
THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN PROMOTING HEALTH-ORIENTED THINKING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Ernazarov Abduvali Beknazarovich
Researcher, Samarkand State University,
eabduvali0777@gmail.com

Abstract:

This article explores the evolving role of educators in the context of health-preserving pedagogy, presenting teacher competence as a multidimensional and dynamic phenomenon. Moving beyond conventional definitions, the discussion emphasizes how pedagogical competence must be reimaged in light of contemporary educational demands, technological integration, and students' psychosocial needs. The paper advocates for a holistic approach that positions the educator not only as a disseminator of health knowledge, but as a facilitator of sustainable behavioral change, ethical awareness, and lifelong wellness habits. Through this lens, the article offers a conceptual foundation for developing professional development programs and institutional policies that can strengthen the impact of health-focused educational strategies. By reframing the educator's function as both a role model and a transformative guide, the study opens avenues for more inclusive, reflective, and future-oriented teaching practices within higher education systems.

Keywords: Health-preserving pedagogy, educator competence, health-oriented thinking, holistic education, teacher roles, emotional intelligence, digital literacy, ethical teaching, lifelong wellness, higher education.

In contemporary educational theory and practice, the concept of competence has emerged as a cornerstone of effective pedagogical engagement. Originating from the Latin word *competere*, which denotes suitability, alignment, or the fulfillment of necessary conditions, competence in its modern interpretation transcends mere knowledge acquisition. It encompasses the dynamic integration of cognitive understanding, emotional intelligence, behavioral aptitude, value orientation, and the capacity to apply learning in complex and variable real-life contexts. In the domain of higher

education, and particularly in the field of health-preserving pedagogy, the competence of the educator holds a central and transformative role in nurturing the development of health-conscious thinking among students [1]. Health-oriented thinking refers not only to the awareness of practices that promote physical and mental well-being, but also to the internalization of health as a fundamental life value. Such thinking does not emerge spontaneously; rather, it must be deliberately cultivated through educational interventions that are guided by competent, purposeful, and visionary educators. Teachers, therefore, are not merely transmitters of knowledge—they are facilitators of behavioral change, role models of healthy living, and architects of a holistic, life-affirming educational environment [2].

The competence-based approach in education is predicated on the belief that knowledge, in isolation, is insufficient for fostering meaningful personal and societal development. Instead, learners must be equipped with the competencies necessary to interpret, evaluate, and apply knowledge in diverse and often unpredictable scenarios. Within the context of health education, this means that students should be empowered not only with factual information about health, hygiene, nutrition, physical activity, and psychological well-being, but also with the skills, values, and motivations to make informed and responsible health-related decisions throughout their lives.

The role of the teacher in this endeavor is multifaceted and extends across several dimensions of professional competence:

1. Cognitive and Intellectual Competence

At the core of every effective teacher lies a well-established foundation of subject-matter expertise. In the case of health education, this includes thorough knowledge of human physiology, public health, mental health principles, personal hygiene, and the socio-cultural determinants of health behavior. The teacher must be familiar with current research, global health trends, and national health priorities, and be capable of contextualizing this information in a way that resonates with students' realities. Additionally, the educator must be adept at critically evaluating sources, synthesizing diverse perspectives, and presenting nuanced understandings of health-related issues [3].

2. Methodological and Pedagogical Competence

The ability to deliver content effectively requires mastery of a broad range of teaching strategies tailored to learners' needs and learning environments. In promoting health-preserving thinking, educators must employ interactive, student-centered methodologies such as project-based learning, inquiry-based instruction, collaborative tasks, case studies, and simulation exercises. These approaches actively engage students, deepen their understanding, and encourage reflective practice. Teachers should also be capable of adapting instructional materials to accommodate diverse learning styles, cognitive abilities, and cultural backgrounds, thereby ensuring inclusive and equitable learning opportunities [4].

3. Emotional and Psychological Competence

Teaching, especially in the realm of health, requires deep emotional intelligence. Educators must demonstrate empathy, compassion, and patience as they navigate sensitive topics such as mental health, body image, stress, and addiction. They must create safe spaces where students feel heard, supported, and empowered to express their concerns without fear of judgment. Emotional competence also involves the ability to recognize signs of distress among students, to respond appropriately, and to connect them with relevant support systems when necessary. In this regard, teachers serve as both guardians and guides of students' emotional well-being [5].

4. Communicative Competence

Effective communication is essential to fostering health literacy and encouraging behavioral change. Educators must articulate ideas clearly, listen actively, and engage in meaningful dialogue with students. Communication should be two-way, allowing for feedback, discussion, and critical inquiry. Additionally, educators must be sensitive to the language they use, particularly when addressing issues related to identity, culture, and personal habits. A competent teacher communicates in a manner that is accessible, respectful, motivating, and inspiring.

5. Organizational and Managerial Competence

Teachers must be capable of designing and implementing coherent educational programs that promote health at both individual and institutional levels. This involves integrating health topics across disciplines, collaborating with other faculty members, organizing extracurricular wellness activities, and building partnerships with health professionals and community organizations. In the classroom, organizational competence translates into the ability to manage time effectively, coordinate group activities, facilitate participatory learning, and maintain a structured yet flexible environment that prioritizes both academic achievement and personal well-being [6].

6. Reflective and Analytical Competence

A hallmark of a professional educator is the capacity for continuous self-assessment and growth. Reflective practitioners regularly evaluate their teaching practices, assess student outcomes, and seek opportunities for improvement. This process involves the use of formative assessments, peer reviews, student feedback, and educational research to inform and refine instruction. By engaging in reflective practice, teachers model the importance of lifelong learning and adaptive resilience, which are themselves critical components of health-oriented thinking.

7. Ethical and Moral Competence

In promoting health-consciousness, educators inevitably engage with moral and ethical dimensions of human behavior. Teachers must embody and advocate for values such as respect for life, dignity of the human body, social justice in health access, and personal responsibility. They must navigate ethical dilemmas thoughtfully and encourage students to critically examine their own values and behaviors. This moral dimension adds depth to the educational process, ensuring that health promotion is not reduced to technical prescriptions but is grounded in humane and democratic principles [7].

8. Technological and Digital Competence

The integration of information and communication technologies into the health education process is no longer optional. Competent educators must harness digital tools to enhance student engagement, personalize learning, and expand access to resources. This includes using e-learning platforms, mobile health applications, virtual reality experiences, digital storytelling, and data visualization tools. Moreover, teachers should be able to guide students in the ethical and critical use of online health information, fostering digital health literacy and responsible technology usage.

9. Innovative and Transformative Competence

The educational landscape is in constant flux, and health education must evolve in tandem with emerging scientific, social, and technological developments. Educators must therefore cultivate a spirit of innovation—experimenting with new pedagogies, exploring interdisciplinary connections, and embracing change as an opportunity for growth. Transformative teachers do not merely adapt to trends; they lead change by anticipating future challenges and preparing students to face them with creativity, courage, and conviction [8].

To summarize, the competence and role of the teacher in fostering health-oriented thinking among university students is not confined to the traditional boundaries of teaching. It is an expansive, multidimensional construct that encompasses intellectual mastery, pedagogical innovation, emotional intelligence, ethical sensitivity, and a profound commitment to the holistic development of learners [9]. The educator must serve simultaneously as a knowledge provider, a facilitator of experience, a guardian of mental and emotional health, a communicator of values, a manager of learning environments, and a catalyst for personal transformation.

By nurturing these competencies within themselves, teachers become empowered to create vibrant educational ecosystems where health is not merely taught but lived, not merely understood but internalized, and not merely practiced but celebrated as a fundamental pillar of human flourishing. In this way, they fulfill their most noble purpose: to cultivate a generation that is not only educated, but also healthy, wise, resilient, and prepared to build a better, more humane future.

References:

1. P. Bregg R.I. Varabyev. Modern education and health. Tashkent: Journal of Education, 2023, 45-53.
2. Tasheva, D. S., & Kubaeva, N. A. (2022). Modern educational technologies in the aspect of a student-centered approach in teaching foreign languages. Eurasian Journal of Learning and Academic Teaching, 12, 35.
3. Tasheva Dilorom, Djanzakova Matluba. The role of literary text in teaching the Russian language. International Multidisciplinary Conference. Manchester, England. 25th December 2023. -p.19. <https://conferencea.org>
4. Nafisa, K., & Kamola, A. (2024). The Problem Of Teaching Students Lexical And Phraseological Features In Translation Studies Of Phrasal Verbs In English And Uzbek Languages. Eurasian Journal Of Academic Research, 4(10), 39-42.
5. Khamidov I. "Practical measures and their effectiveness". Nukus, 2024.
6. Sultanov R. "Cooperation in the health system". Bukhara, 2022.
7. Murodov D. "Healthy lifestyle propaganda". Jizzakh, 2023.
8. Nesterenko L.A. "Life and health". Moscow, 2022.
9. Nafisa, K., & Matluba, D. (2023). Psychological And Pedagogical Aspects Of Research Into The Problem Of Bilingual Foreign Language Teaching. Conferencea, 31-34.