General tendencies of higher education in the modern social-cultural conditions

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The article presents the most important directions of higher education development. The main contexts, theories, criteria of higher education in constantly changing conditions of the modern world are defined. The emphasis is placed on the international and national peculiarities of higher education development.

Key words: education; higher education; criteria of education; development of higher education; social-cultural conditions.

Introduction

The issues of higher education trends and quality are not new. Our article is trying to understand why these trends have appeared and what they bring, how educational managers, scientists, and lecturers support higher education reforms, and how it helps to select models of the education system by different universities.

The topical issues of higher education are on the agenda of modern society. Today, we have entered into the period of the international movement: a single educational space with equal participation of members from different countries is being formed. Such integrated education is characterized by continuous reforms, renewals, context reviewing, as well as the priority of theoretical foundations, appearance of new criteria for educational programs, definition of new values within the traditional education and new qualitative characteristics describing both the educational process itself and its obtained results. All these processes lead, finally, to selection of a proper model of the higher education system.

Should the higher education vector be shifted either to rational pragmatism or conceptual irrationality? This question has roots in the dual nature of the essence of education. On the one hand, the priorities of rational pragmatism means that only such things are matter that give practically useful results. The truth within pragmatic approach is interpreted not as a reflection of the objective reality, but as a utilitarian component, satisfying particular interests of each university. On the other hand, the conceptual views on education are close to the question about the sources of meaning generation. "The flow of

consciousness" is formed by cognitive efforts during solution of practical tasks put forward before higher education. There are two poles of education: the first is aimed at pragmatic goals and the second support personal self-realization, and these poles must be in equilibrium. Here, we can talk about philosophical contradiction of rational and irrational in their unity. The principle of polarity reject the position "either-or", when an alternative is absent, but use the "and" approach. Existing alternatives help to understand problems, because not the truth lies between the two extremes, but the namely existing problem does. And this is the path to problem solution.

Theoretical foundations

The main tendency of higher education development is the ability of educational institutions to act in accordance with their own interests and goals, based on the knowledge of objective necessity within two poles: objective necessity in professionals and the desire for personal self-realization. Universities are not free in choosing the objective conditions (economic, political) within which they act, but, as a self-governing institution, they have a freedom, an opportunity to choose own goals and methods or means for their achievement. The degree of freedom to choose contexts, theories and criteria for professional work in education is determined by development of science, technologies, knowledge on the objective laws of the nature and society, social and political principles and norms. The modern educational process can be understood as truly free and conscious creative work based on historical achievements,

which creates and expands opportunities for free and comprehensive development of every direction of higher education. It is the most important characteristics of the actual trends of modern education development.

It is worth examining the contexts and theories, the morphology of the key educational concepts at the verge of the XX-XXI centuries. The examined directions of higher education development can shape the future of world education and the best of them should be applied in all spheres of education reorganization: learning processes, science on education, management, cultural activities.

Results and Discussions

Our research is based on the ideas of O. Stepanov, a professor, such as continuous education, entering into the international educational space, two main tasks of education: knowledge transfer and cultivation of a personality (morality is one of the educational tasks); O. Korotkovsky who examined the higher education structure and goals aimed at development of a specialist's general system of knowledge; N. Metlenkova who discussed the criteria of "modernity", "objectivity" and "pre-reflection" of education, competitiveness of the state standards used in higher education, the main problems and directions of work aimed at development of educational standards for the new generation; Y. Karmazin, who formulated universal concepts of the creative method in education, its structure and interrelations with the universal concepts of culture, science, philosophy; K. Kyianenko's ideas on the strategies of self-determination of an educational institution in the conditions of an academic freedom. We also have compared the guidelines for the national system of education with the ones used in the USA and England.

The tendencies in education depend largely on the contexts, theories, and criteria for the education vector chosen both by each particular university and by the education system of a state or a community (further, a unified international educational space). Each university has the right to make a choice.

The issue of balance of international and national approaches in a higher educational system is very difficult. As a rule, a first attempt to resolve it is based on contraposition of these approaches. But this way is not the productive one. Each achievement as for an educational system or process in most cases based on regional or national peculiarities, because the centre of any development is a person having own national (regional) characteristics. The reality is even more complex, because a lecturer - bearers of his/her culture can move from time to time to different regions of the world. There he/she can assimilate different philosophical and ideological principles and can become a real creative thinker. On the one hand, deep national traits of the lecturer influence national culture he/she meets. On the other hand, there is an exchange and mutual enrichment between the lecturer's own culture and the culture met at a new place. So, international creative work starts at this point. The same thing happens with the higher education system that consists of a large number of individuals - bearers of different cultures. Development of higher education is a process starting at one point, then spreading like a wave. This process is not infinite, it stops

somewhere between the starting point of an individual's creative work and the national culture in an absolute unified form. International educational practices also influence this process. A. Aalto believes: "... an achieved result combines organically national and international characteristics, it meets the requirements of the modern world where these concepts (national and international) are nearly inseparable".

All masters of higher education in their professional, creative work touch the examined problem to a greater or lesser extent. Basing of national peculiarities of educational work, these masters widely uses new achievements of foreign and national science and practice and introduces them into their own educational process. Famous, talented pedagogues-practitioners, theoreticians, scientists, teachers, heads of national schools from Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan - T. Basenov, M. Mendiculov, B. Gladinov, F. Huseynov, I. Azimov - are contributing significantly to formation of such higher education system that combines the historical and spiritual values of the national cultures, national traits characteristic for different regions of their countries and the international cultural achievements.

The power of any state is determined by one of the most important components of its national wealth, uniting material and cultural heritage of the past generations: this main resource is people-creative thinkers. It is difficult to imagine disappearance of national characteristics, but, perhaps in the near future, they will be transformed into national characteristics of all peoples living on the Earth. This idea was put forward in V. Vernadsky's theory on the noosphere. Today, we understand how important for our culture are, for example, the National Museum of Damascus, the largest one in Syria, the Centre for the Preservation of Monuments of Artistic and Material Culture of the Ancient East, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, as well as national centres for scientific research, national academies, national centres studying global planetary problems (space, ecology, and culture). Modern work of national associations and institutions cannot be isolated from international work; a unified information space has been formed, manifesting a new type of relations based of equality and cooperation. Globalization in higher education does not contradict to its regionalization, which means preservation of cultural identity. But globalization is also means bringing up of new technologies, especially informative ones, transfer of education to a new instrumental base, changes in the nature and style of relations and the atmosphere of co-creation of students and lecturers.

The internationalization of the higher education science and practice is manifested in joint creative works, cooperation of various institutions, unification of educational programs, establishment of international creative unions and universities, organization of international creative workshops (information technologies help in this work). The history and theory of education implies that higher education should be developed in both directions: through globalization and through support of regional peculiarities. The further researches may be focused on cultures of small ethnic groups, peculiarities of regional education, which is interesting from the scientific point of view and can help shape the integral international worldview.

There are four the most important criteria of a formed space of higher education: ideological-rational orientation, humanism, truthfulness, informational capacity. Professional culture, as a purposefully developed quality, forms a basis of a specialist's socially and professionally oriented thinking; in this case the values of culture are actuated and systematically organized. Having mastered these values, a specialist can act as a bearer of progressive social consciousness and general professional culture. The transition of society to the technological stage raises the requirements for humanitarian and technological training of specialists. The requirements for modern university education should be based on the modern societal tendencies. Such approach helps form a specialist as a creative, thinking, highly cultural individual having deep convictions, democratic views and an active life position.

Because of the actual tasks to make education more intellectual, the task of development of the higher education theories obtains the higher priority. More intellectual education leads not to separation from the reality or traditional values, but helps mark humanistic orientations, reveal creativity, and assimilate the world cultural achievements. The theoretical, organizational, projective and reflective-methodological work for development of corresponding programs and projects is a prerequisite to overcome existing gaps in educational theory and practice. Such changes have already begun.

Today, we observe significant changes in society, so the whole education system should be transformed on the base of the principles of innovativeness. These principles, transforming the traditional model of education into innovative one, are: a) creation of a system for elite education; b) development of innovative education using interdisciplinary, problem-oriented technologies; c) use of innovative and information technologies in the educational process; d) formation of corporate culture; e) creation of a competitive environment; e) integration of scientific, educational and innovative work; g) creation of innovative infrastructure for universities. This infrastructure should include: 1) a multi-channel funding base; 2) a range of small, high-tech enterprises on the basis of graduating departments and a university complex; 3) creative laboratories, educational, scientific and innovative bureaus. Such approach will transform traditional education, adapting it to the innovative, permanently changing modern world. The purpose of education is accumulation of new knowledge as a material basis for training of innovative-oriented specialists who possess the skills of innovative entrepreneurship and are able to support innovative economy, society and culture. Here, we can see three problems in a union: innovations, scientific development and education of future specialists. The first two of these problems are the basis for solving of the main goal: to train a professionally competent individual with an innovative worldview, who is capable to make changes or develop innovative economy, society and culture.

1. The group of objective laws describing higher education renovation and development includes: education renovation through interdependent quantitative and qualitative changes and through changes of internal attributes and parameters influenced by new scientific, technological, social, economic, cultural and political factors;

education renovation by resolution of contradictions between its form and content, between established educational practices and new scientific developments, between innovative and conservative lecturers; cyclical renovation of education through educational reforms; support of continuity of the educational innovation process; increase of knowledge intensity and innovative capacity of modern education; shortening of innovation-educational cycles due to accelerated moral aging of new knowledge; shortening of the period of educational systems destabilization evoked by introducing of innovations.

2. The group of objective laws describing pedagogical approaches include: growth of an innovative component in the training content and methods, merge education with science and application of the best practices; accelerated aging of knowledge; a certain reorientation of pedagogical innovations and teaching methods. There are also the following processes: a social request for innovative abilities; increased importance of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary pedagogical innovations (at a junction of different types of professional activities), poly-professionals; transition from specialized pedagogical innovations to integrated clustered ones, etc.

3. The group of objective laws describing economic trend includes: cyclical changes of economic activity in the field of educational innovation. Development of market relations in our country has identified a number of problems in the educational sphere, such as: insufficient funding of the education system by the state; uncontrolled appearance of commercial higher educational institutions; increased requirements of consumers to the educational process; intensification of scientific and technical researches; strengthened requirements for efficiency and quality of teaching at universities; the need to attract students to creative research activities within the framework of university projects.

One of the priority vectors (directions) of the industrial innovation policy is development of a new model of the national education system, integrated into the worldwide educational space. The purpose is to train labour resources, especially in terms of vocational education and innovative management. Such education policy defines the following tasks: training for innovative activities; establishment of institutes specialized in vocational training, certification and retraining of specialists. The especially urgent tasks are to improve the material, technical and methodological basis of education; to develop and implement educational standards that meet international requirements. We also can see such positive trends as strengthened international cooperation in the field of training and attracting of highly skilled professionals to work at newly created enterprises; creation of new and re-profiling of existing higher educational institutions into specialized universities on the basis of international experience for training of skilled personnel for high-tech industrial branches. In order to solve the existing problem, a new model of higher education is needed that embraces not only standard requirements (technical, humanitarian, profile, etc.), but also innovative (integration of science, education and production, etc.)

Innovative development of education is a complex process of integrated implementation of innovative technologies and scientific achievements. It is closely linked

with reformations of both universities and the learning process. Transformation of education in the conditions of innovative economic development demands appropriate methodological foundations. The examined objective laws of transformation of the higher education system allows the educators to train better a new generation of highly intellectual specialists.

Modern approaches, topical directions, theoretical models of the higher education system, their qualitative characteristics, as well as interaction with the necessary practice and science should be taken into consideration. We should notice that students' training in humanitarian specialties has been approached to the moment of bifurcation. Here a choice must be made either to hold on to the past, although it has ceased to meet the modern requirements, or to acquire something unusually new and reject some benchmarks not effective for decades.

Nowadays, a lot of relevant contexts, constructive models aimed at qualitative transformation of higher education exist that can help meet the current requirements. Official documents, in particular: The Bologna Declaration and the Charter of MSA-UNESCO contain the concept of "lifelong education". Not only this concept should be actualized, but also the factor of advanced education should be taken into account. This approach leads to significant changes in the education system, because it cause development and introduction of innovative methods, technologies, forms and means for effective high-quality education, as well as support integrated scientific researches, elements of the "smart economy" program, international certification and accreditation. The revolutionary transformations and radical reformations often leads to utopia, so introduction of innovative technologies should take into account the historical and cultural regional heritage, preserve existing value orientations and be based on the humanistic approach.

In order not to fall into the "trap of time", it is necessary to raise the quality of higher education to the international level. Specialists in the age of globalization must have high qualifications and react adequately to current situations. Therefore, the main task of universities is not a simple transfer of knowledge, which lose quickly its novelty and relevance, but giving students of a clear methodology of knowledge, formation of their ability to work in conditions of the ever-changing reality. Accelerated modernization is an optimal and up-to-date vector for further development.

An alliance of scientific institutions with leading universities is another trend, an actual vector of education under dynamically changing social-cultural conditions. Unfortunately, not all scientific organizations aspire to such cooperation. Its forms should be clearly identified. Cooperation can be organized in the form of the innovative regional centres uniting education, researches and production, centres of science and applied practice for exact and engineering sciences, business incubators, small enterprises, design and development bureaus, research and production laboratories in the IT field. Each student should undergo their training, perhaps partly, at such organizations.

The perspective moments of education transformation are: improvement of lecturers' knowledge on psychology; deeper training in the most important technological and

economic disciplines; and learning of some courses in foreign languages.

The international standards for education define it as organized work characterized by communications, information and knowledge transfer based on views, values, existing in an educational institution. The definition of education also includes learning environment and new learning methods helping communications; forms of educational work.

Universities, as a main higher educational unit, can adopt at their establishment different entrepreneurial, innovative, national forms of work. Therefore, they inevitably organise numerous peripheral structures: research laboratories and institutes, industrial, implementing, advisory, pre-university centres, scientific and technological parks, etc. So, any university uses dual organization of its main subdivisions: in addition to traditional departments and faculties, it has specialised centres, more closely linked to the outside world.

The transition from the functional approach to the process one is the main modern international trends in the specialists' training quality management. Effectiveness, optimal use of quantitative and qualitative resources, and finally, the quality of the process itself are dependent on the used approach. Process management inevitably requires development of an organizational structure (for the university and the whole complex associated with it).

The decisive directions of the traditional education transformation are: development of new methodological and theoretical foundations, revision of the education content and fundamental renewal of the methodological support. Qualitative transformations in educational practice have highlighted shortcomings and trends in the existing system of higher education.

Conclusions

We have determined the following drawbacks, characteristic for the modern education:

1. Underdevelopment of the methodological and theoretical basis, insufficient modernization of obsolete concepts and ideas.
2. Inconsistency of the education content with the current situation in the field of knowledge and forms of its structuring.
3. Inconsistency of the educational and methodological approaches with the existing fundamental theoretical breakthroughs and researches.
4. Insufficient desire to communicate with representatives of other spheres of knowledge in the general cultural space.
5. Specialists' worldview is mainly technocratic by its nature.
6. Qualitative transformations in higher education are ineffective during transition from the learning strategy to the education strategy. The nature of education has changed to problematic, searching, open one. Cultural, methodological, instrumental and other resources of higher education should be used more consistently. Attention should also be drawn to formation of entrepreneurial knowledge and skills, commercialization of results, and participation in real scientific researches.

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