

Methods of creating spiritual and moral culture of higher education students

Strokovni članek

UDK 378+133.2+17

KLJUČNE BESEDE: metode, duhovna in moralna kultura, visokošolsko izobraževanje, študenti, multikulturalizem, izobraževalno okolje

POVZETEK – Članek obravnava problem metod in sredstev za ustvarjanje duhovne in moralne kulture študentov v multikulturnem izobraževalnem okolju. Upoštevajoč dejstvo, da se tekom študijskega procesa malo pozornosti namenja vzgoji, ostaja omenjen problem slabo raziskan. Glavne metode in sredstva so bila proučevana s pomočjo analize obstoječe znanstvene literature, ki je pokazala, da je problem odvisen od definiranih dejavnikov in pogojev ter ga lahko razložimo na podlagi dejstva, da so sodobne generacije študentov pod vplivom hitrih in dinamičnih sprememb socialnih dogodkov, kontroverznosti v socialnem razvoju in povečanega števila informacij. Stopnje ustvarjanja duhovne in moralne kulture v multikulturnem izobraževalnem okolju so opredeljene kot: učenje o vedenjskih normah in vrednotah, običajih, miselnosti, različnih kulturnih življenjskih slogih po svetu, kot tudi razvijanje medkulturnih komunikacijskih spretnosti, utrjevanje in preverjanje znanja ter spretnosti, ki se nanašajo na medkulturne komunikacije.

Professional paper

UDC 378+133.2+17

KEYWORDS: methods, spiritual and moral culture, higher education, students, multiculturalism, educational environment

ABSTRACT – The article is dealing with the problem of methods and means of creating spiritual and moral culture of higher education students in a multicultural educational environment. Considering the fact that during the educational process in higher education not much attention is paid to the “upbringing”, the problem remains poorly investigated. The main means and methods were identified by analysing the existing scientific literature. It has revealed that the problem depends on the defined factors and conditions, and is explained by the fact that the modern generation of students’ lives are influenced by a quick change of social life events, dynamic changes, controversy in social development, including the increased amount of information. Stages of creating spiritual and moral culture in a multicultural education environment are defined as: teaching about the behavioural rules and norms, customs, mentality, different cultural lifestyles around the world, as well as creating intercultural communicative abilities, consolidation and verification of knowledge, and skills concerning intercultural communications.

1. Introduction

An all-round complex task of modern society’s transformation requires deeper understanding of its development goals from social and political, social and economic, spiritual, moral, and ethical perspectives. Definite improvement of spiritual level of society is considered to be a required condition of the creation of a balanced personality, a condition of further strengthening of material and spiritual foundations of a modern life and the overcoming of negative effects in the forms of social and

moral values' depreciation. The perception of moral and ethical values turns out to be an internal basis of responsible behaviour motivation. The creation of responsibility, especially during the period of studying, is determined by the increase of each individual's personal responsibility for his/her own contribution in the process of social transformation. It is necessary for all people, and students in particular, to take responsibility for everything that happens in everyday life and educational environment as well as, on the same basis, to introduce new ideas that unite young people, all people, and society in general.

The process of preparation of young people for life in the multicultural world is one of the most important tasks of higher education. To teach young people to live together, help them to turn the existing connection between states and ethnicity into solidarity, are the most important functions of any higher education institution. Taking into consideration the above-mentioned task, higher education should contribute the following changes: on the one hand, a person should understand his/her roots and define his/her place in this world, and, on the other hand, he/she should show respect for other cultures (Krylova, 1990, pp. 50–52).

Nowadays, the problem of creation of spiritual and moral culture of a future expert's personality depends on the defined factors and conditions, and is explained by the fact that the modern generation of students' lives are influenced by a quick change of social life events, dynamic changes, controversy in social development, including the increased amount of information. Young people, their spiritual life, and moral values are predetermined by all global problems of the modern world, including world and environmental problems, national identity preservation and tolerance in the multicultural world. This is why education, focused on creating a student's spiritual and moral culture, has to be regarded as one of the most crucial goals of the modern systems of education in specialized institutions (Rubinstein, 2003).

All in all, a successful accomplishment of the tasks such as creating spiritual and moral culture and responsibility requires an active involvement of higher education institutions workers, who have to create the required ideological positions and valuable focus among the students during the whole educational process.

2. Theoretical background

The problem of spiritual and moral culture of personality and spiritual and moral education is represented in the works of the following philosophers: E. Bondarevskaya (Bondarevskaya, 2001, pp. 17–24) and L. Vygotskiy (Dvornikova, 2003). They discussed psychological and pedagogical ideas about the development of spiritual and moral qualities of a person as a cultural product thoroughly. N. Krylova (Nikolina, 2002) defines the focus of spiritual development of a personality as a significant educational task. She underlines that the education of spiritual and moral values

can help to solve a modern problem of many pedagogical sciences – how to encourage a personality for self-development and self-improvement on the basis of distinguishing good and evil and help to choose valuable guidelines of ethical behaviour.

In the works by K. Abulhanova-Slavska (1991) and S. Rubinstein (Sadohin, 2006), the authors admit that the creation of responsibility as a component of ethical focus of a personality is regarded as a crucial task in the process of education at different institutions.

Therefore, the problems of spiritual and moral development of a personality in modern scientific and pedagogical literature are urgent indeed. The analysis of the current situation proves that during the educational process in higher education not much attention is paid to the “upbringing”, the problem of education of spiritual and moral values among students remains poorly investigated. The question of methods and means of creating spiritual and moral culture of students in a multicultural educational environment is one of these problems.

The purpose of the article is to evaluate the methods and means of creating spiritual and moral culture of students in a multicultural educational environment.

3. Discussion

The process of cultural self-determination of a personality determined by mass culture, and spread by the media and communication, is the basis for creating the spiritual and moral culture of a future expert. A modern student is a medium and generator of forms and ideas of mass culture and separate subcultures in particular. Interaction with peers plays an important role in the process of creation and development of spiritual and moral culture. Young people try to be united into their own internal worlds by means of their thoughts, interests, and activities. Friendly relations in particular promote the development of a solid basis for evaluation and implementation of personal understanding of the main components of spiritual and moral culture of a future expert (Botasheva, 2010).

A. Sadohin studied the methods of creation of intercultural tolerance and identified several approved practices of preparation of a personality for intercultural interaction. Among these practices, there are the didactic methods of education (enlightenment, focus, and modelling) and empirical methods (training). Enlightenment is the process of acquisition of knowledge about culture. Focus is the evaluation of the forms of behaviour in situations, which are the most common. Modelling is the method of education that focuses on the knowledge acquisition on the basis of the evaluation of artificial methods (conditional samples, schemes, and processes), which correspond to a situation of intercultural communication. Training, as a method of education, is a problem of diverse exercises that is carried out systematically in order

to create and improve the skills and knowledge in this or that particular sphere of human life (Vygotskiy, 2004, pp. 250–251).

According to our point of view, the level of multicultural proficiency of future experts depends on how possible it is to unite cultural studies (e.g. “Esthetics and History of Culture”), foreign languages, professionally-focused disciplines like “Theory and Practice of Specialized Education in Russia and the World” and “Professional Ethics”. A course of Comparative Cultural Ethno-Pedagogy and Ethno-Psychology may play an important role in the creation of an informative database concerning the prevention of intolerant treatment of the students to the cases of other culture’s presence in a multicultural society.

It is necessary to organise such events like the week of culture of definite countries, festivals, and competitions within the frames of extracurricular work. The creation of valuable focus of future experts by means of the organisation of educational tourism turns out to be an effective practice as well. Nowadays, it is possible to define several types of educational tourism: sightseeing and educational travels to different cities, natural areas, and countries; educational travels in order to study a foreign language or some other general and specific subjects; study visits to different institutions, organisations, and enterprises; scientific and educational training at institutions, organisations, and enterprises; participation at seminars, conferences, congresses, workshops, which are aimed at getting of new professionally-important information.

According to K. Gagarina, the implementation and realization of the forms of educational activities are possible with the help of different methods of formation of spiritual culture of students: the formation of consciousness, the experience of social behaviour, the organisation of stimulation and motivation of activities and behaviour, control, self-control, and educational self-esteem (Gagarina, 2007, pp. 16).

Students master ethno-cultural traditions and values when they study the relevant disciplines (Native Language, Russian History, and History of Religion). Addition of art and craft disciplines to the curriculum provides students with an opportunity to study the unique art and craft world, including its songs and dances deeper. Specific disciplines, focused on studying Russian culture and traditions, seem to be a thoughtful addition to the educational process.

There is a burning necessity to change the priorities of the educational process. More attention should be paid to the dialogues during the courses, collective and individual tasks, and the combination of problematic methods with evaluation as a result of which spiritual union and activation of spiritual activities of students take place.

Art, as a source of spiritual development of students, has an outstanding definition as it gives space for self-expression and creation of original possibilities. Creating spiritual culture of a personality on the basis of the art’s humanistic values is similar to the process of understanding spiritual and moral values and personal installation, consideration of personal strengths and students’ creative possibilities, creation of personal landmarks, but not the process of understanding of different art forms.

The presence of a system of educational methods and forms is considered to be an appropriate means of art in the process of development of spiritual and moral culture of students. These methods and forms provide students and teachers with the required portion of motivation by means of concerns, empathy, art knowledge, and the presentation of the activity content in the form of tasks, based on common knowledge, skills, and feelings concerning the mastery of art humanistic values (Pokatiloskaya, 2009, p. 85). Besides, nature and religion may be also considered as the sources of spiritual and moral development of a personality.

On the basis of a theoretical analysis, the usage of the following methods seems to be appropriate during the work with students: the methods of organisation and self-organisation of an educational team, everyday communication, cooperation, initiative, and pedagogical influence (a collective game, collective self-management, collective self-service, common requirements); the methods of everyday systematically targeted communication, friendly and confidential cooperation in usual and force majeure situations (social protection, respect, pedagogic requirement, persuasion, warning, conviction, trust, compassion, decision-making, and problematic situations); the methods of personal initiative: self-management as a self-analysis and self-awareness, sense and mind self-management (self-education), will and self-management (self-stimulation) conduct; the methods of pedagogic and psychological support offered by a teacher to a student in order to improve his/her consciousness and behaviour, stimulation and deceleration of his/her activities, attention to personality in different real-life situations (explanation, creation of a success situation, dream actualization, exercise, encouragement, and punishment) (Vygotskiy, 2004, pp. 5–34).

4. Conclusion

In general, creating spiritual and moral culture of students in a multicultural education environment consists of the following stages: the creation of knowledge about the rules and norms of behaviour, customs, mentality peculiarities, lifestyles of people of different cultures in the whole world; the creation of intercultural communicative abilities; consolidation and verification of knowledge and skills concerning intercultural communications.

The main means and methods of creating spiritual and moral culture of students in a multicultural educational environment were identified on the basis of theoretical analysis. They are as follows: lectures, seminars, meetings with the national minorities' representatives, cross-cultural cooperation, cross-cultural modelling, viewing and evaluation of the movies, reading and discussion of literature, organisation of discussions, a detailed evaluation of problems, the analysis of multicultural communication situation, involvement into the activities of the national communities, practical experience that provide a direct contact with the representatives of other culture, involvement into research activities, observations, reflexive thinking, etc. The process

of preparation for a work with multicultural students has to be properly organised and supported by professional education: first, a form of a separate course should be used, second, the form of various systematic links between humanitarian, social and economic, fundamental, and professionally-focused disciplines, and scientific research-based works of undergraduate students.

REFERENCES

1. Abul'hanova-Slavskaja K.A. (1991). *Strategija zhizni* [Life strategy]. Moscow: Mysl', p. 58.
2. Bondarevskaya, E.V. (2001). Senses and Strategies of Personal-Focused Education. *Pedagogy*, № 1. pp. 17–24.
3. Botasheva, CH.Y. (2010). The Development of Spiritual and Moral Culture of Students in an Educational Space of a University. diss. cand. Ped. Sciences (UDC 13.00.08). Rostov-na-Donu, p. 219.
4. Dvornikova, E.N. (2003). The Problems of Education of Tolerance Personality by means of Creation a Cultural Identity. *Tolerate Consciousness and Creation of Tolerate Relations (Theory and Practice)*. Moscow: Psychological Social University Publishing; Voronezh: NPO "MODEK" Publishing, pp. 50–52.
5. Gagarina, K.E. (2007). The Creation of Spiritual Culture of Undergraduate Students on the Basis of Traditions of Sakha People. diss. cand. Ped. Sciences: (UDC 13.00.01). Yakutsk, p. 21.
6. Krylova, N.B. (1990). The Creation of Culture of a Future Expert: Handbook. M.: High School, p. 142.
7. Nikolina, V.V. (2002). Spiritual Values and Education of a Personality: A Psychological and Pedagogical Aspect. In: L.E. Shaposhnikova (Ed.) *Religion and Culture*. XI Christmas religious philosophical readings. Nizhny Novgorod: NGC, p. 485.
8. Pokatiloskaya, E.N. (2009). The Creation of Cultural Values among Young People at Institutions [Electronic Source]. Retrieved on 10.10.2014 from: <http://sibac.info/index.php/2009-07-01>.
9. Rubinstein, S.L. (2003). *The Principles of General Psychology*. Saint-Petersburg: Liter, p. 713.
10. Sadohin, A.P. (2006). *Intercultural Communication: Handbook*. M.: Alfa-M, INFRA-M, p. 288.
11. Shemshurina A.I. (2005). Moral Education of School Students (Methodics). *Ethical Education*, pp. 5–34.
12. Vygotskiy, L.S. (2004). *Psychology of Development of a Person*. M.: "Sense" Publishing, EK-SMO Publishing, p. 1136.

Irina Ilinichna Nikolaeva (1960), senior lecturer in pedagogy and methodology of elementary education, Technical Institute (branch) of North-Eastern Federal University named after M. K. Ammosov. Address: South-Yakutskaya street b. 25, 678960 Neryungri, The Republic of Sakha, Russia Telephone: (+7) 0924 160 61 91 E-mail: nikolaevaii2013@gmail.com