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TUTORING AS A MEANS OF INDIVIDUALIZING THE EDUCATIONAL TRAJECTORY OF STUDENTS AT THE THIRD (EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC) LEVEL OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Abstract. The article explores the theoretical and methodological foundations of tutoring as a means of individualizing the educational trajectory of third-cycle (educational and scientific) higher education students. The essence of tutoring is defined as a systemic process that integrates legal, methodological, personnel, digital, and resource aspects, aimed at individualizing the educational trajectory of third-cycle students. Key components of tutoring support include an individual study plan, systematic scientific guidance, the use of digital educational platforms, the development of a culture of partnership, and providing resource and regulatory support.

It is argued that tutoring is a key tool for enhancing the effectiveness of the educational and scientific process in higher education institutions, as it fosters students' academic autonomy, integrates theoretical knowledge with practical skills, develops research competencies, and prepares third-cycle students for participation in international scientific projects.

The study analyzes legal documents, educational standards, and the experience of leading Ukrainian higher education institutions (Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University and Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A.S. Makarenko) that train third-cycle students. The findings confirm that the systematic implementation of tutoring contributes to the preparation of highly qualified, competent, and competitive future researchers.

Prospects for further research include the development of comprehensive tutoring support models that integrate innovative pedagogical technologies, digital tools, and methods for assessing learning outcomes and research activities. It is also advisable to investigate the effectiveness of various approaches to third-cycle education, the formation of a culture of partnership between mentors and students, and the impact of tutoring on the development of professional and research competencies, students' ability to independently plan and implement their educational and scientific trajectory, and their successful integration into the international scientific community.

Ключові слова: Tutor, Tutoring, Individualization, Individual educational trajectory, Third-cycle (educational and scientific) higher education students, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Educational and scientific program.

ТЬЮТОРИНГ ЯК ЗАСІБ ІНДИВІДУАЛІЗАЦІЇ ОСВІТНЬОЇ ТРАЄКТОРІЇ ЗДОБУВАЧІВ ТРЕТЬОГО (ОСВІТНЬО-НАУКОВОГО) РІВНЯ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ

Анотація. У статті досліджено теоретико-методичні засади тьюторингу як засобу індивідуалізації освітньої траєкторії здобувачів третього (освітньо-наукового) рівня вищої освіти. З'ясовано сутність тьюторингу як системного процесу, що інтегрує нормативно-правові, методичні, кадрові, цифрові та ресурсні аспекти і спрямований на індивідуалізацію освітньої траєкторії здобувачів третього (освітньо-наукового) рівня вищої освіти. Визначено ключові компоненти тьюторського супроводу: індивідуальний навчальний план, систематичний науковий супровід, використання цифрових освітніх платформ, формування культури партнерства та забезпечення ресурсної і нормативно-правової підтримки.

Обґрунтовано, що тьюторинг є ключовим інструментом підвищення ефективності освітньо-наукового процесу в закладах вищої освіти, оскільки сприяє розвитку академічної автономії здобувачів, інтеграції теоретичних знань із практичними навичками, формуванню компетентностей у сфері наукового дослідження та підготовці аспірантів до участі в міжнародних наукових проєктах.

Проаналізовано нормативно-правові документи, освітні стандарти та досвід провідних закладів вищої освіти України (Карпатського національного університету імені В. Стефаника та Сумського державного педагогічного університету імені А.С. Макаренка), що здійснюють підготовку здобувачів третього (освітньо-наукового) рівня вищої освіти. Результати дослідження підтверджують, що системне впровадження тьюторингу сприяє підготовці висококваліфікованих, компетентних та конкурентоспроможних майбутніх науковців.

Перспективи подальших досліджень вбачаємо в розробленні комплексних моделей тьюторського супроводу, які інтегрують інноваційні педагогічні технології, цифрові інструменти й методи оцінювання результатів навчання й наукової діяльності здобувачів. Доцільним є дослідження ефективності різних підходів до підготовки майбутніх докторів філософії, формування культури партнерства між наставником і здобувачем, а також вивчення впливу тьюторингу на розвиток професійних і наукових компетентностей аспірантів, їх здатності самостійно планувати та реалізовувати власну освітньо-наукову траєкторію, а також на успішну інтеграцію в міжнародне наукове середовище.

Keywords: тьютор, тьюторинг, індивідуалізація, індивідуальна освітня траєкторія, здобувачі третього (освітньо-наукового) рівня вищої освіти, доктор філософії, освітньо-наукова програма.

INTRODUCTION

The problem formulation. At the current stage of the development of higher education in Ukraine, the individualization of the educational trajectories of higher education seekers is of particular importance, driven by the need for high-quality training of highly qualified, competitive professionals capable of scientific and innovative activities. This issue is especially relevant at the third (educational and scientific) level of higher education, where the main task is to develop the ability of learners to conduct independent scientific research, to engage in systematic reflection on scientific problems, to cultivate critical and creative thinking, as well as to design and test their own scientific ideas.

The legal and regulatory framework for organizing the educational process at this level is defined by the Law of Ukraine "On Education" (2017), the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" (2014, with amendments), and the National Strategy for the Development of Education in Ukraine. These documents emphasize the need to create a learner-centered educational environment that takes into account the individual requests, abilities, and needs of students, while also ensuring academic freedom, individualized learning, and the implementation of educational programs.

An important reference point is also provided by the Higher Education Standards for the third (educational and scientific) level, which define the necessity of preparing postgraduate students for independent research activities, the ability to conduct critical analysis, generate new ideas, and develop and justify scientific concepts, as well as test them in domestic and international academic environments. Priority is given to the development of academic mobility, scientific autonomy, and research culture, which ensure the integration of learners into the educational and scientific space and foster the formation of competent researchers capable of conducting independent studies and implementing scientific projects at a high professional level.

In this context, tutoring emerges not only as a form of pedagogical support but also as an effective tool for revealing the individual potential of learners and building their own strategy for professional and scientific development. The experience of European countries demonstrates the effectiveness of tutoring support as an instrument of personalized education, while in Ukraine it is only beginning to be systematically implemented, requiring scientific justification and adaptation to the innovative educational environment of higher education institutions.

Therefore, the relevance of this research is determined by the need to find effective ways to implement tutoring as a means of individualizing the educational trajectory of students at the third (educational and scientific) level of higher education, in line with the strategic tasks of modernizing Ukrainian higher education and integrating it into the European educational space.

Analysis of recent research and publications. A review of academic works shows that the issue of tutoring is multifaceted and considered in various contexts. In particular, researchers emphasize the individualization of the educational process through tutoring support (L. Bernadzikovska, A. Boiko, S. Mykytiuk, T. Lytvynenko, T. Shvets, L. Sheina); the improvement of the higher education quality management system through the introduction of tutoring (O. Horbachova, A. Kovalenko, V. Kuzmin, L. Nastenko, et al.).

Considerable attention in Ukrainian and foreign studies has been devoted to the professional training of tutors in higher education institutions. This topic has been explored in the works of L. Bernadzikovska, O. Bundak, A. Boiko, N. Demianenko, A. Popov, Yu. Tuz, D. Taradiuk, and others. At the same time, most academic research has focused on particular aspects of tutoring (in preschool education, in higher education, in educational work), whereas a systemic approach to using tutoring as a means of individualizing the educational trajectories of students at the third (educational and scientific) level of higher education remains not well studied.

AIM AND TASKS RESEARCH – To explore the theoretical and methodological foundations of tutoring as a means of individualizing the educational trajectory of students at the third (educational and scientific) level of higher education and to propose effective ways of its implementation in higher education institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

Theoretical: analysis, synthesis, generalization, and systematization of academic sources on the research problem; modeling of the structural components of tutoring support for doctoral students. Empirical: observation of the educational process in higher education institutions; study and generalization of practices in the implementation of educational and scientific programs at Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University and Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A. S. Makarenko; analysis of regulatory documents (individual study plans, educational and scientific programs, doctoral reports). For the interpretation of the results, a qualitative analysis of the obtained data was applied, which made it possible to identify challenges and determine effective ways of introducing tutoring in higher education institutions in Ukraine.

RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

In the modern Ukrainian educational space, tutoring is gaining increasing significance as a means of individualizing the educational trajectory. As D. Taradyuk notes, the phenomenon of tutoring is relatively new to Ukrainian pedagogical science, unlike foreign pedagogy, where tutoring practices have established traditions and a clearly defined place (Taradyuk, D. O., 2018, p.72). The domestic academic discourse is only beginning to shape its conceptual framework and methodological approaches to studying this phenomenon.

The history of tutoring dates back to the medieval universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In the 11th–12th centuries, Europe witnessed a powerful intellectual movement driven by the development of economic and cultural life, which raised the importance of knowledge as a prerequisite for social and professional advancement. First universities were characterized by a high level of autonomy and freedom: students independently chose their subjects and lectures. However, at the initial stages of study, it was often difficult for them to determine which disciplines to select, especially if their abilities and inclinations were not yet clearly defined. At this point, the role of the tutor emerged—a mentor who acted as an intermediary between the professor and the student, helping learners to shape their own educational paths. Thus, the value of academic freedom was closely linked with the value of the individual, and the main task of the tutor was to harmonize the student's personal characteristics with academic ideals (Bernadzikivska, L., 2019, pp.95–98).

Tutoring is viewed as an individualized process that involves systematic and long-term support of the learner's development, taking into account abilities, interests, and opportunities. It is generally a long-term process aimed at the integrative development of the learner, combining knowledge, skills, and value orientations. Tutoring is based on regular one-to-one meetings held in an atmosphere of dialogue, mutual respect, and attention, during which the tutor helps the learner deepen knowledge in the chosen field, develop independent research skills, and maximize personal potential (Shvets, T., 2017, p.119).

When implementing tutoring as a means of individualizing the educational trajectory of third-level (educational-scientific) higher education students, several challenges arise: regulatory and legal restrictions due to the lack of clearly defined mechanisms for implementing tutoring support in higher education institutions; organizational and methodological difficulties caused by a shortage of tested models of individualization; insufficient preparation of teaching staff to perform the role of tutor; personal barriers of PhD students manifested in a low level of readiness to independently design their own educational trajectory and develop self-management skills; resource limitations, including lack of funding and unequal access to international programs and modern scientific databases.

The experience of implementing tutoring demonstrates that this method is aimed at developing the learner's personality, creating conditions for effective self-realization and self-development. Tutoring provides personalized support by combining assistance in scientific and professional activities with the development of critical, creative, and strategic thinking. It fosters the ability to learn independently, make decisions, and take responsibility for one's own educational and professional pathway. Through this approach, the individual educational trajectory optimally combines academic and research tasks with the abilities, interests, and potential of third-level (educational-scientific) higher education students.

According to the Law of Ukraine "On Education," an individual educational trajectory is a personal pathway of developing a learner's potential, designed with consideration of their abilities, interests, needs, motivation, opportunities, and prior experience. It allows the learner to choose the types, forms, and pace of learning, the providers of educational activities, as well as the educational programs, courses, complexity levels, methods, and learning tools offered by them. The realization of an individual educational trajectory in an educational institution is carried out through the creation of an individual study plan (Law of Ukraine "On Education", Part 1, Article 1, P. 9).

Leading higher education institutions in Ukraine, in particular Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University (https://vad.pnu.edu.ua/) and Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A. S. Makarenko (https://sspu.edu.ua/aspirantura-

doktorantura-sspu), have long been implementing educational-scientific programs aimed at the personalized development of higher education students. These programs take into account the PhD students' scientific interests, abilities, and educational needs, combining academic training with practical and research activities.

The experience of these universities allows for analyzing the content and organizational aspects of implementing educational-scientific programs in the context of tutoring support. For instance, the educational-scientific program "Professional Education" at Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University (program guarantor – Professor O. Tsiuniak) is based on an individualized approach to PhD training that integrates educational and scientific components into a single educational-scientific trajectory (Tsiuniak, O. P., Kondur, O. S., 2024, pp.86–91). This mechanism is described in detail in the "Regulations on the Training of Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Science Students at Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University." The core of this training is the individual PhD student's work plan, which is drawn up by the student in agreement with the academic supervisor. The plan includes both educational and research components, such as: a list of courses (including electives), the scope and deadlines for conducting research, and the stages of preparing and defending the dissertation.

PhD students receive systematic academic support from their supervisors, which is a key factor in individualizing the educational-scientific process. The supervisor acts as a coordinator, ensuring that the individual work plan meets the requirements of the program, monitoring the progress of research, and providing methodological advice on effective research methods. This support fosters planning, analysis, and critical reflection skills, while also enabling effective use of university resources such as laboratories, libraries, electronic databases, educational platforms, and methodological materials. In addition to direct support from the supervisor, PhD students can also receive expert assistance from the program guarantor and the head of the department. This allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the student's progress, timely adjustments of their educational-scientific trajectory, and consideration of individual interests, abilities, and prior experience. Thus, tutoring support ensures a balance between academic standards and personalized approaches, stimulating professional growth and competence development in both research and teaching.

The training of future Doctors of Philosophy is carried out in full-time (daytime or evening) and part-time forms, including on a contract basis, which ensures flexibility of the educational process and accessibility of education for different categories of learners. PhD students have the opportunity to independently choose elective educational components, which allows them to shape their own educational trajectory, combine basic competencies with scientific interests, and take into account regional needs and the interests of stakeholders.

The educational and scientific program Professional Education also provides for the systematic development of professional and personal competencies, which is a prerequisite for the preparation of highly qualified future Doctors of Philosophy. An important component of this process is the participation of PhD students in scientific and international events, which facilitates the exchange of experience with colleagues, the testing of research results, the development of scientific communication skills, and receiving feedback from peers.

Publication activity stimulates the development of academic competence, the improvement of the ability to argue scientific positions, structure material, and adhere to ethical standards of academic writing. Participation in grant projects and international exchange programs ensures the acquisition of experience in international scientific cooperation, increases academic mobility, contributes to integration into the global scientific community, and fosters the ability to independently manage research projects.

At Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A. S. Makarenko, the individualization of the educational process is ensured through a set of organizational and methodological measures that harmoniously combine academic requirements with a personalized approach. Observations of the pedagogical process under wartime conditions demonstrate the consistent implementation of a student-centered approach and the principle of academic freedom.

Among the tools of personalization are: a modular-rating assessment system, which allows PhD students to independently determine the pace of mastering educational components; this system ensures flexibility in planning the educational process, enabling learners to adapt the study schedule to their individual needs and research goals; distance learning formats, which help combine research work with educational activity; scientific schools and interdepartmental research groups, which create opportunities for participation in individual and collective research projects—such activities promote the development of research competencies, the exchange of experience, and the formation of an interdisciplinary approach to scientific work; international partnerships and internships, which increase the level of professional mobility of learners; participation in international programs allows PhD students to integrate into the global scientific environment, gain experience of cooperation with foreign colleagues, and expand professional horizons.

The uniqueness of the educational and scientific program Educational, Pedagogical Sciences lies in the Europeanization of organizational, methodological, and content principles of PhD training. The program combines educational and scientific components aimed at research in general pedagogy, the history of pedagogy, and comparative pedagogy. It contributes to the professional and personal development of future teacher-researchers through the construction of an individual educational trajectory, the provision of academic mobility, the development of productive scientific communication, and adherence to academic integrity (Educational and Scientific Program Educational, Pedagogical Sciences).

The right of learners at the third (educational-scientific) level of higher education to construct an individual educational trajectory is regulated by a set of university documents: Regulations on the Organization of the Educational Process, Regulations on Ensuring the Student-Centered Approach to Learning, Regulations on Academic Mobility of Higher

Education Applicants and Academic Staff, Regulations on the Recognition of Learning Outcomes in Non-formal and/or Informal Education, Regulations on the Free Choice of Academic Disciplines by Students. The elective courses – European and National Dimensions of Quality Assurance in Higher Education, Doctoral Seminar on Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of Comparative Pedagogical Research, Technologies for Testing Dissertation Research Results, Education of Gifted and Talented Learners: Global Context, etc. – are interdisciplinary, allowing PhD students to choose courses that correspond to their academic and professional interests. Individual PhD plans, reviewed by an expert group, confirm the possibility of shaping an individual educational trajectory through elective courses (15 ECTS credits, 25% of the total volume) (Accreditation Report on the Educational Program). An important factor is methodological support, which involves the creation of teaching and methodological materials, guidelines, and algorithms for organizing individual educational trajectories of learners at the third (educational-scientific) level.

Tutoring support is a key element of individualization. Academic supervisors and faculty provide personalized support to PhD students through regular consultations, during which the individual study plan is adjusted, research objectives are clarified, and recommendations on research methodology are provided. This approach fosters the development of skills in independent scientific inquiry, critical analysis, and effective time and resource management.

PhD students are actively involved in scientific events (conferences, seminars, round tables), which contributes to the development of scientific communication skills, exchange of experience, and presentation of research results. Publication activity is supported through access to professional journals and consultations on article preparation, which fosters academic competence and the ability to adhere to ethical standards.

The experience of Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A.S.Makarenko, similar to Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University, confirms that the effective implementation of individual educational trajectories is possible under conditions of combining innovative educational technologies, tutoring support, and active integration into the national and international scientific-educational space. Both institutions demonstrate a high level of institutional readiness for the introduction of tutoring as a means of individualization. This is complemented by an emphasis on inclusivity and academic integrity, which are integral components of PhD training. Participation in grant projects and international exchange programs fosters the development of research autonomy, project management skills, and integration into the global scientific environment. Thus, tutoring support, in combination with flexible organizational mechanisms, ensures personalized training that meets the modern challenges of higher education and contributes to the formation of competent researchers.

Throughout the entire period of PhD study, regular monitoring of learning outcomes and research tasks is provided. At the end of each academic semester, the Head of the Postgraduate and Doctoral Department monitors the recording of PhD students' achievements in performance registers in accordance with the individual plan. This mechanism ensures systematic feedback, which makes it possible to identify problems in learning or research in a timely manner and adjust the individual educational trajectory. Regular assessment of progress promotes the development of scientific autonomy, the formation of critical and analytical thinking, and increases the responsibility of PhD students for their own results.

The integration of digital tools – electronic learning platforms, learning management systems, e-portfolios, and personal accounts – is gaining particular importance, as they ensure effective monitoring of learning and research outcomes.

An important direction is the formation of a culture of partnership, which presupposes building relationships between the academic supervisor (tutor) and the PhD student on the principles of trust, mutual respect, and shared responsibility for achieving educational and scientific goals (Semenog, O. M., 2024, pp. 161-171). It is also advisable to consider the vector of internationalization of tutoring support, which orients PhD students toward involvement in international academic programs, inter-university projects, and internships.

Accordingly, the introduction of tutoring in higher education institutions should be considered as a systemic process integrating regulatory, methodological, staffing, digital, and resource aspects, aimed at individualizing the educational trajectory of learners at the third (educational-scientific) level of higher education.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

The analysis and generalization of scholarly sources on the research problem; observation of the educational process in higher education institutions; study and synthesis of practices of implementing educational and scientific programs at Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University and Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A. S. Makarenko; analysis of individual study plans and PhD students' reports confirmed the high effectiveness of tutoring as a tool for individualizing the educational trajectory of learners at the third (educational-scientific) level of higher education. Tutoring fosters the development of PhD students' personal and professional potential, the formation of critical, creative, and strategic thinking, as well as skills of independent scientific inquiry.

Prospects for further research are seen in the development of comprehensive models of tutoring support that integrate innovative pedagogical technologies, digital tools, and methods for assessing the learning and research outcomes of PhD students. It is advisable to investigate the effectiveness of different approaches to training future Doctors of Philosophy, the formation of a culture of partnership between mentor and learner, as well as the influence of tutoring on the development of PhD students' professional and scientific competencies, their ability to independently plan and implement their own educational and scientific trajectory, and their successful integration into the international scientific community.

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