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Reconsidered Content of Upbringing in Modern Pedagogy

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Abstract

Upbringing both now and always is humanistic in its nature and implies focus on a child's personality as the supreme value and on their capacity for self-actualization and self-development. It is important to realize the priorities in modern-day educational activity. These priorities are the humanization principle which means creating conditions for child's development and self-development; facilitation as the basis of the educational activities; the co-existence principle; the functionality which means commitment to helping children and encouraging coherency in their socialization and individualization; processuality of educational activities, meaning the pedagogue's ability to work 'in the process' and in direct interaction with children. This article emphasizes the following conditions for efficiency of educational activities in modern world: focus on the present-day reality; integration as the basis of inclusion; reflective competence of a teacher and pedagogue; investigative nature of educational activity.

Key words: professional development; education; educational activity; humanization; personality development; self-actualization; self-development.

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1. Introduction

Modernization of the educational activity implies its humanization when a child becomes the supreme value and the *raison-d'être* of such activity. It is now based on the idea that every child has a capacity for self-actualization and self-development and on open interpersonal interaction leading to co-existence.

It is important for a pedagogue to understand how the society affects a child. This means to block and counterbalance (if possible) its adverse effects by organizing an educational space as the co-existence. It is also important to form an open interaction with children based on total acceptance of all children and their interests.

In order to understand the essence of the educational activity, it is important to see its different aspects using the cross-disciplinary approach, such as: personality dynamics (existential philosophy); co-existent nature of interaction (fundamental ontology); the essence of the open dialogue space with areas of self-organization (synergetics); understanding verbal and non-verbal signals communicated by a child (semiotics); understanding child's struggling upwards through difficulties and problems (acmeology); ways of comprehending the meaning of child's behavior (hermeneutics); a personality as a holistic open multi-level evolving system capable of resisting external influences (humanistic psychology).

According to V.A. Karakovsky, a teacher is a frontier guard on the border between the Nowadays and the Eternal. The teachers must not only meet the constantly growing expectations, but always match up their activity with the area of history and culture. A pedagogue works with a constantly changing personality in a constantly changing world. The educational activity of a modern teacher implies self-balanced personal identity focused on the present and future of the children and their development (Karakovsky, 2008). A prominent Polish educator J. Korczak argued that none of the educator's opinions should become an unquestionable conviction, a conviction that cannot change; the present day is a transition from yesterday's observations to tomorrow's more profound conclusions (Korczak, 1979). Intuition and insights into the children's heartfelt issues, concerns and actual goals of self-actualization and self-development are important for the educational activity.

Many aspects of humanization of education and educational activities have been explored in L.I. Novikova's school of thought (Novikova, 2010). The works of the representatives of this scientific school expand the content of educational activities within the humanistic paradigm (Demakova, 2013; Karakovsky, 2008; Tagunova, Selivanova & Valeeva, 2016; Shustova, 2018; Mudrik, 2004; Selivanova, Stepanov, Shakurova, 2016).

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. *The tasks of the research*

The study addressed the following objectives: 1) To analyze the psychological and pedagogical literature for the study of "humanization of upbringing" notion; 2) To select the main educational priorities of a modern pedagogue; 3) To describe conditions for efficient educational activity.

2.2. Theoretical and empirical methods

We used methods of theoretical studies (systematization, classification, comparative analysis), which allowed to determine the approaches to the process of humanization of upbringing.

3. The educational priorities of a modern pedagogue

The principle of humanization of educational activities means recognizing the preciousness of childhood and respecting the children's rights, such as the right to higher social status, to comfortable living conditions, to be respected and appreciated as a person (Valeeva, 1997) and the right to freedom in the process of education which implies recognition of a child as an existential (free) being (Gazman, 2002).

The educational activity is aimed at creating conditions for the child's development and self-development. It is important for a pedagogue to be aware of difficulties and the contradictory nature of the developmental process. He must understand and take into account a) factors contributing to a child's development, such as psychological climate in the children's community; emotional stability in the everyday life; flexibility and richness of the educational environment; support of children's self-activity by the teacher; communion of children and adults; co-operation and mutual help in teamwork, etc., and b) factors hindering a child's development, such as fear; undeserved guilt or shame; introversion and alienation from children and adults; the feeling of loneliness; low self-esteem and the feeling of unsuccessfulness.

Pedagogue's activities focused on child's development must include: holistic and comprehensive study of that particular child and social factors influencing them; organizing conditions for their identity formation and their proactivity in self-actualization as well as conditions encouraging their self-understanding and self-organization.

As we are setting out the priorities of the educational activity, it is necessary to mention the ideas of C. Rogers (Rogers, 1994): a child's personality will always be more important than any pedagogical issue; the child's present is more important than their past and future; the child's feelings are more important than their knowledge and thoughts; intuitive striving for the development of a child as a person (their values, their choices, their interests and dispositions) are more important than any pedagogical instructions; the educational activity should be optimistic about the child and focused on the positive.

A pedagogue should be a facilitator supporting the process of child's evolving and development, their identity formation and self-development.

The facilitation is based on the ideas of humanistic psychology: every individual is unique and precious and must be treated with care; every child has their own special abilities holistically forming the essence of their Self. The idea of education as facilitation is based on child's natural striving for development, self-development and using their abilities (Rogers, Lyon, Tausch, 2013).

A priority in modern educational activity should be given to the Co-Existence Principle meaning that the phenomenon of education steps away from the image of a pedagogue who knows what is right and from his goals and methods; instead, it is being brought into the 'world of between'. Martin Buber's idea of 'between' is still up-to-date, where the 'between' is a true space of co-existence making possible a real dialog, a real lesson, a real, not ritualized, hug, a real conversation and a real experience (Buber, 1993). The real education is happening only in this world of 'between' where the common value-based space arises. A pedagogue is focused not on predetermined goals and methods but on children's present and on the immediacy of interaction with them. It is possible if both teacher and children are interested in such

interaction and share the same field of thought and common activity. This interaction implies that children absorb cultural patterns and norms of relationships and activities, adopt universal human values and come to a new understanding of themselves, others and the world. The result of education in co-existence is a mutual spiritual enrichment, a mutual development of a pedagogue and a child (Demakova & Shustova, 2017).

Co-existence assures transition from formal and institutionally predetermined relationships between adults and children into the space of human relationships involving equality, openness, freedom and everyone's responsibility. According to O.S. Gazman, looking for models of moral conduct, for the best examples in the spiritual culture and in the work culture, and creating thereon, together with children, one's own values, norms and laws of life, is the content of a pedagogue's work (Gazman, 2002).

One more priority of the modern educational activity is the functionality which means that socialization and individuation processes should run in an interrelated and complementary fashion. As a child grows, their personality evolves and matures; they build social relationships and explore the world of people and the culture: it is the socialization process. At the same time the child grows aware of and wants to assure his/her own self: it is the individuation process. The educational theory studies the conditions and ways of socialization, such as transfer of cultural knowledge, norms, rules and values to a child and the child's exploration of the social and the natural world. The individuation process is less understood in terms of pedagogical approaches. These two processes are often being studied as separate with no regard for their mutual interdependence.

The socialization process has been thoroughly described by A.V. Mudrik. According to him, it is "a complex process of inclusion of an individual into the society... and involves absorbing a certain set of values (norms, behavioral patterns, knowledge and ideas) enabling the individual to be a community member. On the other hand, it is a process where a child acquires their own social experience and where their personality actively builds itself" (Mudrik, 2004, p.89). Therefore, the socialization is a two-sided process where the individual acquires the social experience, enters the system of social relationships and at the same time reproduces the system of social relationships and finds self-fulfillment in the community.

Individualization means the search for one's individual self, understanding one's autonomous inner world and one's own self and fulfillment thereof. Gazman notes that "the individualization (not to be confused with the individual approach aimed at facilitating socialization) is a joint effort of an adult (pedagogue) and a child to support and develop the special and unique that is inherent in that individual or acquired by their experience" (Gazman, 2002, p.56). The individualization in terms of the educational activity comprises efforts to support identity formation, self-understanding, life-conception, self-actualization and self-organization. A child comprehends their own self and all its aspects, both positive and negative; he/she develops his/her own internal value system and comprehend his/her holistic self-image thus creating the internal conditions for creative self-actualization in the outside world.

A pedagogue should realize that socialization and individualization are interconnected, mutually dependent and complementary, acting as both aim and means for each other. According to D.I. Feldstein, individualization and socialization constitute the content and the essence of the maturing process (Feldstein, 1999, p.14). A child comprehends the social experience: it is the process of socialization. At the same time they acquire new information about themselves; they grow more and more independent, finding their own ways of dealing with the community, of integration and of being a part of it; they "discover themselves in their sociality": thus their individualization happens. Nowadays it is important to see the potential of the educational activity in detecting and expanding the sphere of pedagogical conditions

supporting the implementation of child's capacity for identity formation and self-development of their true human nature. It is necessary to take a new look on children's community and on the communion of children and adults (its characteristics pertaining to co-existence) as the most important conditions for full-scale socialization and individualization processes as a whole: as the social situation of the child's development.

The processuality of the educational activities is particularly important for a modern pedagogue as well as the capability of 'work in the process', in direct interaction with children; focusing on 'here and now' where the children's needs, values, problems and struggles manifest. A pedagogue should be able to work with the present situation (both within and outside the learning process) which means the ability to manage and direct the open positional interaction with children. They should trust their own intuition and self-reflection. Reflection as a part of the educational activity throws light on a situation and its different aspects (for every child involved). It helps transfer the pedagogical interaction from the emotional and activity-related absorption to the level of comprehension and recognition of important aspects such as children's inner motives, interests, problems, struggles, resources and obstacles hindering their development. 'Work in the situation' means clarifying and organizing the external environment so that it resonates with the children's internal conditions, personal values and moral clues.

It is important to focus on the positive, on the real relationships based upon universal human values. If a problem arises, the focus should be on overcoming it, thus bringing about a new stage of development for the communion of children and adults and for its every member. A problem should be regarded not as an obstacle or hindrance but as an interesting task to be solved together, giving the important real life experience to every individual involved and helping them evolve (Children's Communion..., 2012; Shustova, 2003).

Conditions for efficient educational activity

Firstly, a teacher should be guided by the values of the modern world where integration facilitates the inclusion. Inclusive education eliminates any discrimination of any child and ensures equal treatment of all children at the same time creating specific conditions for children with special needs. Inclusive education implies that the education should be available for all and that it should be adapted to all children including those with special needs. It is important that the inclusive education strives towards developing a flexible approach to education and upbringing. Inclusiveness makes both upbringing and education more effective which is beneficial for all children, not only for those with special needs.

The experience has shown that inclusive education gives children the idea of human rights; they learn to interact with each other; to recognize, understand and accept the differences between children of different health levels. The issue of inclusive education is very complicated and to a large extent depends on a 'human factor' (Demakova, 2013).

Our experience of joining children from different social groups into a single community has given us insights into some specific aspects of inclusive education. Integration of children from different social groups and different health levels, including blind and visually impaired children, contributes to humanization and boosts the efficiency of inclusive education. A teacher should organize an inclusive environment and exciting creative activities allowing children to have a shared experience, to understand and accept each other's problems and find ways of self-actualization in the emotionally safe and encouraging environment. Important professional qualities of a pedagogue organizing the integration process are as follows: willingness to accept children of different nationalities as well as children with

somatic, psychological, behavioral and emotional peculiarities and different educational abilities; willingness to support any child facing a difficulty or a problem (Valeeva & Demakova, 2015).

Secondly, a teacher should have the reflective thinking. Reflection in the educational activity takes place when a subject of pedagogical interaction identifies themselves with the present pedagogical situation and with elements of such situation, namely: themselves, children, goal, content, methods and tools, etc.

In terms of reflection, pedagogical challenges without obvious 'right' and unambiguous solutions are particularly significant. In case of a challenging issue reflection becomes a lifeline enabling a pedagogue to objectivize the situation and reconceptualize it as a task, not a problem. Pedagogical reflection stimulates the explorative and creative thought and takes the teacher to the next level of awareness where new professional goals arise; it enables them to become aware of their own weaknesses and find ways of dealing with them. Reflection underlies the innovative pedagogy.

Reflective competency is a quality of a teacher enabling them to accomplish the processes of upbringing and education in a most efficient and appropriate way through reflection; it enhances the creative approach and directs the professional growth (Biktagirova & Valeeva, 2014).

Reflective competency implies the mastery of the psychological mechanism behind the professional growth and self-actualization which enables a pedagogue to be analytical towards themselves and their professional activities (keeping within the time framework of the past, present and future). It is important that the reflection is directed not on their own self (as a person and professional) but also on the process of development of a particular child (his or her background and conditions hindering or supporting this process) and of the children's communion (as a collective subject) (Shustova, 2003).

Thirdly, the educational activity should be investigative in its nature. V.I. Zagvyazinsky pointed out that in the structure of the educational activity a pedagogue's role should be investigative emphasizing that educational institutions should take up a new, explorative and investigative function which makes the pedagogical work a creative effort (Zagvyazinsky, 2006). We totally agree with his point of view and with the idea that a teacher and pedagogue should lay out new principles and ways of upbringing that are in lines with the *Zeitgeist*, with the present of our children; they should combine traditions with innovations and strict procedures with creative endeavors.

R.A. Valeeva has formulated the principles of investigative activities in upbringing to be implemented by modern pedagogues. They are: genuine concern about every child; acceptance of every child as they are; respect and appreciation of every child; the principle of pedagogical optimism; treating every child as a person in their own right; investigating not 'generally' but aiming at the solution of a specific task (Valeeva, 1997). An investigation should be well designed and its results should be recorded. The investigative activity implies creating an individual development plan for every child. It is important not to compare children with each other; the evaluation criterion should be based on individual development dynamics.

The investigatory nature of the educational activity enhances a pedagogue's creativity and the constant search for optimal conditions and ways of upbringing. Investigatory and creative activities are inextricably linked. All activities of a creative pedagogue always contain an investigatory component. According to Zagvyazinsky (2006) the investigatory component brings together the scientific inquiry and the educational-bringing-up process. The investigatory nature impregnates the practical educational activity and the latter enhances the scientific work. Investigatory elements in the practical activity are considerably strong and valuable and make it akin to the scientific inquiry.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, we would like to highlight some important points about reconsidered educational activity in the modern world. It is essential for a pedagogue to keep focused on life, on the future and the child's development. Their work implies the 'live interaction' with children and should be process-oriented. The educational activity should be constantly focused on understanding the process of a child's development in the modern world. The educational activity should be optimistic about a child; a pedagogue should be a facilitator supporting the 'self-'processes in a child such as self-understanding, self-identification, self-development, self-realization, etc.

A pedagogue's worldview manifests itself in direct interaction with children where he or she acts as an embodiment of the human values building upon them all interactions and the attitude towards children. The phenomenon of upbringing is being brought into the "world of between" the teacher and the children where the pedagogue is focused not on predetermined goals and time-proven methods but on the child's present moment, on co-existence and real process of interaction. Therefore, upbringing is the reality of value-oriented interaction between adults and children where the children absorb cultural patterns and norms of relationships, adopt universal human values and come to a new understanding of themselves, others and the world.

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