-learning skills. At the same time, tutoring, integrated with pedagogical innovations and modern technologies, is also applied in distance learning and specialized educational directions.

Currently, the tutoring system in higher education institutions is increasingly being viewed as an innovative pedagogical approach aimed at supporting the individual development of students. The tutoring system provides students with the opportunity to engage in independent learning, develop strategies for personal and academic growth, and receive assistance in their professional development. The main task of a tutor is to support the student throughout the learning process, help them create an individual learning program, overcome difficulties in the educational process, and involve them in scientific research. Modern tutors are not just individuals who help adapt to the learning process; they are mentors aimed at developing students' intellectual abilities, fostering innovative thinking, and strengthening their professional skills.

Today, the tutoring system has been successfully implemented in leading higher education institutions worldwide. This system is also being gradually

introduced in Uzbekistan and other CIS countries. As a result, opportunities for training specialists with modern knowledge and competencies, based on an individual learning strategy, are expanding. In a modern Oxford University, 90 percent [3], and in Cambridge University, 75 percent [4] of tutors work individually with one or two students. This ensures a student-centered approach to the educational process, allowing for the consideration of each student's individual needs and abilities. Tutors, even without specialized pedagogical education, guide students in academic activities, encourage their independent thinking, and stimulate scientific inquiry. Furthermore, the responsibility of tutors extends beyond the academic process; it includes maintaining contact with students during holidays and providing them with moral and psychological support.

Conclusion

Tutoring is an essential component of the modern higher education system, playing a central role in ensuring the comprehensive development of students. The tutor's functions encompass a wide range of areas, from providing information to designing, controlling, organizing, reflecting, technological, motivational, consulting, analytical, communicative, monitoring, and managerial aspects. These functions distinguish tutoring as an independent and innovative pedagogical activity, different from traditional teaching and mentoring.

The implementation of the tutoring system in Uzbekistan aims to improve the quality of higher education, develop students' independent learning skills, and shape their professional competence. Tutors are no longer just academic facilitators; they are mentors who enhance students' intellectual potential, foster innovative thinking, and assist in their personal growth. The experience of leading universities worldwide demonstrates that an individual approach to tutoring significantly increases the effectiveness of the educational process. Therefore, continuously developing the professional competence of tutors and supporting their activities remains a priority in the modern education system.

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