

Editorial

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Humanization of the Learning Process in Higher Educational Institutions

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In the current context of globalization and integration into the world educational space, the issues related to psychological and information safety of the learning environment are the most topical. Global socio-economic and political changes, along with society's entry into the post-industrial age, have contributed to the democratization and humanization of a man's life and his activities. Treating a human being as the highest value of social existence, has become the condition for the identification and development of the creative potential of a person and the training of highly qualified specialists in higher educational institutions. Successful training of future specialists at the university is achieved not only by being informed, knowledgeable or the quality of teaching (that is obviously very important), but mainly by meaningful guidance, giving the students freedom and allowing them to participate in independent activities, by choosing an appropriate organization and improving the process of education. Humanistic oriented higher education allows each participant to apply his knowledge effectively, develop skills in new situations, and reveal his potential.

The main objectives of the humanistic oriented educational process in high school are:

- Humanistic orientation of the teaching process of all subjects in the curriculum;
- Creating conditions suitable for the realization of an individual approach to the humanistic development of the future specialist's personality;
- Establishing principles of co-operation and promoting the development of student activities in learning and research processes.

The methodology of implementing the humanization of education should be based on contemporary axiology as the foundation for the development of the values of a person, reflecting on one's attitude to the social and the objective world, as well as to oneself.

The problem associated with the making of a humanistic oriented person are commonly attributed to a review of objectives, content and technologies of humanistic oriented education in higher school, with the creative interaction of the actors of this process, as well as the identification of the practical effectiveness of the humanistic paradigm of education.

Methodological foundations of humanization of the educational process are based on the system theory of the personality-developing training,¹ reflected in teachers paying attention to the personality of each student to the personality of each student as the highest social value, focussing on the formation of the future specialist's high intellectual, moral, and physical qualities.

Further development of educational systems is associated with the re-orientation of its aims and goals, methods and means in assisting acquisition of knowledge concerning oneself, human nature and the surrounding world where people live. Worldwide development is directed towards a distinct humanistic orientation.

The humanistic orientation of the pedagogical process in higher educational institu-

tion is changing its traditional idea of goal of education and training, the main component of which is the orientation towards the acquisition of systematized knowledge, skills and competencies. Today a specialist with a university degree is required not only to perform algorithmic actions, but to possess artistic skills and to have the freedom of choice in selecting problem solving tools, as well as skills of defining goals, methods and means of their professional activities. Receiving a comprehensive education could give an individual a true advantage and allow one to be competitive in the labor market.

Under the current circumstances, education is defining the order of preparation of a competitive, comprehensive, and creative specialist. In the educational process, it is of great importance to focus on the individuality of a student, his culturological education, development of physical abilities and aesthetic values. This means that on the basis of education, there should not only be the learner-centered approach, according to which the goal,² is neither formation nor training, but discover, support and develop the humane side of an individual.^{2(p.5)}

Goal setting, centered around individual growths to re-orient the main aim of the pedagogical process towards the personality development of students (in terms of intellect, ethics, aesthetics, and activity); changing the education and training process, thereby instilling new merits in a specialist. Humanization in goal setting of the educational process is revealed in the prognostication of the specialist's development; in setting specific objectives of an activity at every phase and stage of education and planning future professional activity. Setting the goals in education and training is efficient to the extent that it takes into account the needs of the society and the individual, educational and training facilities of an educational establishment as well as the abilities of the teachers, students, etc. The essence of goal setting is reflected in the curriculum based on prognostication of the specialist's development with due regard to his training, proficiency level, abilities and capabilities, as well as on the selection of means and methods of the teacher-student interaction in response to the circumstances. An integral consideration of pedagogical goals presupposes a double focusing, i.e. an "outside" one that is at the level of the Macromodel applying to the whole system of specialist training and an "inside" one that is at the level of a Micromodel applying directly to a certain stage of future specialist training.

The integrative product of the university education promotes the development of a moral, independent, creative, socially active and competent specialist with a distinct pedagogical and research orientation who is able to adjust to various professional activities in changing conditions.

The strategic aim, i.e. the goal in itself, of humanization of education is to promote development of humanity in an individual, his self-education and self-training. The criterion of attaining the aim, manifests in the obtained level of humanity, which is reflected in a person's attitude towards man, society and other people.

Higher educational institutions of Belarus possess an experience in the organization of humanistically oriented pedagogical process. According to the sociological studies, institutions of higher education have made progress in the field of humanization:

- The majority of higher educational establishments apply more educational programs aimed at realization of humanistically oriented pedagogical process;
- Institutions of higher education have developed or have been developing theoretical and methodological issues of humanization with regard to the conditions and specificity of the given institution;
- Issues pertaining to humanization of pedagogical process are discussed at the chair meetings in the institutions of higher learning and in academic conferences;
- Learner's guides have been prepared covering the issues of humanization of education and training;
- Humanistically oriented educational processes of students training are used.

At the same time, it should be noted that the realization of humanization goals of the pedagogical process in higher education has certain difficulties and shortcomings. The problems and shortcomings of the humanistically oriented education processes in higher education institutions are deep rooted in history and society. Firstly, the authoritarian system of education and training prevailed for a long-time and secondly, there is a decline of prestige of the teaching profession.

Subjective reasons for insufficient implementation of humanization goals are caused by insufficient attention paid by the authorities of many institutions of higher education to popularization of humanization goals and to monitoring of putting into practice. A survey conducted among teachers demonstrated that clear understanding of goals and objectives in the given sphere is a characteristic of the minority of the respondents. There are only two thirds out of 1500 teachers of technical higher educational establishments who approve of the humanization ideas. But even among them there are quite a lot who consider humanization to be temporary, though an important stage in the development of higher education, not seeing that it makes a constant and enduring

content of its theory and practice.

Setting the goals in the humanistic oriented course of study serves as an important feature of its success. We regret that in the system of higher education, there are certain shortcomings in the implementation of goal-setting. Aims and objectives of educational activities are not always explained in lectures and practical classes. If students do not understand the aim to learn some academic material, then they learn it passively, without necessary diligence and assiduity. In many ways, the success of humanization of the educational process depends on the students “*setting and undertaking training goals and objectives. The survey of teachers has shown that a clear understanding of the goals and objectives in the subject area is a characteristic of the respondents*” minority.

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