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# MODERN METHODS FOR IMPROVING THE MECHANISMS OF MANAGING THE PROFESSIONAL ADAPTATION OF YOUNG UNIVERSITY FACULTY MEMBERS THROUGH MENTORING

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**Abstract:** This article examines modern methods for managing the professional adaptation of young university faculty members through mentoring. It analyzes the role of mentoring in facilitating the adaptation of young educators to a new professional environment, enabling them to organize teaching activities effectively, develop professional competencies, and independently address challenges arising in the educational process. The article also substantiates mechanisms for improving the systematic organization of cooperation between mentors and young faculty members, identifying individual professional development pathways, facilitating experience sharing, and providing methodological support.

**Keywords:** higher education, young faculty members, professional adaptation, mentoring, mentor, professional development, pedagogical competence, professional support, methodological collaboration, professional activity, management mechanisms, individual development, pedagogical experience.

Today, improving the quality of education, developing the professional potential of university faculty members, and preparing specialists capable of meeting the requirements of modern pedagogical practice are among the priority objectives of the higher education system. In particular, the professional adaptation of young faculty members who are beginning their careers in higher education institutions, their integration into the teaching community, their ability to independently organize the educational process, and their involvement in research and methodological activities require particular attention. The practical experience, methodological assistance, and professional support received by young educators during the initial stage of their careers have a significant impact on their subsequent professional development.

In the contemporary higher education environment, young faculty members are expected not only to possess profound knowledge in their respective fields of specialization, but also to demonstrate competencies such as the effective use of digital technologies, application of innovative pedagogical methods, establishment of effective communication with students, independent research, and analysis of educational outcomes. Such multifaceted requirements necessitate organizing professional adaptation in a broader context than the traditional process of merely "adjusting to a job." Therefore, organizing professional adaptation through modern pedagogical and management approaches represents an important scientific and practical issue.

Within this process, mentoring is regarded as an important mechanism for effectively engaging young faculty members in professional activities and supporting their individual development. Mentoring involves not only providing methodological, organizational, and professional guidance by an experienced faculty member, but also contributes to the development of young educators' independent thinking, pedagogical experience, and professional competencies. Modern mentoring is not limited to experience sharing; it also incorporates individual consultations, observation, reflection, feedback, digital collaboration, and the development of individualized professional development plans.

The use of modern methods in managing the professional adaptation of young faculty members makes it possible to ensure the individualization and continuity of this process. In particular, mentoring may incorporate coaching elements, peer mentoring, blended mentoring, digital mentoring, portfolio-based monitoring, reflective conversations, action research, open classes, and peer observation of



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teaching. These methods make it possible to identify the needs of young faculty members, determine appropriate development strategies, and systematically monitor the dynamics of their professional growth.

A diagnostic approach also plays an important role in managing professional adaptation through modern methods. Initially, the professional preparedness, pedagogical competencies, digital literacy, communication skills, interest in research, and professional needs of young faculty members are identified. Based on the results of this diagnostic assessment, an individual mentoring program is developed. Within the framework of the program, specific objectives, competencies to be developed, types of activities to be undertaken, and expected outcomes are determined, while their implementation is regularly monitored.

One of the modern methods of managing professional adaptation is the individual mentoring model. Under this model, the knowledge, skills, competencies, and professional needs of each young faculty member are examined individually. Based on the diagnostic results, an individual development plan is developed for the young educator. This plan identifies areas such as improving teaching practices, mastering modern educational technologies, developing digital competencies, establishing research activities, and improving communication skills. An individualized approach transforms mentoring from a set of general recommendations into a process focused on specific professional needs.

Another important method of modern mentoring is the use of coaching elements. In this approach, rather than providing a ready-made solution, the mentor asks questions that encourage the young faculty member to independently analyze a problem and identify an optimal solution. For example, if student engagement decreases during a lesson, instead of providing a direct answer to the question “What should be done?”, the mentor may use reflective questions such as “What caused the problem?”, “Which method could lead to a different outcome?”, and “What could be organized differently in the next session?” Such an approach encourages independent thinking and contributes to the development of the young faculty member’s competencies in pedagogical decision-making and self-analysis.

Peer mentoring, or mentoring among colleagues, is another modern form of supporting professional adaptation. In this model, faculty members working in the same or closely related professional fields exchange experiences, discuss lesson plans, and jointly seek solutions to pedagogical problems. Peer mentoring develops a culture of collaboration, mutual exchange of ideas, and collective professional development among young educators. This approach complements traditional mentoring and ensures that professional experience is exchanged not only in a one-way but also in a multidirectional manner.

The method of lesson observation followed by reflective analysis is also effective in supporting the professional adaptation of young faculty members. The mentor observes the young educator’s teaching session and analyzes their performance according to predetermined criteria. Attention is given to the objectives and content of the lesson, methodological organization, student engagement, pedagogical communication, use of digital tools, and assessment processes. During the post-lesson discussion, it is advisable for the mentor first to listen to the young educator’s self-assessment and then provide constructive feedback. This method develops the young educator’s ability to independently evaluate and improve their professional practice.

The use of action research, or practice-oriented research, within mentoring also contributes to the professional development of young faculty members. In this approach, the young educator identifies a problem existing in their actual pedagogical practice, investigates its causes, tests a pedagogical method aimed at addressing the problem, and analyzes the results. The mentor supports the methodological organization of the research process. This approach enables the integration of pedagogical practice with scientific inquiry.

The use of modern diagnostic methods is also important in managing professional adaptation. Self-assessment, observation, interviews, questionnaires, portfolio analysis, and assessment of professional performance can be used to determine the professional development status of young faculty members. Diagnosis should not be conducted as a one-time activity; rather, it should be carried out systematically


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at different stages of professional adaptation. Initial diagnosis serves to identify the needs of the young educator, intermediate diagnosis demonstrates development dynamics, and final diagnosis makes it possible to evaluate the effectiveness of the mentoring program.

The microlearning approach can also be effective in managing the professional adaptation of young faculty members. Under this approach, large volumes of methodological materials are divided into small, clearly defined, practice-oriented modules. For example, topics such as “using interactive methods,” “student assessment,” “using electronic learning platforms,” and “writing a research article” can be mastered through short learning modules. This enables young faculty members to make effective use of their available time and gradually acquire the competencies they need.

The formation of professional communities is also particularly important in managing professional adaptation through mentoring. Methodological seminars, pedagogical laboratories, experience-sharing sessions, open classes, and academic discussions organized at the department or faculty level can facilitate the faster integration of young faculty members into the professional environment. Such communities provide young educators with opportunities to demonstrate their own experiences, learn from colleagues, and receive constructive feedback on their professional activities.

The use of modern forms of feedback is also important for ensuring the effectiveness of the professional adaptation process. Feedback should be specific, timely, development-oriented, and supported by practical recommendations. The mentor should not merely identify shortcomings in the young educator’s performance but should work collaboratively with them to develop possible ways of addressing these shortcomings. In this regard, the “strengths – areas for development – next steps” model can serve as a practical approach to analyzing the professional activities of young faculty members.

Another important component of modern mentoring mechanisms is professional development monitoring. During the monitoring process, changes in the pedagogical, methodological, communicative, digital, and research competencies of young faculty members are systematically observed. Based on monitoring results, the individual development plan is reviewed and, where necessary, mentoring methods are adjusted. This ensures flexibility in the professional adaptation process.

Thus, managing the professional adaptation of young faculty members through modern mentoring mechanisms creates opportunities for their effective integration into the higher education environment, systematic development of professional competencies, and gradual transition to independent pedagogical and research activities. Individual mentoring, coaching elements, peer mentoring, lesson observation, action research, diagnostic assessment, microlearning, professional communities, constructive feedback, and continuous professional development monitoring constitute important methodological approaches to this process.

The systematic implementation of these methods makes it possible to identify the individual professional needs of young faculty members, develop appropriate professional development strategies, monitor their progress, and provide timely methodological and organizational support. Consequently, mentoring can serve not merely as a mechanism for transferring professional experience but as an integrated system for managing the continuous professional development and adaptation of young university faculty members.

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