

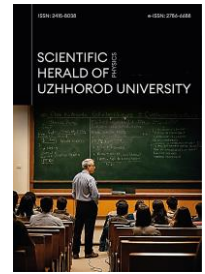
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## The role of "global competence" in professional competencies of Kazakhstan future educational psychologists

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### Abstract

**Relevance.** The study addresses the crucial need for training globally competent educational psychologists, particularly within the context of Kazakhstan universities. As professionalism becomes vital for effective labour market inclusion, the development of global competencies in future educational psychologists is essential.

**Purpose.** The research aims to identify the training needs of globally competent educational psychologists, and graduates of the "Pedagogy and Psychology" educational program, and to pinpoint priority areas for the development of global competencies among Kazakhstan university students in this field.

**Methodology.** A pilot survey was conducted among students in the "Pedagogy and Psychology" program to assess their current level of global competence and gather their views on international news, cultural diversity events, and global issues discussions.

**Results.** The survey results indicate an overly optimistic view regarding the potential to train globally competent educational psychologists. The findings underscore the necessity for highly educated and qualified specialists, aligning with state policies on optimizing the national labour market.

**Conclusions.** The study highlights the importance of developing global competencies in educational psychologists to ensure their effective inclusion in the labour force. Training programs must focus on enhancing professionalism to meet the demands of the national labour market and support state policies on workforce development.

**Keywords:** educational psychologist; globalization; professional competencies; global competence.

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## Introduction

At the present stage of development, Kazakhstan's education, in its inseparable, organic connection with science and education, is becoming an increasingly powerful driving force for economic growth, improving the efficiency and competitiveness of the state's economy, which makes it one of the most important factors of national security and the well-being of the country.

Moreover, the priority task of higher education is to increase the global competitiveness of Kazakhstan's education and science, which is the main priority of the State Program for the Development of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2020-2025 [1]. We believe that to achieve this goal, it is necessary to ensure that university graduates gain global competencies and will be in demand not only in the Kazakhstan labour market but also abroad, being ready for the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Without a doubt, it is still too early to say that a graduate of Kazakhstan University can be easily employed in Western countries. So, will a globally competent Kazakhstan graduate be able to compete with graduates of Western universities?

Before answering this question, let us consider the professional competence of an educational psychologist and reveal its specific features in the context of globalization, it is important to characterize the concept of "competence", which not so long ago came to replace such concepts as knowledge and skills. In 2010, Kazakhstan signed the Bologna Declaration and has been a full participant of the Bologna process for the last ten years. If just a few years ago it was enough to have a higher education to work in any field, today a person is expected to study and train throughout life (LLL), including self-development and self-education [2].

Notably, 21st-century competencies are also closely linked to the skills and values required for active citizenship in a global and interdependent society. Scientists describe the four skills required for active global citizenship. These include perspective-conscious skills for understanding the perspectives of others and cross-cultural competence for effective participation in today's multicultural societies. Critical thinking skills, especially the ability to evaluate conflicting information, and habits of mind compatible with civic responsibility in the global age are also essential. Such habits include an open-minded approach to judgment and decision-making, anticipating complexity, resisting stereotypes, and developing the habit of asking. Similarly, the multidimensional citizenship model of J. Cogan [3] requires that citizens address several interrelated dimensions of thought, belief, and action, expressed in terms of personal, social, spatial, and temporal dimensions.

In Singapore, 21st century learning outcomes focus on some of the core qualities of learners, such as "self-confident person", "independent learner", "active participant", and "engaged citizen". It is interesting to note that these are the "soft skills" and socio-emotional attributes mentioned above, not cognitive skills. The 21CC framework, adopted by the Singapore Ministry of Education, focuses on three sets of fundamental competencies required for holistic student development: critical and inventive thinking, information and

communication skills, civic literacy, global awareness, and cross-cultural skills [4].

The study of the problem of the professional activity of an educational psychologist required a detailed acquaintance with the State Educational Standard of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the specialty "Pedagogy and Psychology" (bachelor's degree), which indicates that the professional activity of a psychologist is systematic: school, pre-school education, secondary education, secondary specialized educational institutions [5].

Globalization is an all-encompassing, large-scale process that has mixed assessments and proceeds in contradictory ways. With its positive orientation, the hopes of humanity are linked to solving the problem of purposeful coordinated actions of the entire world community for the transition to a sustainable development regime. The "Millennium Declaration", adopted by the UN General Assembly on September 8, 2000, states in particular: "... the main task facing us today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive factor for all the peoples of the world" (2). In education, the result of globalization is the emergence of such phenomena as "global education", and "global competencies" [6]. The field of the educational process becomes not only a consequence but also a means of forming a planetary community, the contours of a globally integrated world. Global education is the process of guiding all residents of the global world about how to live in the conditions of globalization.

We also believe that the inculcation of global competencies should begin at an early age, from kindergarten and educational psychologists, who are trained by universities, play school, a significant role in the formation of the worldview of children. The issue of professional competencies of educational psychologist have been thoroughly investigated by foreign and domestic scientists. For example, the problem of the formation of professional competence of future teachers is reflected in the works of V.A. Evans [7], S.V. Khusainova [8], V. Dmitrieva [9], and N.I. Isaeva [2]. A significant contribution to the study of the problems of professional competencies of educational psychologists was made by the works of Russian scientists such as M.A. Nikolayev, E.V. Yakovlev, and N. Yakovlev, who made efforts to develop a model of formation of professional competence of future educational psychologists [10].

Among Kazakhstan scientists, the problem of the professional activity of an educational psychologist is being investigated by A.Zh. Sapargaliyeva [11], who suggests new ways to improve the professional training of an educational psychologist as a specialist in helping professions. However, the aspect of training a future educational psychologist in the modern conditions of globalization and the possibility and need of training "globally competent" graduates is relatively new and represents an important issue to research.

The purpose of the research is to analyse the role of "global competence" among Kazakhstan university students in the educational program "Pedagogy and Psychology".

## **Materials and Methods**

An opinion questionnaire with multiple choice answers was applied in the pilot survey. Several questions were formulated in the way that respondents could choose more than one answer. A pilot survey was conducted to identify the need and importance of global competencies for future educational psychologists. Overall, 100 respondents – master and bachelor students from different Kazakhstan higher educational institutions filled out the multiple-choice opinion questionnaire during the academic year 2020/2021. The education level of the respondents was the following: 50% – Master degree, 50% – Bachelor degree. The survey was based on such aspects:

1. Interest in the culture of other countries. This parameter describes what respondents can do when they interact with people from different cultures. They understand cultural norms, interaction styles, and the degree of formality of the cross-cultural context [12].

2. Tolerance for the culture and values of other countries. This aspect contributes to global competence. Education has a profound impact on people's values. While in school, young citizens form habits, beliefs, and principles that will stay with them throughout their lives. This is why it is so important to think about the type of education that best "promotes the development of humanity" [13]. An education that encourages the value of dignity, human rights, and diversity, emphasizes the common commonalities that unite people around the world, rather than the issues that divide them; and provides a learning experience that allows students to see the world from different perspectives. While most people would agree that education should help students develop into people who care and respect others, the decision about which values of the education system around the world should be promoted is a matter of debate. It is not easy to define a basic set of rights that are universally valid and interpreted in the same way everywhere and in all circumstances since morals and social institutions differ depending on cultures and historical contexts. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights describes the building blocks of a minimum core of rights that can guide education around the world: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and must act towards each other in a spirit of brotherhood."

3. Global competence activities at the university. This aspect examines whether respondents at the university where the study is conducted are engaged in the following activities: learning about the interconnectedness of countries' economies, learning how to resolve conflicts with other people in our classrooms [14], and learning about different cultures. It also considers if they read newspapers, search for news on the Internet, or watch news together during classes, and if they are invited by their teachers to express their personal opinions about international news. Additionally, it looks at their participation in cultural diversity events during the academic year, class discussions of world events as part of regular training, and analysis of global issues with classmates in small groups during class. Lastly, it assesses whether they learn how people from different cultures can have different points of view on certain issues and how to communicate with people from different backgrounds [9].

4. Knowledge of foreign languages. This aspect provides information about how many foreign languages the student speaks. Therefore, the study of foreign languages in the era of globalization does not lose its relevance. Students are expected to learn foreign languages for the successful realization of their professional, creative, and socio-cultural aspirations. In the training of future educational psychologists, the role of studying international languages is increasing. The process of teaching foreign languages to future educational psychologists acquires a functional orientation and includes the formation of foreign language communicative competencies. The most popular teaching strategies are teaching methods similar to modern types of international business communication: business and role-playing games, round tables, debates, conferences, project activities, case analysis, and working with documents in a foreign language [15].

5. Internationalization of education is one of the most important modern trends, which contributes to the competitiveness of countries and regions. In this regard, both national education systems and most universities are characterized by integration phenomena and international cooperation. These processes did not bypass the higher schools of Kazakhstan. This is evidenced by the development of all the main forms of internationalization of higher education in our system: student mobility, student exchange, faculty mobility, internationalization of curricula, etc. programs, transnational education (interuniversity agreements: franchising, twin programs, mutual recognition of programs – double-degree, joint [10]). The goal of internationalization is to increase the effectiveness of educational and research activities, increased mobility of faculty and students, and compliance with international quality standard educational services [16].

It should be noted that the various programs of the European Union (for example, Erasmus, Socrates, Tempus, etc.), as well as projects initiated by national organizations of the OECD member countries aimed at the development of mobility, to a certain extent contributed to the development of the internationalization process. Kazakhstan, as a part of the world community, became involved in these relations.

The main directions of internationalization of education in Kazakhstan include:

- exchange of students based on inter-state and inter-university agreements;
- exchange of teachers;
- implementation of joint educational programs (sandwich programs);
- double-degree programs;
- conducting joint scientific research, and implementation of scientific projects;
- development of cooperation in the field of education quality assessment;
- creation of international universities jointly [8].

It should be noted that in the modern world, the internationalization of education is becoming the object of a purposeful policy on the part of states to solve national, political, social and economic problems.

The internationalization of higher education is characterized by new trends. These trends include increased competition in the international market of educational services and the development of the international accreditation system as a tool for ensuring the quality of education and strengthening international labour mobility. Additionally, there is a strengthening of the autonomy and independence of universities from state regulation, alongside a reduction in state funding of universities. Other trends include the development of lifelong learning and the creation of opportunities for lifelong learning (lifelong Learning), addressing new tasks of the education system due to changes in the social profile and age of students, and implementing more flexible terms and methods of training.

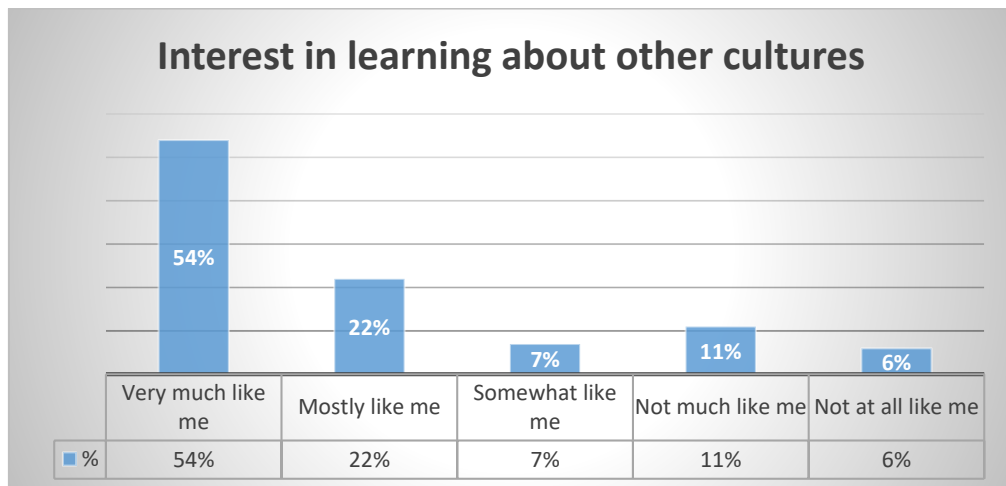
World practice shows the absolute advantages of internationalization of higher education, which include [17]:

- 1) increasing the availability of higher education;
- 2) universalization of knowledge;
- 3) the emergence of international standards for the quality of higher education;
- 4) increasing the innovativeness of higher education;
- 5) expanding international cooperation;
- 6) activation of academic mobility of students and teachers.

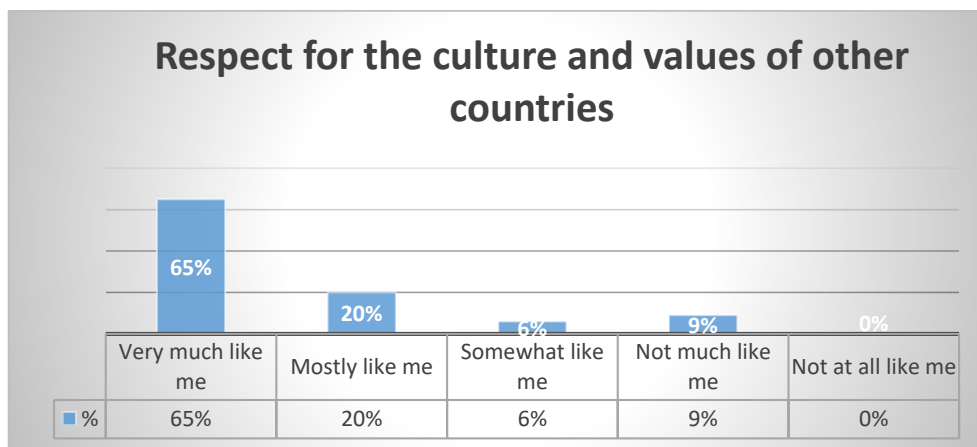
In this regard, the Republic of Kazakhstan creates conditions for the active development of the process of internationalization of higher education. Unfortunately, even though there is a great demand among students of Kazakh universities for studying in foreign countries, Kazakhstan universities are not very popular among foreign students. This is influenced by numerous factors, such as the unfamiliarity with the country far abroad, the stereotypical attitude towards the "stan" in the country's name, and the lack of some educational programs in English. However, it is worth noting that the attraction of foreign students and professors has shown a positive trend in recent years [18; 19].

**Results and Discussion**

Responses to the opinion questionnaire indicated that most of the participants of the survey 76% were extremely interested in learning about other cultures. 18% were not sure about that, and only 6% did not have any enthusiasm to study other cultures. It seems that the vast majority of respondents, which participated in the survey strongly, believe in their ability to enhance their professional skills by embracing the knowledge of other cultures (Figures 1-2).



**Figure 1.** Questions on how well each of the statements describes the respondent



**Figure 2.** Questions on how well each of the statements describes the respondent

As can be seen from the results, the vast majority of respondents 85% respect other cultures, and people from other cultures as equal human beings and give space to people from other cultures to express themselves. 15 % of respondents are not sure about that, and nobody showed

disrespect related to representatives of other cultures. It shows that the student's future educational psychologists are ready to cooperate with representatives of other cultures and values (Figure 3).

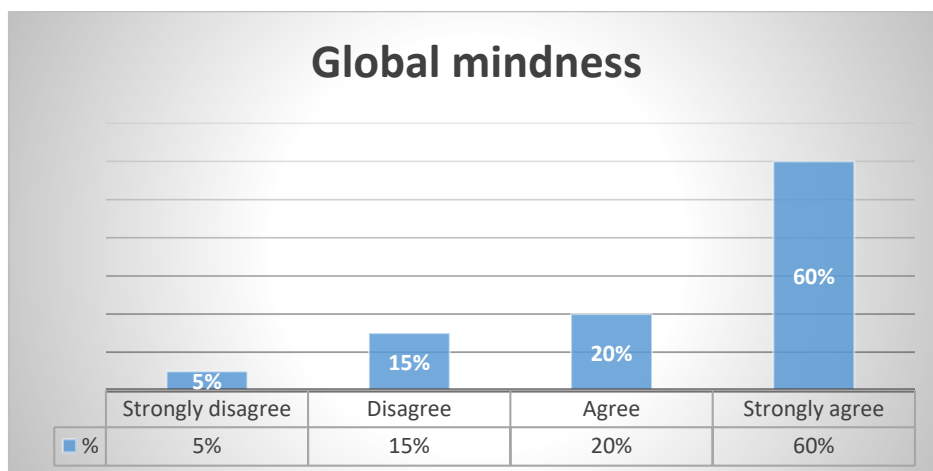


Figure 3. Questions on how well each of the statements describes the respondent

According to the respondents, most of them 80 % think of themselves as a citizen of the world and think their behaviour can impact people in other countries. When they see the poor conditions that some people in the world live under, they feel a responsibility to do something about it.

However, 20 % of respondents are not global minded and they are not ready to identify themselves as global citizens.

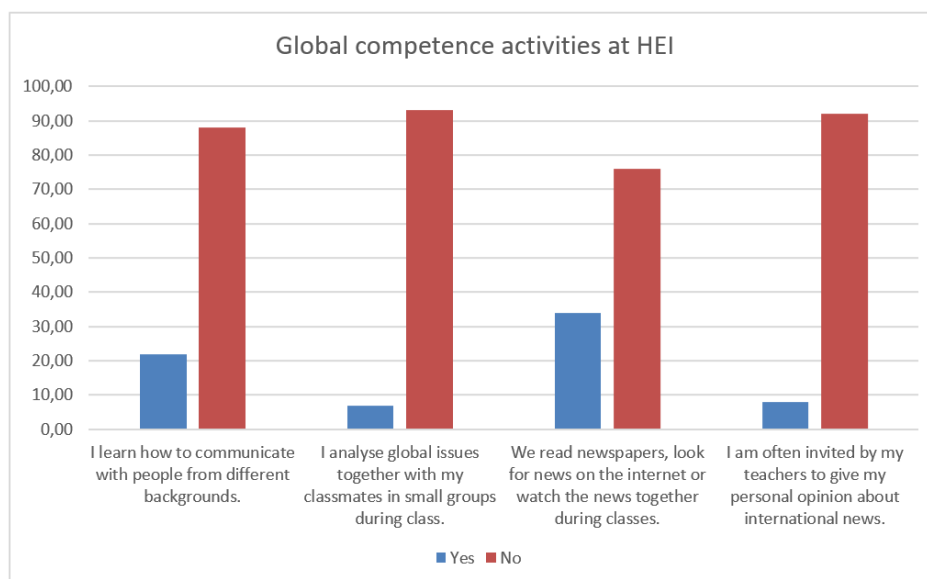
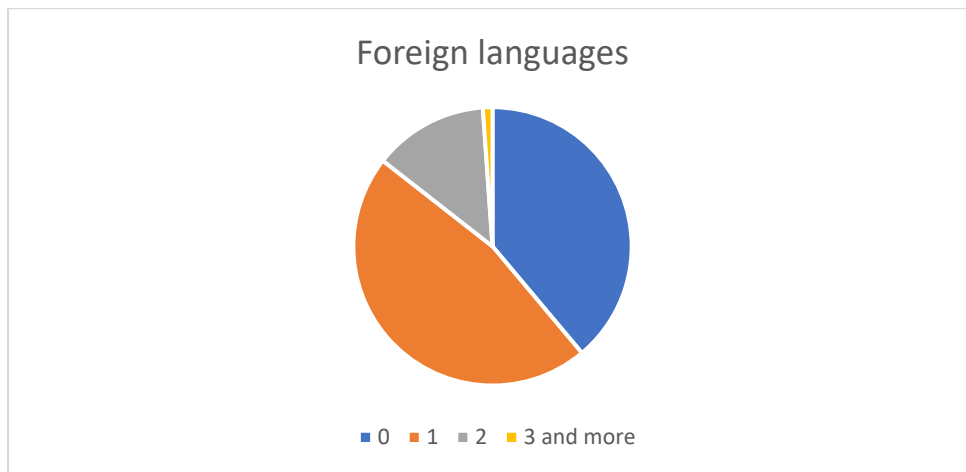


Figure 4. Questions on how well each of the statements describes the respondent

According to the results of the survey, unfortunately, there is an insufficient level of organizing events that develop global competencies and increase the level of readiness of students to work and develop professionally

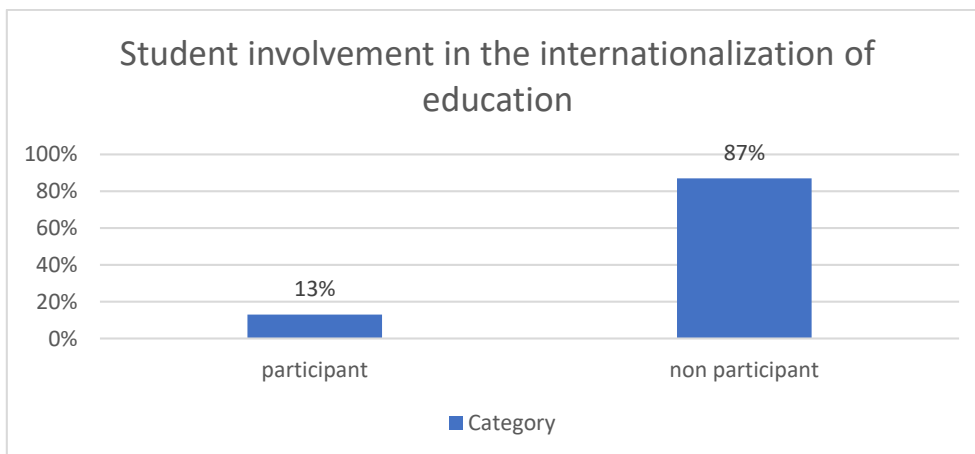
abroad [7]. We believe that such events are of vital importance and they should be provided on the base of Higher Education Information System HEIs (Figure 4).



**Figure 5.** The proportion of students, who speak foreign languages

According to the research on foreign language competencies, 35% of respondents do not speak any foreign languages, 42% of pilot survey participants know 1 foreign language (English in most cases), only 12% of

students speak 2 foreign languages and surprisingly only 1% of the respondents speak more than 3 foreign languages (Figure 5).



**Figure 6.** The proportion of students, involved in international educational programs and projects

As the result of survey indicates (Figure 6), only 13% of interviewed future educational psychologists were involved into internationalization process in the way of participating in academic mobility programs and the lectures of foreign professors. According to the report of the Centre for the Bologna Process and Academic Mobility, the indicators of involvement in international programs of representatives of other specialities, such as information technology, law, economics and foreign languages, are much higher than the speciality of pedagogy and psychology [20]. The students explain this factor for several reasons, including the language barrier, the financial component, the fear of change and low motivation.

### Conclusions

The results of the investigation have shown that many students consider themselves as citizens of the world and are ready to open up to the outside world and develop global competencies. It seems to us that this is primarily the influence of globalization and the Internet, students learn about the outside world through social networks,

foreign literature, films, etc. However, we do not believe that this is the merit of universities, as the results of the study showed that university-based activities are not so extensive for the development of global competencies, for example, only 7% of respondents confirmed their participation in analysing global issues together with their groupmates during class. In addition, we can note that even though the interviewed future educational psychologists are open to other cultures, they are not eager to leave the country to study in international student programs. This is evidenced by the low percentage of participants in study abroad programs, which stands at only 13%. Additionally, their proficiency in foreign languages is not particularly high.

In conclusion, after interpreting the results obtained, we can state that instilling global competencies in students' professional competencies will accommodate the graduates not only to work abroad but also to develop openness to self-education and self-development, adherence to the concept of life-long learning, readiness for both formal and informal learning. Finally, we consider it very important to maintain global competencies

activities at HEI as well as to add disciplines to the curriculum aimed at developing students' global competencies and their willingness to work in both domestic and foreign educational institutions.

#### Acknowledgements

None.

#### Conflict of Interest

None.

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## **Роль "глобальної компетентності" у професійних компетенціях казахстанських майбутніх освітніх психологів**

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### **Анотація**

**Актуальність.** Дослідження розглядає гостру потребу в підготовці глобально компетентних освітніх психологів, особливо в контексті казахстанських університетів. Оскільки професіоналізм стає життєво важливим для ефективної інтеграції на ринку праці, розвиток глобальних компетенцій у майбутніх освітніх психологів має важливе значення.

**Мета.** Метою дослідження є визначення потреб у підготовці глобально компетентних освітніх психологів та випускників освітньої програми "Педагогіка і психологія", а також визначення пріоритетних напрямів розвитку глобальних компетентностей у студентів казахстанських університетів у цій галузі.

**Методологія.** Проведено пілотне опитування серед студентів освітньої програми "Педагогіка і психологія" з метою оцінки їхнього поточного рівня глобальної компетентності та з'ясування їхньої думки щодо міжнародних новин, подій культурного розмаїття та обговорення глобальних проблем.

**Результати.** Результати опитування свідчать про надмірний оптимізм щодо потенціалу підготовки глобально компетентних освітніх психологів. Отримані дані підкреслюють потребу у високоосвічених і кваліфікованих фахівцях, що узгоджується з державною політикою оптимізації національного ринку праці.

**Висновки.** Дослідження підкреслює важливість розвитку глобальних компетентностей у практичних психологів для забезпечення їх ефективного включення до ринку праці. Навчальні програми мають бути спрямовані на підвищення професіоналізму для задоволення потреб національного ринку праці та підтримки державної політики щодо розвитку робочої сили.

**Ключові слова:** психолог освіти; глобалізація; професійні компетенції; глобальна компетентність.