

Professional development of university teachers: Kazakhstan context

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Abstract

The current state of the teachers' professional development, working in Kazakhstani pedagogical universities is examined in this study and recommendations on creating conditions for the implementation of their continuing education are offered. A set of qualitative and quantitative research methods was selected for the study. Qualitative research was based on the study of analytical reviews and empirical studies, national regulatory documents and the national context of the existing forms of university teachers' professional development. Quantitative research methods were used to determine university teachers' professional needs in advanced training. The questionnaire including semi-structured questions with a variety of choices was developed by the researchers. The questionnaire was based on the survey results of Kazakhstani school teachers participated in Talis 2018 international study. 614 teachers working in pedagogical universities participated in the survey. The random sample was chosen, the online survey was utilised in data collection. The study helped to answer the question: What problems do university teachers have in their professional development? The results of the study identified such problems as the need to develop and implement a national program for advanced university teacher training in Kazakhstan; the transition from transmission to transitional forms of their professional development, as well as the improvement of universities' mechanisms for university teachers' internal incentives to their continuous professional development.

Keywords - University teachers; development; state policy; competencies; professional needs; survey.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The conceptual foundations of the university teachers' continuous professional development are determined by the understanding of the important social role of education as a harmonious form of personal development [Delors, 1996].

Teacher professional development is identified as the process of teacher's empirical learning, changing his own pedagogical practice and forming a critical and independent view on decision-making [Valenčič, 2001], the teacher's competence, allowing to analyze and plan his own professional development [Clark, 1995].

The reviews of studies on school teachers' professional development [Postholm, 2012; Walter & Big, 2012] underline the importance of such aspects as:

- The state policy in the field of education and teacher' participation in the policy decision making;
- Teachers' desire to learn based on their cognitive, activity, emotional and motivational aspects of their personalities;
- The importance of courses and seminars, meanwhile, on-the-job training performs another equally important function in professional development;
- On-the-job training in collaboration with colleagues and reflection, which are the best ways to develop teaching practice under the guidance of experienced teachers or other consultants;
- Training based on the teachers' research of their practice;
- Long-term training, in which the support of the administration is important;
- Training, including mentoring and coaching;
- Positive microclimate in the team.

Camblin & Stoeger [2000] note that teachers' self-education by itself will not solve the problem of their professional growth. A sustainable long-term strategy for university teachers' effective professional development is needed.

Hitch et al. [2015] concluded about the isolated and fragmented approach to the professional development of university teachers within the framework of inclusive education. They note that it is necessary for universities to work collaboratively at the level of a national initiative for the exchange of case studies, best practices and resources. This will provide an integrated approach to training teachers and the use of relatively limited resources of each university.

Timperley et al. [2007] point out the duration of training, its focus on teaching practice, as well as the availability of appropriate educational content and a research approach to the transformation of teaching practice are needed for the effectiveness of teachers' professional development. Meanwhile, the use of reflexive teaching methods, the availability of sufficient time for reflection and transformation of teacher's own practice, the completion of the final task aimed at integrating reflexive actions play a significant role for the university teachers' professional development [Hubball et al., 2005].

Effective professional development is primarily based on values [Biesta, 2010] and begins with learning what practitioners themselves value in their work. Professional development, considered at the level of teachers' professional identity and their mission [Korthagen, 2017; Lam, 2015], is one of the powerful stimulating factors for the development of motivation to learn [Gorozidis & Papaioannou, 2014].

The state's scientists consider the process of transformation of pedagogical activity to be an important factor in teachers' professional development, the core of which is the competence of their personal self-development and self-education, the formation of teachers' research competence to transform their practice, as well as the close integration of subject (theoretical and practical) competencies [Abylkasymova, 2021; Kamalova et al., 2016; Sovetkanova et al., 2021].

Thus, according to the review of relevant literature on the professional development of university teachers, including school teachers, the crucial problems are:

(1) regulatory documents: state policy in the field of education and teachers’ participation in making these policy decisions;

(2) university content: the presence of a long-term strategy for the development of the university, including mechanisms to support teachers’ professional development; collaboration between universities in sharing research results, best practices and resources; in addition to participation in short-term courses, on-the-job teacher training, based on the research; the existence of the mentoring and coaching systems in universities; identification of teachers' incentives for continuous professional development.

Alongside this, the OECD study [OECD, 2019] is important for the development of the system of continuous teachers’ professional development in Kazakhstan, underlying the determination of teachers’ needs and the access to appropriate training provided to them as one of the important tasks in solving this issue [OECD, 2019].

According to the 2018 TALIS study [OECD, 2019], the opportunities and needs of Kazakhstani school teachers in professional development were studied. Attending classes of colleagues, self-assessment and coaching, training in courses/ seminars, participation in the professional community of teachers, reading professional literature, participating in conferences on education issues, visiting another educational organization as part of the dissemination of best practices, online courses/seminars are utilized by Kazakhstani school teachers in their professional development.

The development of ICT skills for teaching, methods of student assessment and criteria-based assessment of students have been identified by Kazakh schoolteachers as the most important areas of their professional development.

Nevertheless, the problem of Kazakhstani university teachers’ professional development remains unstudied [Orynbasarova. 2020].

Until now, the professional needs of Kazakhstani university teachers in professional development have not been the subject of special study.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of the study is to identify «problem areas» of pedagogical universities’ teacher professional development and to develop recommendations for improving the mechanisms of implementation of this process. A set of qualitative and quantitative research methods was chosen (content analysis, comparative analysis, questionnaire) according to the purpose of the study, The study was conducted sequentially in accordance with the stages shown in Figure 1.

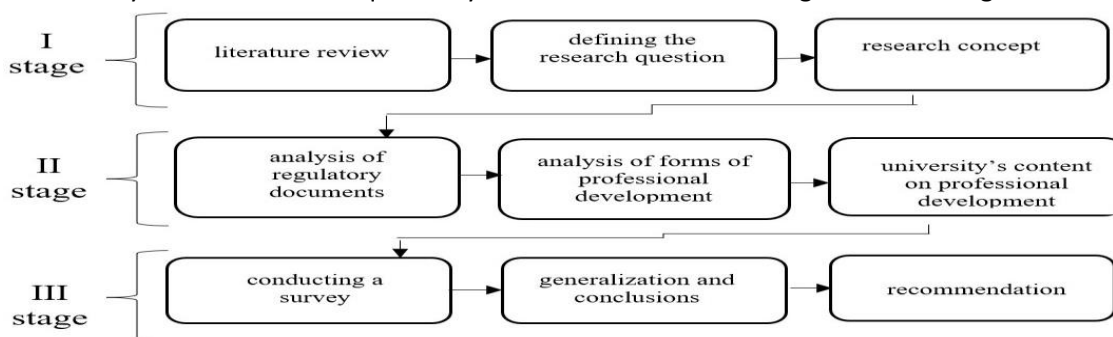


Figure 1. Block diagram of the research stages

A literary review was carried out at the first stage of the study to identify relevant literature and determine the range of issues on university teachers’ professional development. The analytical reviews of studies, empirical studies on the current state of issues regarding university teachers’

professional development were examined. At this stage, content analysis was utilized, allowing to determine the range of problems on this issue. Further, the results of the TALIS (2018) study on school teachers' professional development in Kazakhstan were studied. As a result, a lack of research on issues regarding university teachers' professional development in Kazakhstan, including identification of their professional needs, was identified. This allowed us to determine the direction of research to answer the question: What problems do university teachers have in their professional development?

At the second stage the national regulatory documents in the field of university teachers' professional development, including the Professional teacher standard in Kazakhstan were studied. A comparative analysis of the teacher's standard in Kazakhstan and Australia was carried out. To determine the national context of the professional teacher development external (traditional and innovative) and internal (individual) forms of their development have been studied.

At the third stage a survey of university teachers was conducted to identify their needs in professional development. As a result of the analysis of the international study's findings [OECD, 2019] questionnaires were developed, including 10 questions. 614 respondents from five pedagogical universities specializing only in the training of teaching staff participated in the survey. The sample included 2 national universities and 3 regional pedagogical universities located in the northern, central and southern parts of Kazakhstan. A stratified random sample was carried out, by which only teachers working in pedagogical universities were chosen to participate in the survey (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of the sample by universities

No	University's name	Number of respondents
1	Abay Kazakh national pedagogical university	156
2	Kazakh national women's teacher training university	144
3	Pavlodar pedagogical university	105
4	South Kazakhstan state pedagogical university	120
5	Arkalyk state pedagogical institute	89
Total		614

Data collection was carried out by the online questionnaire method, and the results were analyzed using mathematical and statistical methods. Conclusions were formed and recommendations were given based on the data analysis.

III. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

National regulatory documents

The analysis of national programs for the development of education until 2025 and the national project «Educated Nation» Quality Education» indicates comprehensive work on increasing teachers' competitiveness carried out by the Ministry of Education over the past 10 years.

The State Program for the Development of Education until 2025 focuses on ensuring the high status of the teaching profession and the modernization of teacher education. At the same time, a National project was presented in 2021, in which tasks on improving the quality of education and developing human capital for the digital economy were also included.

In 2017 Kazakhstan adopted the Teacher's Standard, developed in accordance with the European, National and Industry-specific Qualifications Frameworks, including three indicators: «knowledge», «skills and abilities», «personal and professional competencies».

A comparative analysis of the teacher standard in Kazakhstan and Australia [Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011] revealed that the structure and content of the Kazakh standard is significantly different from the Australian's one. The Australian Teacher Standards act as a guide to professional training, practice and interaction at work. All the key elements of quality education are described, formulating what teachers should know and be able to do at the 4 stages of a teaching career.

The Australian teacher standards influence the development of vocational training goals and provide a framework for teachers to conduct self-assessment of their professional practice.

However, the Kazakhstani teacher standard act as a description of the teacher’s labor functions essential for the performance of his official duties and specifying the requirements of qualification guides set by the Ministry of Labor.

It was found out that the Kazakhstani Teacher's Standard refers to the type of a set of professional values, and not a measure of quality teaching [Ingvarson, 2002], and also does not perform the function of a roadmap for teacher professional development, including a description from the most basic to advanced career stages [Toledo et al., 2017].

The comparative analysis has shown that the professional Teacher’s standard in Kazakhstan does not act as a comprehensive tool for stimulating university teachers’ professional development and does not perform the functions of modeling and managing a pedagogical career. The Kazakhstani teacher standard needs updating. In 2022, taking into account international experience, a new Professional Teacher’s standard has been developed, including a description of the teacher’s professional competencies according to five levels of professional development.

In 2021 the Concept of lifelong learning (continuing education) was developed and approved, according to which mechanisms for recognizing the results of non-formal education to validate learning outcomes, as well as the introduction of a cumulative system (data bank) of credits and non-credit training to recognize and confirm learning achievements will be the key tools of the continuing education system.

Forms of university teachers’ professional development

Currently, the university teachers’ professional development in Kazakhstan is implemented in all types of education through external (traditional and innovative) and internal (individual) forms [Abylkasymova, 2021], the content of which is presented in Figure 2.

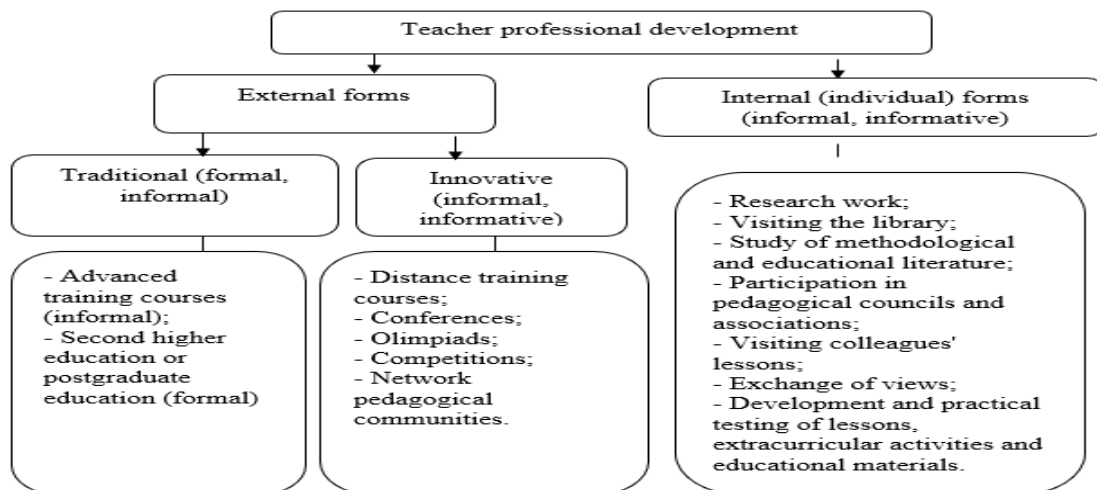


Figure 2. Teacher’s professional development

Formal education by utilizing traditional forms of university teachers’ professional development is represented by obtaining a second higher or postgraduate education and advanced training courses. Higher or postgraduate education is determined in accordance with the requirements of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-2011). The levels of education have been institutionalized, appropriate standards have been developed, learning outcomes have been set and an assessment system has been formed.

Since 2018, the academic freedom of universities has been legislated, giving universities the opportunity to independently develop educational programs for teacher training, determine

qualification requirements for teachers and strategies for their professional development. Only graduates of the pedagogical magistracy are allowed to work at universities (ISCED level 7).

More than 130 educational programs of doctoral studies have been developed by pedagogical universities of Kazakhstan (ISCED level 8). However, it is noted that the educational programs running in universities are poorly connected with the real sector of the economy [Rysbekova et al., 2017; The National Report on the State and Development of the Education System of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020]. As a result, graduates enter the labor market with theoretical rather than practical skills. Even though since 2018 universities are independently responsible for the content of educational programs, the long-term regulation of higher and postgraduate education by state standards and standard programs affects. The university administration notes such issues as a shortage of Doctors of Philosophy (PhD) and the need for updating pedagogical teaching technologies for the teaching staff. Within the framework of the project office at the Ministry of Education, pedagogical educational programs for doctoral studies are being updated.

«Bolashaq» International Scholarship, established by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, is being implemented in the state, providing an opportunity for gifted young Kazakhstani citizens to receive pedagogical education (ISCED level 7, 8) at the best world's universities.

University teachers receive training in advanced training courses within the framework of *non-formal education*.

The problem of developing high-quality educational programs belongs to the competence of providers of professional development services for teachers. Currently, professional development of university teachers in short-term courses is carried out by organizations subordinated to the Ministry of Education, universities and licensed legal entities.

Advanced training courses and post-course support for teachers are implemented both in full-time and distance formats. However, according to UNESCO [Ensuring lifelong learning for all in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan: country evidence and policy recommendations, 2020], Kazakhstan needs to integrate teacher training and advanced training programs to ensure flexible transitions within and between educational sectors and also to create a national teacher training program. Thus, Kazakhstan can be attributed to the first category of countries where national teacher training programs should be initiated [Fink, 2013].

As for the model of continuous teacher professional development [Kennedy, 2005, 2014], it was found that the transmission forms of continuous professional training for teachers are dominated in Kazakhstan. This is due to the fact that the Professional Teacher Standard (2017) was not the basis for transitional forms of continuous teacher professional development, whereas professional subject teachers' communities as a public institution are at the stage of their development.

This year the stereotype of a five-year frequency of passing teachers' professional development courses has been overcome and a legislative norm on mandatory professional development for teachers once in 3 years is underway to introduce.

The Rules for the development, coordination and approval of educational programs for teacher training courses, and also for their organizing and conducting have been developed. The programs are examined by the Expert Council of the Ministry of Education. However, licensing and accreditation procedures for short-term courses are not legally established. Evaluation of the quality of short-term advanced training courses is completed at the stage of examining these courses.

The participation of university teachers in *informal and informational* formats of professional development by utilizing innovative and internal (individual) forms is regulated by the strategic university's documents (university development strategy, work plans of faculties and departments, individual plans of university teachers) [Development strategy «Abai University» for 2022-2025, 2021]. Kazakhstan has a National Open Education Platform for the implementation of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), established by leading universities in Kazakhstan. Also, pedagogical universities

develop and post MOOCs independently on their official websites. The participation of university teachers in research and scientific publications, distance training courses, conferences, competitions and olympiads is reflected in their ratings and affects their wages in case of high indicators. Meanwhile, due to the universities' academic independence, the forms and procedure of financial incentives for university teachers are determined by the university independently. However, the teacher's participation in professional development often does not affect career advancement or material remuneration, since career growth is mainly associated with the teacher's scientific achievements.

This is regulated legally in the National and Sectoral Qualifications Frameworks and the rules for awarding academic degrees, as well as reflected in the official qualification requirements for universities.

Study of the teachers' needs working in Kazakhstani pedagogical universities in continuous professional development

12 % (74 out of 314) of young teachers under the age of 30, 59 % (363 out of 314) - from 40 to 63 years old, 4 % (25 out of 314) - teachers of retirement age, including 84,5 % (519 out of 614) female representatives and 15,5 % (95 out of 614) male took part in the survey.

Most of the respondents (274 out of 614 or 45%) are masters, 20 % (125 out of 614) have completed doctoral studies, 35 % (215 out of 614) teachers have received special professional education. Notably, 276 out of 614 or 45% of respondents have an academic degree.

When identifying university teachers' activities aimed at obtaining additional knowledge and skills, it turned out that the most common form of their professional development is taking advanced training courses (404 out of 614 or 66 %).

97 out of 614 or 16 % of teachers continue their studies in master's or doctoral studies; 86 out of 614 or 14 % participated in the experience exchange based on the results of training; 77 out of 614 or 12,5 % - consulted with specialists or more experienced staff; 54 out of 614 or 9 % participated in the discussion of reports on the completed work; 4 out of 614 or 7 % attended field short-term training sessions and seminars; 38 out of 614 or 6 % - participated in master classes with professionals; 35 out of 614 or 6 % used to read specialized literature; 32 out of 614 or 5 % participated in internship programs; 26 out of 614 or 4 % visited professional Internet sites; 23 out of 614 or 4 % participated in retraining programs; 22 out of 614 or 4% communicated in professional communities, forums, project groups. The data obtained are shown in table 2.

Table 2. Preferred forms of professional development

Forms of professional development	F	%
master's, doctoral studies	97	2.6
communication in professional communities	22	3.6
retraining	23	3.7
professional internet sites	26	4.2
internship	32	5.2
reading specialised literature	35	5.7
master classes	38	6.2
field training sessions and seminars	44	7.2
report on completed work	54	8.8
consultations with specialists	77	12.5
experience exchange	86	14
advanced training courses	404	65.8

Meanwhile, such partnership resources as experience exchange based on the results of training, consultations with specialists or colleagues and discussion of reports on the completed work, as well as communication in professional communities, forums, project groups are of particular importance for the professional growth of the teacher and the development of the educational

organization [Niemi, 2015]. Thus, the teaching potential of the above-mentioned forms of teachers' continuous professional development, working in pedagogical universities is not fully considered.

Distance learning, which has been widely used due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is not considered by teachers (26 % or 160 out of 614) as an effective form of professional development organization. The actual form of conducting advanced training courses for 307 out of 614 or 50 % of respondents is the full-time training format. 148 out of 614 or 24 % prefer lectures based on interactive methods and case discussions (Table 3).

Table 3. Teachers' preferences regarding the training format

Learning formats	F	%
interactive methods and case discussion	148	24.1
distance learning	160	26
courses – full-time learning	307	50

According to the review of the advanced training courses' programs topics for university teachers on the websites of pedagogical universities, the following main topics of the courses can be identified:

- Improving teachers' research skills and the skills of presenting research results;
- Improvement of educational programs;
- Development of teachers' information and communication competencies and their management skills;
- Study of the up-to-date pedagogical technologies and teaching tools, as well as teacher's innovative methods of work;
- Training at the young teacher school;
- Study of methods for teaching general education subjects;
- Features of learning in inclusive and multilingual education.

At the same time, university teachers expressed their wishes to receive training in the following areas of professional development:

- The content of the taught subject (393 out of 614 or 64 %);
- Improvement of scientific and professional competencies (250 out of 614 or 41%);
- Improvement of methodological competencies (228 out of 614 or 37 %);
- Improvement of IT competencies (181 out of 614 or 29 %);
- Study of self-development technologies (149 out of 614 or 24 %);
- Development of communication and speech skills (130 out of 614 or 21%);
- Development of management competencies (88 out of 614 or 14 %). The data are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Teachers' preferences regarding the direction of study

Recommended topics	F	%
management competencies	88	2.3
communication and speech skills	130	21.2
self-development technologies	149	24.3
IT competencies	181	29.5
methodological competencies	228	37.1
scientific and professional competencies	250	40.7
the content of the teaching disciplines	393	10.4

The survey data of teachers revealed a range of issues, showing their preferences when choosing advanced training courses:

- course topics (535 out of 614 or 87 %);
- professional level of trainers (434 out of 614 or 70 %);
- course fee (131 out of 614 or 21 %);
- course venue – (113 out of 614 or 18 %);

- type of document after completion of training (88 out of 614 or 14 %). The data are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Criteria for choosing advanced training courses

Criteria	F	%
document	88	14.3
course venue	113	18.4
course fee	131	21.3
trainer's qualification	434	70.7
course topics	535	87.1

Meanwhile, respondents note facing the following problems when expressing their wishes to take advanced training courses:

- training is conducted at an inconvenient time (310 out of 614 or 50 %);
- the subject of the courses did not correspond to my professional interests (250 out of 614 or 41 %);
- there was no financial opportunity to pay for the course (246 out of 614 or 40 %);
- received information about the courses with delay (99 out of 614 or 16 %). The data are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. The existing problems if expressing wishes to receive training

Challenges	F	%
received information about the courses with delay	99	16.1
financial problems	246	40
course topics	250	40.7
time of the course	310	50.5

The motivation for continuous professional growth is an important factor in the university teachers' professional development. Data on the study of factors influencing the increase of motivation for the teacher professional development are presented as follows:

- personal rating system operating at the university (482 out of 614 or 79 %);
- availability of the competitive environment (392 out of 614 or 64 %);
- effective contract's terms (220 out of 614 or 36 %);
- interdepartmental rating system (142 out of 614 or 23 %). The data are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. University teachers' incentives for their professional development

Factors	F	%
interdepartmental rating system	142	23.1
effective contract's terms	220	35.8
competitive environment	392	63.8
personal rating system	482	78.5

Based on the results of the survey, it can be concluded that the existing mechanisms of professional development provided for the universities' teaching staff are insufficiently effective.

For instance, more than half of the teaching staff (65,8 %) note short-term advanced training courses as the main form of their professional development. Meanwhile, studies [Postholm, 2012; Walter & Brigg, 2012; Timperley et al., 2007; Hubball et al., 2005] indicate the importance of teaching staff's reports on the completed work and experience exchange based on the results of training, by which they will continue their training and enhance their experience utilizing cooperation with colleagues and self-reflection. Meanwhile, on average, 1 out of 12 teaching staff complete training in short-term advanced training courses with a report on the completed work (8,8 %) or experience exchange (14 %).

Alongside this, university teachers consider the relevance of the course topics (87,1 %) and the qualifications of the coach (70,7 %) to be important when choosing short-term advanced training courses. Therefore, the national program for advanced training of university teachers is of particular importance, which has not been practiced since 2018 due to the legislative adoption of the universities' autonomy.

According to the survey results, the university's development strategy should include mechanisms for the development of the competitive environment (63,8 %) among teachers based on a personal rating system (78,5 %). Mechanisms for stimulating university teachers to continuous professional development should not be based only on career growth, since only 2,6 % of teaching staff continue their postgraduate studies, which legally gives them the right to advance in their careers.

It is important to encourage teaching staff to participate in such forms of training as: communication in professional communities, master classes, field trainings and seminars, consultations with specialists, experience exchange etc. These forms need to be defined both within the university and by widely developing cooperation between universities.

These forms should not be based solely on research, they should be directed to the study of teaching methods and further development of IT competencies, considering the system of mentoring and coaching.

IV. DISCUSSION

The results of this study show the main problems of university teachers' professional development are as following:

- (1) The need for a national professional development program for university teachers in Kazakhstan;
- (2) The relevance of the transition from transmission to transitional forms of university teachers' professional development based on standards, using coaching/mentoring and a developed network of professional communities (community of practice) [Kennedy, 2005];
- (3) Creation of universities' conditions stimulating teachers to continuous professional development.

Firstly, in agreement with school teachers [Nagibova, 2019; Amirova, 2020; Syahrial et al., 2022] and foreign universities' teachers, Kazakhstani pedagogical universities' teachers consider the development of research, subject, methodological and IT competencies to be an important area of their professional development. The results of the study confirm university teachers' awareness of the relevance of developing these competencies in accordance with global trends. For instance, in Kazakhstan, the positive experience of the national program for the professional development of school teachers established on the basis of the Center for Pedagogical Excellence of Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools is being studied using the cascade model of professional development and the implementation of action research projects to improve teaching practice [Wilson, et al., 2013]. This experience can contribute to the development and implementation of the national program of university teachers' advanced training on the development of the above competencies.

Secondly, the transition to transitional forms of university teachers' professional development utilizing coaching/mentoring, mentoring system and participation in professional communities will lead to their deep understanding of the content of educational changes to overcome professional isolation [Sharimova, 2021]. To achieve this goal, Kazakhstani universities' teachers prefer offline forms of education. Meanwhile, recently the online teacher professional development becomes popular due to the lack of geographical and time constraints [Elliott, 2017]. Using the opportunities of online teacher professional development will help teachers to solve the problem of choosing advanced training courses considering the programs' topics, the trainers' qualifications and the inconvenient time of training. At this stage of the development of teachers' continuing education, a rational

combination of various offline and online transitional forms of teacher professional development is necessary.

Thirdly, in the university's context, it is important to create appropriate conditions for the university teachers' effective professional development. Thus, according to OECD studies, the most common types of Kazakhstani teachers' professional development are: attending colleagues classes or self-assessment, as well as coaching; participation in advanced training courses/seminars, teachers' professional communities; reading professional literature, participating in conferences on pedagogical issues, visiting another school as part of the best practices' dissemination, as well as online courses/seminars [OECD, 2019]. According to the OECD, Kazakhstani teachers are more involved in effective professional development activities than teachers in OECD countries [OECD, 2019]. However, the level of university teachers' participation in the above-mentioned forms of professional development is considerably low. It is possible to use such organizational mechanisms contributing to teachers' professional growth as: corporatism, training, branding, development of the roadmap (individual development plan) in the university' conditions [Shibankova et al., 2019]. These mechanisms should not be formal in nature, but should be aimed at creating a competitive environment and the functioning of the personal rating system [Goroizidis, 2014].

The significance of the study lies in the universities' possibility to apply the study's results to obtain competitive advantages in the development of the university's human capital.

In this study, the problem of university teachers' professional development is considered for the first time, using the example of pedagogical universities. Further research may be conducted on studying models, forms and methods of teachers' professional development in the university's educational environment, as well as conducting a comparative analysis taking into account the university's rating.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the conducted research, the following recommendations are proposed:

- (1) Study of the professional needs of the teaching staff for continuous professional development;
- (2) implementation of the national program for advanced university teachers' training aimed at the development of their research, subject, methodological and IT competencies;
- (3) university teachers' participation in the development of their professional development strategy, taking into account traditional, innovative and individual forms of teachers' continuing education; the use of the reasonable combination of offline and online transmitting forms of teachers' continuous professional training;
- (4) creating an academic environment for the application of technologies and teaching methods based on research in action and self-reflection;
- (5) supplementing the content of short-term advanced training courses with forms of internal and external collaboration, extensive experience exchange, teachers' involvement in research and project activities, activation of course participants' reflective work;
- (6) strengthening cooperation between universities nationally in the exchange of case studies, best practices and resources in teacher training and the use of the universities' resources;
- (7) improving the quality of scientific conferences and other professional discussions;
- (8) development of teachers' communication skills in English for their professional self-development.

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