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ROLE OF PHILOSOPHY IN IMPROVING HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

The paper attempts to investigate some methodological issues and the role of philosophy in improving the system of higher professional education in the context of the realities of modern society. In this case, the actual higher professional education received by specialists in higher educational institutions is considered but not the officially recognized system of higher education. The role of philosophy in performing various functions in training specialists in the system of higher education in different fields of social relations and in different types of human activity is emphasized. The worldview and methodological functions of philosophy are crucial in obtaining high knowledge in various specialties by students. The role of philosophy in the formation of a highly moral and comprehensively developed personality is substantiated, first of all, through its ideological, axiological and educational functions. The role of the formation of a high general educational level in the training of specialists in their further professional activities and further effect of these specialists on the moral and worldview principles of future colleagues and other people is emphasized. It is argued that as a result of the educational process and training, a person can acquire several specialties but only one real higher education, since higher education includes not only the professional qualities of a specialist, but also a high level of spirituality and personal development. In addition to a particular specialty, higher education implies mastering general cultural disciplines and philosophy.

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1. Introduction

The paper attempts to investigate some methodological issues of improving the system of higher professional education in modern Russian society, without a comprehensive analysis of all aspects of this problem. It should be noted that paper does not focus on the officially recognized system of modern higher education with bachelor's and master's degrees, the actual higher professional education in modern Russia is considered.

2. Problem Statement

It should be noted that the actual system of higher professional education is designed, first of all, to train narrow-profile specialists who can be considered experts in a certain field. In modern society, the prevailing opinions concern the need for the presence of professionals, experts, narrow-profile specialists, and the need for special knowledge that contributes to survival in the current conditions.

Leaders of various organizations often declare the need for successful and so-called effective managers in a certain field of activity. At the same time, these leaders of organizations sometimes show complete indifference about specialists with high moral qualities who are capable of managing the personnel, as well as about those with a high general level of personal development. They are even less interested in the worldview and moral principles of these specialists, their system of values, beliefs in the field of morality, sensitivity and care for other people.

3. Research Questions

The realities of modern society testify to the excessively utilitarian approach of certain categories of people to the problems of spirituality and culture, to the role and purpose of spiritual culture in life, and to its possible use in public life. This approach, first of all, is evidenced by the views of numerous people on the role of modern scientific knowledge in the realities of modern society.

The current situation in the labor market indicates that employers of various enterprises and organizations prefer to hire specialists of certain competencies rather than specialists with diplomas of higher education in any field of activity.

In recent years, a certain category of people in different countries has an erroneous opinion about the uselessness of entering higher educational institutions, since the competencies necessary for immediate interests in this particular organization can be acquired much easier and faster outside higher educational institutions.

This state of affairs causes a feeling of regret among people representing the system of higher professional education. Unfortunately, in recent years, there have been cases when job advertisements are missing a mandatory line indicating the minimum level of education. This suggests that employers are not interested in the level of education of a specialist, the level of development of his personality, his spiritual and moral qualities. First of all, such employers are interested in the specialist who possess known competencies.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate some methodological issues of improving the system of higher professional education in the context of the realities of modern society. However, this study does not intend to carry out a comprehensive analysis of all aspects of the problem identified and its possible solution.

5. Research Methods

As a methodological basis for the study of the problem identified, we use the principle of development to consider the problem of education in change and development, and the principle of historicism to consider the dynamics of the problem of education and the formation of spirituality through the prism of the events of the era.

We also use an integrated approach with regard to the results of the study of the problem of various social sciences and attempt to consider the problem in terms of the systemic-philosophical, axiological approach.

The axiological approach allows us to reveal the attitude of people to education and spirituality through the prism of their values.

6. Findings

The results obtained in this study show that the entire system of higher education, which has developed in the current conditions, is mainly aimed at meeting the immediate and long-term interests of transnational corporations. The economic and political elites of the industrially developed countries of the modern world, as well as the leaders of individual countries, which are primarily focused on expressing the interests of these social forces, fear to 'scare away investors' and thus are not concerned about national interests and values of all social groups in different countries. They do not care about the sustainable development of society in the long term.

Due to this fundamental reason the system of modern higher professional education is mainly aimed at training specialists in order to accomplish this task. Therefore, the system prepares the so-called effective managers.

Further activities of these managers will have to serve to increase the wealth of the ruling class. No doubt, the economic and political elite of the modern world is not interested in the impact of these managers on the staff in order to develop the moral and personal qualities of the latter.

The considered situation contributes to the emergence of global problems, which have an increasingly negative impact on the development of the world community. However, the world community, according to Bayanov (2010), should start searching for new ways to identify the true causes and possible forecasts of natural, social and cultural processes. Bayanov (2020) argues that in the modern globalizing world, the social groups who have new fundamental knowledge will be the leaders of the evolutionary process on a global scale, but not those who have the greatest financial opportunities. For

this reason, he considers the ability to forecast the future of fundamental science as the most important task of the world community in modern realities (Bayanov, 2020).

It is implicit that the described situation in modern society imprinted on the demand for specialists of a certain orientation. In connection with the current situation, students studying in higher educational institutions began to more often question the need to study philosophy, social sciences and other general cultural disciplines aimed at humanizing society, at forming high moral qualities, at personal development in terms of raising the general cultural level of specialists in various fields of activity.

In modern society, calls for the humanization of knowledge are increasingly being proclaimed. However, we believe that this process does not find its actual embodiment in the system of higher professional education, which is designed to a greater extent to perform an information function.

The actual system of higher education causes the decreased level of morality of a modern specialist and his inability to evaluate the beauty and find aesthetic pleasure. At the same time, his degree of prudence and pragmatism is steadily growing. He examines and evaluates the social phenomena encountered in life through the prism of his material interests.

However, there is a need, which is often supported by a desire, for comprehensive and harmonious development, which assumes the unity of the intellectual and emotional aspects, and the modern system of higher education contributes to the one-sided development of a specialist. Unfortunately, as a result of such development, a person may acquire a tendency to mental imbalance, moral and aesthetic poverty. Ultimately, he becomes more unbalanced and aggressive. This system does not contribute to the formation of an integral personality (Andreeva, 2011).

The goal of the entire system of continuous education, as well as of higher education, should be a harmonious development of a person in the unity of the rational and emotional aspects. However, when the system of education is reduced mainly to an increase in the intellectual level and to pure utilitarianism, practical benefit, science, it becomes more aggressive and raises all sorts of global problems. Modern society should not be concerned about the development of science itself. The insidious scenario is the development of science without the comprehensive development of a personality, which is devoid of spiritual development.

The elimination of various global problems in the modern world is conditioned by the type of person formed by society. The solution to these problems will be determined simultaneously by both the intellectual and the spiritual level of a person. This task should become a priority for the entire system of continuous education. The task of realizing personal potential and developing abilities, and the task of developing the intellectual and emotional aspects of the world perception should be solved by the entire system of continuous education starting from childhood of all categories of children (Ismailova et al., 2019).

Philosophy investigates, summarizes the results obtained by particular sciences, draws conclusions about the results of these studies, as well as about all other types of human activity. It is known to reveal the general laws of the development of nature, society and thinking, the laws of both the development of society and its functioning. Philosophy justifies the process of cognition and methods in various sciences and types of activity and acts as a methodology for particular sciences and all types of human activity.

Philosophy armed with its own specific methods of cognition of being generalizes the results of studies of particular sciences, reveals the laws of being, and represents the highest degree of comprehension of the nature of things and spiritual freedom. Genuine freedom of a person is possible only when he comprehends the basic laws of being and the most important life values. Human activity based on the principles of rationality, morality and justice can be largely conditioned by his knowledge in the field of philosophy. Philosophy can be attributed to those basic values of society, which, according to Bilalov (2015), determine the norms of human behavior and contribute to the cultural development of society and adequate reflection of social reality.

A person can get several specialties in the educational process but this does not mean, as some people erroneously think, that it is possible to get more than one higher education. We argue that a person can get only one higher education since it implies the comprehension of philosophy, ethics and other humanities, a high degree of morality, spirituality, general cultural development, that is, the many-sided development of the individual. Higher education and a high personal level involve mastering the advances of world culture, the presence of humane qualities, love and a certain measure of mercy towards people, mutual assistance and an obligatory feeling of gratitude.

We do not deny the fact that educational institutions are capable of training a highly qualified specialist even without the above mentioned sciences. However, such a specialist can be deprived of such humane qualities as philanthropy, compassion, mutual assistance, he may be indifferent to human misfortunes, that is, he may be like a soulless robot. Of course, we are talking only about the probability of such results. (We are aware that these results may not be the case.) Unfortunately, such a highly qualified specialist, a scientist-robot experienced in, for example, nuclear physics, virology, is able to direct his knowledge not to human well-being, but to conquering of people. A radical example can be destruction of people for the sake of power over others. As noted by the famous researcher Kasavin (2020), modern society is often called the 'knowledge society' that refers to 'the impact of science and education on social practices and technologies'. The unconditional legitimacy of his remarks is obvious, but the possible impact can be not only humane and noble, but also mercenary and inhuman.

A person devoid of morality, spirituality, upbringing, and culture is actually a rude and insensitive creature. Such a person can even be defined as an animal. The true essence of a person, among other qualities, is determined by the level of his culture, spirituality, and personal development (Ismailov, 2010). Arsaliev (2017) writes that personal development involves the upbringing and cultural development. The educational process, at its core, should be aimed at the formation of a personality who is familiar with culture (Arsaliev, 2016).

The work of a specialist who has received a higher education in a certain field, and especially in one where the fate and lives of other people depend on the professional level of a specialist, should initially be conditioned by moral qualities, the principle of justice, and the system of values. Consequently, in his professional activity, a specialist must determine his priority values. Philosophy plays a crucial role in this process through its ideological, theoretical, educational and other functions in relation to particular sciences, social life and all types of activity. Philosophy, through its functions, determines the place, role, goals and objectives of both higher education and the entire educational process.

Yanitsky (2019) writes that emerging information technologies necessitate reconsideration of the issues of education and upbringing since “the population and organizations get unprecedented access to sources of knowledge and information” (p. 32).

Delokarov (2014) argues that people's ideas about society and the functions of philosophy and science have changed over the past decades due to the widespread processes of informatization and computerization that changed people's perception of the world. However, for example, ideological and methodological functions of philosophy are still important for particular sciences. We believe that the role of philosophy in this regard cannot fundamentally change.

For example, the dialectics of the correlation of all spheres of society's life enables the conclusion that the solution to various problems in education and in the entire spiritual sphere of society is ultimately determined by the economic capabilities of society. This solution is also due to the state of affairs in the social, political and legal spheres of public life. The role of politics, law and morality is as enormous as the role of economics. The solution to any social problem should initially be considered in the context of the unity of all spheres of public life, in the context of their correlation and mutual dependence (Ismailov, 2014).

7. Conclusion

Thus, the above arguments and provisions yield the conclusion regarding the purpose and objectives of higher professional education. The process of obtaining a certain specialty by a student should be an important part of the entire educational process in the system of higher professional education. Nevertheless, this process should be subordinated to the highest goal of forming high moral qualities, high spirituality, and a comprehensively developed personality. Achievement of this goal will undoubtedly contribute to further advance of society to a higher civilizational level. In the future, the professional activity of a highly moral person can have a positive impact on other people.

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