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INITIAL EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF TEACHERS THROUGH PEDAGOGICAL FACULTIES

Abstract: The initial education of teachers represents the basic part of the preparation of the teaching staff. This phase is just a prerequisite for starting the career development of the class teacher, which continues through permanent education.

The functionally established continuity between initial education and vocational training presupposes quality. For these reasons, the pedagogical faculties are the most appropriate institutions that are also responsible for the entire approach of the creation and development of the teacher’s profile.

The subject and purpose of the research in this paper refer to the following: analysis of the current situation in our country regarding the systematic professional development of primary school teachers in the primary school and determining a system of thematically structured activities and trainings for the teaching staff, which would be realized at the pedagogical faculties. According to the goal, we determine the operational tasks and hypotheses, as well as the research methods, techniques and instruments that will be listed in the paper.

Through the research we have acquired specific data on what types of training teachers need to actively participate in. From the ranking of the received answers by frequency, it is evident that the teachers need training most, which refers to modern models and strategies of teaching work.

The analysis give us the opportunity to classify the offered trainings based on how desirable and necessary they are for the teachers. When creating the type and content of the trainings, we will start from what teachers emphasize.

Keywords: Initial, Education, Teacher, Training

Theoretical Components

The Initial Education of Primary School Teachers

The initial education of teachers represents the basic part of the preparation of the teaching staff. This phase of staff preparation is extremely important, as it represents the starting point. But it is only a prerequisite for the career development of the class teacher to begin, which continues through the continuous (permanent) education of the teacher, which is also called professional (professional) improvement.

Within the initial education of the teacher, the competencies on the basis of which his profession is realized and which represent the basis of his activity begin to be formed. The functionally established continuity between initial education and professional development presupposes quality teaching work. The organizational setting of professional development should be at the level of upgrading the already acquired knowledge and experiential knowledge. For those reasons, pedagogical faculties are the most suitable institutions that are also responsible for the complete approach to the creation and development of the teacher profile.

Overcoming traditionalism in the teacher education system is in constant progress, there are also official documents that support the innovation. We can expect more complete effects at that moment, when there will be complete changes in the consciousness of both teachers and other structures in society about the meaning of the profession. Observed from a current angle, the changes, although they are slow, are still reflected in reality. Faculties that educate teachers are modern in many aspects, but in that direction, they should be constantly improved in the field of: organization of teaching; equipment with technical and informational means and aids and other didactic means, dedicated teaching material, etc. appropriate spatially organized structure of the faculty; professional teaching staff; openness and flexibility towards innovation in all educational segments.

In the initial education of teachers, we start from the fact that we know how a teacher should behave and how to work with students. In the interest of the proper preparation of the teacher, in his education we should apply ways and systems of work that we expect him to apply in his work with students.

Modern educational trends of teaching faculties are aimed at the integration of science and teaching. Science followed in current trends, science that evolves following changes and additions in scientific thought. This integration represents the process of discovering new scientific knowledge. The initial education and training of the teacher should be at the level of a scientific degree, which is applicable in the primary working environment of the teacher.

When we talk about the initial education of the teacher, we are focused on education that enables the creation of a motivated and creative teacher, capable of flexible communication, within educational frameworks and beyond. The preparation of future teachers is also aimed at how to ensure the development of qualities that encourage the cultural way of life and work, creating conditions for quality of action, way of thinking and lifestyle, tolerance, criticality and self-criticism, engagement and fig.

The modern school has an anticipatory character, which means that the education acquired by the future teacher should be futuristically oriented. When we form a teacher, we form him so that he can exert a productive influence in the future. The students that that teacher of the present time will train will be active members in social life in the future.

The education and training of primary school teachers in the Republic of North Macedonia is four years long, and is carried out at the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Philosophy (Institute of Pedagogy).

Studying at the faculties is conducted according to the so-called parallel model. The parallel model presupposes the study of the profession from the aspect of its scientific and academic basis and certainty, and the study of pedagogical-psychological and didactic-methodical contents, strategies and variant models of teaching work. An integral part of the parallel model is the pedagogic practice, which is realized with hospitalizations in schools, during which the students follow mentor teaching, teach with the help of a mentor and teach independently.

The interrelationship of the professional and pedagogical competencies of the teacher throughout the training is very important. The teacher should be a factor in the parallel and integral implementation of the scientific and pedagogical-psychological and didactic-methodical aspects of the student's development. Starting from this finding, it is necessary to enable the passage between these two types of content during the teacher's education, which is most successfully achieved through the connection of theory with pedagogical practice.

Professional Development of Primary School Teachers

Permanent education actually represents that education which: takes place after the completion of formal educational degrees; builds on previously acquired education; it is realized institutionally or extra-institutionally; it is in function of building a person who will anticipate the future; lasts until the end of life.

Scientific and technical developments produce a lot of new information and expand and enrich the existing ones. Information becomes part of our consciousness through institutional and non-institutional education, which is the need of every modern person.

With the acquisition of a diploma of a certain educational level, the teacher is qualified for work immediately after the completion of formal education. The education of teachers should be continuous and realized in different ways. In order for the teacher to be able to follow modern trends in his work, he must be constantly upgraded and perfected. There is no doubt the need for it to become a functional part of every teacher's life (for his personal interest and for the interest of society as a whole). Therefore, the question of how to encourage teachers' desire to learn and their own professional development is constantly being asked.

The professional development of the teacher can be observed and developed in two ways: when it is a function of his overall development and when it is a function of development and improvement in his own profession as a teacher. Professional development offers the opportunity for the teacher not to accept changes in his profession as a given, but opens up opportunities to plan and organize it according to global educational needs, but also according to the needs of the specific students he works with. As long as the individual experiences and realizes permanent education in this way, she will be ready to face education in every new situation.

The permanent education and professional development of the teacher can function through the following ways and forms of improvement: Formal and informal cooperation, individual improvement, group improvement.

The trainings for teachers – as a model of the aforementioned group training, represent a form of professional development, organized and led by an accredited trainer/s, where the teacher acquires a variety of knowledge, skills, abilities and ways of communication in an organized manner. Trainings are usually organized for a group of teachers on a particular topic that is the focus of interest of the given group of teachers. The topic of work should derive from: current situations; innovative didactic-methodical solutions; new scientific knowledge; changes in documents that regulate education as a process, and primarily from the needs of teachers for their professional development, which is actually a function of correct and functional implementation of

their educational activity. The topic can also have a higher scientific level, which will implicitly affect the teacher's basic activity. Training should be interactive. Teachers should be involved in activities where they will think and interpret their own ideas in relation to the problem that is the topic of work. It can last several hours, but also several days, depending on what it is aimed at and what is the ultimate goal of its realization. For a successfully completed training, the teacher receives a certificate from the institution organizing the training, where the trainer as the holder of the program structure of the training should be indicated).

Methodological Components

The subject of the research in this paper is the following: analysis of the current situation in our country in terms of systematic professional development of primary school teachers and determination of a system of thematically structured activities and training for the teaching staff, which would be implemented at our faculty.

The purpose of the research, which derives from the subject of the research, is to analyze the current situation in our country in terms of the professional development of the teacher and to determine a system of thematically structured activities and trainings for the teaching staff.

According to the goal, we determine the following **operational tasks**:

- To examine the situation in our pedagogical reality, in terms of the methods and content structure of the professional development of teachers;
- To establish whether the professional development of teachers is sufficiently systematized and equally accessible to all teachers;
- To examine the opinions and attitudes of teachers about whether and to what extent the existing ways and forms of professional development meet real needs;
- To determine the needs for adopting a package of activities and trainings for primary school teachers, as a starting model for work in the field of professional development of teachers;
- To introduce a systematized package of activities and trainings for elementary school teachers.

Research hypotheses:

- In our pedagogical reality, professional development of teachers is realized;
- The professional development of teachers is not sufficiently systematized and equally accessible to all teachers;
- According to the teachers' opinions and attitudes, they are involved in more ways and forms of professional development;
- Teachers' opinions and attitudes indicate that the existing ways and forms of professional development do not meet real needs;
- There is a need to adopt a package of activities and trainings for primary school teachers, as a starting model for work in the field of professional development of teachers;
- There is a need for a system of thematically structured activities and trainings for teaching staff.

The population of the research we carried out is made up of all primary school teachers in the Republic of North Macedonia. We determined **the sample** consisting of a total of 126 teachers from eight elementary schools by random selection.

In the research, we applied the following **research methods**: Theoretical-analytical method and analytical-descriptive method. **Research instruments**: survey.

Results and Discussion

Analyzes of teachers' answers to the questions asked give us the opportunity to classify the offered trainings based on how desirable and necessary they are for teachers. Accordingly, we

can build a list of trainings that we could offer to teachers, in a pre-conceived package of activities for professional development of teachers.

We note that most of the teachers felt benefited from the trainings, which leads us to the conclusion that the implemented trainings were still successful.

Since the opportunity was given to choose more than the offered answers, all teachers opted for multiple choice, that is, they chose several of the proposed trainings. The number indicated next to the training indicates how many teachers opted for that training.

1.	Models and strategies of teaching work	49
2.	The class teacher and activities related to the preparation of the IEP (Individual Education Plan)	44
3.	Strategies for realizing the educational competencies of teachers	31
4.	Numerical assessment in grade school education	28
5.	Professional competencies of teachers	26
6.	Integrative approach in the realization of teaching contents	20
7.	Descriptive assessment in function of individualization	16
8.	Individualization of teaching work (organization of additional and supplementary teaching, but also individualization in regular teaching)	14
9.	Planning the teaching work	6
10.	Organization and implementation of a classroom lesson	5

From the answers of the teachers of several questions, we come to the knowledge that teachers most need the following types of training: Training in the field of inclusive education on multiple bases, Training in the field of teacher preparation for teaching work, Training in the field of organization and implementation of teaching, Training in the field of individual teaching subjects, Trainings in the field of informatics, Trainings in the field of psychological components in teaching, Trainings in several fields. Also, teachers believe that strategies for the realization of educational competencies should be found as part of their training. From the ranking of the answers received by frequency, it can be seen that teachers are most in need of trainings related to models and strategies of teaching work, and also feel the need for help in developing an individual educational plan.

The most significant benefit of this paper will result in a systematized package of activities and trainings for primary school teachers. With the mentioned package, a system of activities is created that will contribute to the professional development of teachers to be realized at an appropriate academic level.

The systematized package of activities and trainings for elementary school teachers will contribute to:

- Greater affirmation of the pedagogical faculty in the field of organization and implementation of activities for the professional development of teachers;
- Utilization of the capacities of the faculty necessary for the organization and implementation of activities for the professional development of teachers;
- Multiple benefits for the institution partner of the activities;

- A higher degree of self-confidence among teachers when realizing the competencies;
- Higher motivation of teachers for their own professional development;
- Greater engagement of teachers in terms of their own progress;
- Improving the quality of teaching;
- Multiple impact on student development.

Conclusion of This Paper

Namely, the data we obtain with this examination will be the starting point for forming a training package for the professional development of primary school teachers. These will be trainings that correspond to the requirements and needs of teachers on the one hand, and on the other hand to modern European and world courses for the education of teachers of the specified degree. When creating the type and content of the trainings, we will start from what the teachers emphasize. We will structure their requests and proposals according to the studies and proposals of professors from different scientific fields, which correspond to the type of training that will be carried out. The trainings will be in the form of active workshops, where teachers will have the opportunity to participate with their suggestions and views, questions and reflections.

All of that should be solved systemically, through an organized approach by schools as partners who will ensure the presence of teachers and finance the trainings. The certificates that will be issued by faculty as an accredited institution with accredited trainers, will be applicable for documenting the realization of the professional development of teachers.

Through the research we have acquired specific data on what types of training teachers need to actively participate in. The analysis give us the opportunity to classify the offered trainings based on how desirable and necessary they are for the teachers. When creating the type and content of the trainings, we will start from what teachers emphasize.

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