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Social Transformation of Kazakhstan Society in the System of Higher Education

The objective of this research is to study the attitude of students to social and cultural values of modern education system. The following tasks were determined: attitude of students to commercialization of the education system and its consequences; definition of the main social and cultural values of modern education; study of student identification grounds. Academic mobility was monitored among Bachelor students. According to the research results, we made the following conclusions: Currently, trends of westernization and commercialization of education are emerging. Students focus on pragmatic aspects of their education. The principles of individual freedom and self-realization dominate the principles of collectivism, ideological conviction and consciousness in the training process. The authors came to the conclusion that in modern conditions, updating of education content implies theoretically and practically justified transition to a humanitarian paradigm of education development, the measure and center of which is a person. The humanitarian paradigm of education development implies its humanitarization and humanization. The basis of this process integrity is spiritual component of education that presupposes a philosophical understanding of human being and problems of educating spirituality as the highest degree of human development. Thus, the education and educational programs quality must be assessed, first of all, by the depth of disclosing abilities of a human as a creative person.

Keywords: higher education, commercialization of education, academic mobility, international mobility, humanization, humanization.

In modern conditions of social development, education is seen as a major factor of social and economic development. The reason for such attention is that the main value and capital of the society is a person capable of finding and mastering new knowledge, making non-standard decisions. No one doubts that further development due to exclusively economic growth and increasing technical power is impossible in the modern world. The future development will be largely determined by the level of spiritual culture of a particular civilization.

Intellectualization and information explosion of the late XX and early XXI century have not only changed the state of the society but also caused backlog of educational content from the level of advanced science, thereby causing the «education crisis». Discordance occurred between the needs of a person and the society in knowledge and opportunities of the existing education system.

The main factors that gave rise to the «education crisis» are firstly contradictions between education designed for a relatively stable situation and rapidly changing and complicating social world, and secondly contradiction between the orientation of education on assimilating as much knowledge as possible and an avalanche-like increase in information produced, and thirdly contradiction between the installation of a narrow specialization and need for a holistic, systemic vision of the world, fourthly contradictions between the national specifics of education and the need of the modern world in uniform standards of education, and fifthly domination of values of pragmatism, individualism over the ideals of humanism education.

As known, education system is a basic social institution determining the level of scientific technical, economic and cultural progress of the society. For the purpose of facilitating this progress, this institution must not only comply with the needs of time, but also have ability for advanced development [1]. In modern conditions education as social institute is imposed new requirements that relate to the features, goals and methods of the educational process, status of the education in the social institutes system. They generated new approaches to solving traditional problems related to globalization, becoming of a new informational space, new educational technologies. Such problems as education modernization, self-education, continuing education, decentralization, commercialization and prestige of education, education and mobility, education and career, new conflicts in education, social justice and education, use of intellectual potential in the country, interactive training problems and other become more and more urgent [2; 7].

Thus, today education system faces the necessity of a new self-determination. Previous arguments in many respects cease to be effective or cannot compete in comparison to the arguments adduced on behalf of other spheres of life activities, and claiming for a place in the system of social priorities. At the same time we have to reach out not only to the State, but to the society itself that needs convincing and in detail worked out

justification of that why exactly in this quality, and with these expenses, for solving exactly which task, it is necessary to develop and improve education system.

Kazakhstan like many other countries performs various in depth and scale reforms of the national education system. Considering social significance of these reforms, as well as huge funds invested by the State in education, the need for developing scientifically based, methodologically verified strategy of education development is more and more evident.

In this regard, the State Program for Education Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020 provides for measures in achieving high level of the higher education quality meeting the needs of the labor market, tasks of industrial and innovative development of the country, personality and complying with the best global educational practices.

For the purpose of improving universities competitiveness, Kazakhstan higher education institutions are classified by their profile and number considering requirements of the «State industrial and innovative development of Kazakhstan up to 2020».

In the modern world, education is the foundation of a democratic way of life and culture. Therefore, modern and democratic society needs modern level of education. Education is one of the main conditions for active participation people in political, economic, social and spiritual life of society. Among numerous innovations in the education system of the post-Soviet period, commercialization of this system is specially distinguished. In our opinion, the commercialization of education and upbringing is in conflict with the ideal of humanism affirming self-worth of a human, prescribing to restore even chances for everyone to be exposed to common welfare that without any doubt include also knowledge, intellectual skills, abilities, standards of decency, social studies. Commercialization, momentary pragmatism, from our position as the antithesis of humanization, in essence, undermines education as a civil institution.

It is this problematic situation in the education system that we have analyzed in a sociological study. Its goal is to study the attitude of students to the social and cultural values of the modern education system. The survey covered 207 students of the 1–4* years of different ethnicity trained on budget and commercial basis. The sampling is quota target. Quantitative and qualitative composition allows considering this sampling as representative.

In our study, we studied the attitude of students to the commercialization of the education system and its consequences; determined the main social and cultural values of the modern education; studied identification base of students.

High degree of identification with universal, civil, and professional criteria is fairly stable indicator as they allow forming social norms and values, structure social order.

Students identified themselves as follows: «I am a student» — 24.7 %; «I am a human» — 9.2 % of answers. But it is remarkable that the second most often response was «I am a person» — 10.2 % from the total number of answers; this characterized significantly high indicator of the individualism peculiar to young people. Subsequently, it can be foreseen that this indicator of individualism will somewhat decrease, and human, civil and professional positions will be represented to a greater degree. Thus, according to the results of a sociological study conducted in 2011 by the Kazakhstan Institute of Strategic Studies of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (KISS), among respondents (the study was conducted by national sampling), universal and civil identification criteria dominate, 94 % and 83.5 %, respectively [3].

Besides, answering the question «with whom they identify themselves?», respondents named their personal characteristics: responsible, neat, caring, etc.; this also, in our opinion, shows the desire for personal self-affirmation.

When distributing answers to a question: «Do you agree that students need to be involved in community service?», none of the respondents agreed fully on this need. Joint, collective work and useful social activities are not among the significant social values of the student, and most of the students (46.2 %) would not like to voluntarily participate in such activities.

***Gender of the respondents:** men — 129 people (62.3 %), women — 78 people (37.7 %).

Ethnicity of the respondents: 58.1 % (104 people) Kazakhs, 28.5 % (59 people) Russians, 4.3 % (9 people) Ukrainians, 1.9 % (4 people) Koreans, 2.4 % (4 people) Tatars, 1.8 % (3 people) Belarusians, 1.2 % (2 people) Germans, 1.2 % (2 peoples) Chinese, 0.6 % (1 person) Azerbaijanis.

Respondents' year of study: 1 year — 24.6 % (51 people), 2 year — 28.1 % (58 people), 3 year — 22.7 % (47 people), 4 year — 24.6 % (51 people).

Mode of study: grant — 59.9 % (124 people); paid — 40.1 % (83 people).

According to the study, the main reason for students' participation in public activities for the majority of respondents is pressure from the administration of their university (50.4 %) that characterizes reluctance to or disinterest in social activities. The principles of collectivism, which are supported only by 12.5 % of the respondents, these are the ones who chose the answer option «I want to be useful to other people», are not dominant among the student population.

That is, the existing collective activity is compulsion by the administration or leadership skills of the students themselves (I want to be aware of the latest events, I like to be in the center of attention, etc.) – 87.5 % of all answers.

Identification by personality is correlated with unwillingness to participate in community work, χ^2 – criterion = 5.948, value $\chi^2_{\text{кр}}$ – criterion = 9.488. We can say that there is a statistically significant relationship and accept the hypothesis about the dominance of individualistic values.

Questions aimed at determining their level of knowledge, showed initially inflated self-esteem of students. The answers were distributed as follows.

Table

Distribution of answers to the question «To which group of students do you related yourself?», %

Options of answers	Gender		Year				Ethnicity			Total
	Male	Female	1	2	3	4	Kazakh	Russian	Other	
«Advanced»	33.2	20.9	11.4	11.2	17.5	14.0	39.4	8.8	5.9	54.1
«Average»	28.7	15.7	12.8	11.0	10.4	10.2	17.8	19.3	7.3	44.4
«Low-performing»	0.4	1.1	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.9	0.4	0.2	1.5
Total	62.3	37.7	24.6	22.7	28.1	24.6	58.1	28.5	13.4	100

The high level of student self-esteem does not correlate with statistical data on the demand for students of our university in the international community and low rates of academic mobility.

Thus, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan has monitored the academic mobility of Bachelor students. Their indicator of mobility was 0.7 % of the total number of students in the Republic of Kazakhstan [4].

The students' responses clearly show a pragmatic tendency in choosing profession, thus, the majority believe that their profession provides an opportunity to earn well, and it is prestigious in the society — the total amount of the answers was 45.8 % of the respondents.

When considering whether the attitude of students to the chosen program changed after admission, it turned out that for 47.3 % of respondents it improved, remained unchanged for 24.6 %, worsened for 11.1 % of respondents, and 17 % found it difficult to answer.

The main reasons for the negative attitude to the chosen program according to respondents are a lot of unnecessary subjects — 15.9 %, poor organization of the educational process — 13.5 %, unfair assessment of knowledge — 5.3 %, low level of teaching — 3.4 %, disappointment in the profession — 2.8 %, extortion by teachers — 1.4 %.

After graduating from university, 50.7 % of respondents are going to work in the profession they study (for the 4th year this figure is the highest — 90.35), only 8.6 % are not going to work in the profession in the future.

When calculating correlation indices correlating the desire to work in a given profession and a conscious, pragmatic choice, we obtained the following values: $\chi^2 = 1,792$; $\chi^2_{\text{кр}} = 3,841$, $\chi^2_{\text{кр}} > \chi^2$, which indicates the existence of a statistically significant relationship. This fact is confirmed by the coefficients of Kramer and Kendall, $K=0.133$; $T=0.112$.

Students are quite loyal to the reforms of the education system in Kazakhstan, which is understandable because they themselves are participants of this process and perceive it as a given, without being able to compare. Mostly positive changes were noted in the improvement of the material and technical base of education — 28.9 %, the four-year study period — 20.7 %, but the commercialization of the higher education and the westernization of the education system, as a positive change, are noted by a minority - 8.6 % of respondents.

According to the results of a sociological survey, 49.2 % of students believe that higher education should be free for everyone, 42.9 % are satisfied with the current system of state funding of the higher education by provision of educational grants, only 2.4 % of respondents agreed that higher education should be paid only.

If there was an opportunity to change their future profession, the majority of respondents (57.7 %) answered that they would not change their program, which indicates satisfaction with the chosen program.

Many have indicated that they would change their profession and become lawyers (9.7 %), experts in the field of economics (7.8 %), oil industry workers (4.8 %), architects (4.8 %), civil engineers (2.9 %), logisticians (2.9 %), cosmonauts (2.9 %), gynecologists (2.9 %), art historians (1.2 %), journalists (1.2 %), deputies (1.2 %).

According to the study results, we made the following conclusions:

1. Currently, trends of westernization and the commercialization of education have become apparent.
2. Students focus on the pragmatic aspect of education.
3. The principles of individual freedom, self-realization dominate the principles of collectivism, ideological conviction and consciousness in the training process.

L.Ya. Gurevich notes that «today, higher education in Kazakhstan has acquired its own face, however, there are contradictions. The main contradiction is between liberalism in education expressed in a larger share of the private sector, declaration of broad rights of educational institutions, the principles of university autonomy and strict state regulation in the field of the structure and content of education. The essential point is that American model, which served as the main model for Kazakhstan, has not even a hint of any standardization of the education content. The activities of the Ministry of Education are limited here exclusively by financial and distribution functions. In most European countries, there is a substantial basis for severe government intervention in the livelihoods of educational institutions. This is belonging of the overwhelming majority of universities to the State. Here the education content is regulated gently and unobtrusively. Kazakhstan have to take into account its past, improving its market today. Most universities are not ready for broad autonomy, including the matters of education content, so development of state educational standards justifies itself. State standards to a certain extent contribute to inter-university and international mobility. Nevertheless, the practice of developing standards and model programs does not take into account the particularities of programs and disciplines» [5; 106].

A characteristic feature of the development of higher education in Kazakhstan «was the rejection of the State monopoly on education, the abolition of centralized management of education and strict regulation of activities of higher educational institutions. As a result, the non-state sector of higher education began to develop on equal terms indicating the creation of educational services market, which, like any market, develops according to the law of competition. State higher education institutions received a right to admit and train for a fee, thereby to diversify the sources of funding for higher education» [6; 56].

Changes in the structure of higher education were associated with the shift in the role of the State in higher education, which was determined by adoption of such laws as the laws «On Education» and «On Higher Education» in 1992 and 1993, and the Law «On Education» in 1999 and 2007. State programs of education development in Kazakhstan for 2005–2010 and for 2011–2020. These legislative acts introduced new organizational principles of the State administration in higher education. They can be formulated as granting greater autonomy to universities, i.e. the ability to manage their own financial assets and property; find additional sources of funding, determine the directions of research and teaching activities; increased decentralization of the State administration; control over the quality of education; introduction of competition principles for budget financing.

We believe that in modern conditions update of the education content supposes for theoretically and practically justified approach to humanitarian paradigm of education development, the measure and center of which is human. The humanitarian paradigm of education development implies its humanitarization and humanization.

From the point of view of the content of humanitarian education, it is necessary to talk about the following areas that should be represented in it: philosophical, historical, cultural, economic, social and political, environmental, and physical.

To humanize and humanitarize education means to determine the main task of education as free development of personal abilities in all spheres of its activity by approaching the achievements of global and national culture.

Improving the quality of higher and professional education, training graduates at the level of leading educational institutions of industrial developed countries is impossible without strengthening the spiritual component of the training and educational process [7].

The basis of this process integrity is the spiritual component of education that presupposes a philosophical understanding of human existence and the problem of educating spirituality as the highest degree of human development. Thus, assessment of the quality of education and educational programs is necessary, first of all, according to the depth of disclosing abilities of a human as a creative person.

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Жоғары білім беру жүйесіндегі қазақстандық қоғамды элеуметтік трансформациялау

Аталған зерттеудің мақсаты студенттердің заманауи білім беру жүйесіндегі элеуметтік-мәдени құндылықтарға деген көзқарасын зерделеу болып табылады. Зерттеу барысында келесі мәселелер анықталды: студенттердің білім беру жүйесіндегі коммерциализация және оның нәтижелеріне көзқарастары; заманауи білім берудегі негізгі элеуметтік-мәдени құндылықтарды анықтау; студенттердің сәйкестендіру негіздерін зерттеу. Бакалавриат студенттерінің академиялық ұтқырлық мониторингі жүргізілді. Зерттеу нәтижелерінен біз келесі тұжырымдамаларға келдік. Қазіргі таңда білім беруде вестернизация және коммерциализация заңдылықтары көрініс табады. Студенттер білім алудың прагматикалық аспектісіне бағыт алған. Білім беру барысында тұлғаның еркіндігі, өзін-өзі дамыту қағидалары, ұжымшылдық, идеялық сенімділік пен саналылық қағидаларына қарағанда, басым. Авторлар білім беру мазмұнын жаңартып, қазіргі жағдайда білім беруді дамытудың гуманитарлық парадигмасына теориялық және іс жүзінде негізделген өтуді көздейді, оның өлшемі мен орталығы адам болып табылады деген ойға келді. Білім берудің гуманитарлық парадигмасы білім берудегі ізгілендіруді білдіреді. Бұл үдерістің тұтастығы негізі адам болмысының философиялық түсінігін және адамдық бастама дамуының ең жоғары дәрежесі ретінде руханилықты тәрбиелеу мәселелерін болжайтын білімнің рухани құрамдас бөлігі болып табылады. Осылайша, білім беру мен білім беру бағдармаларының сапасын бағалай отырып, ең алдымен, адам қабілетін терең зерттеп, шығармашылық тұлға ретінде қарастыру керек.

Кілт сөздер: жоғары білім, білімді коммерцияландыру, академиялық ұтқырлық, халықаралық ұтқырлық, гуманитаризация, гуманизация.

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Социальная трансформация казахстанского общества в системе высшего образования

Целью данного исследования является изучение отношения студентов к социокультурным ценностям современной системы образования. Были определены следующие задачи: отношение студентов к коммерциализации системы образования и ее последствиям; определение основных социокультурных

ценностей современного образования; изучение идентификационных оснований студентов. Проведен мониторинг академической мобильности студентов бакалавриата. По результатам исследования нами были сделаны следующие выводы. В настоящее время наметились тенденции вестернизации и коммерциализации образования. Студенты нацелены на прагматический аспект получения образования. Принципы свободы личности, самореализации доминируют над принципами коллективизма, идейной убежденности и сознательности в процессе обучения. Авторы пришли к мнению, что в современных условиях обновление содержания образования предполагает теоретически и практически обоснованный переход к гуманитарной парадигме развития образования, мерой и центром которой является человек. Гуманитарная парадигма развития образования предполагает его гуманитаризацию и гуманизацию. Основой целостности этого процесса является духовная составляющая образования, предполагающая философское осмысление бытия человека и проблемы воспитания духовности как высшей степени развития человеческого начала. Таким образом, оценивать качество образования и образовательных программ необходимо, прежде всего, по глубине раскрытия способностей человека как творческой личности.

Ключевые слова: высшее образование, коммерциализация образования, академическая мобильность, международная мобильность, гуманитаризация, гуманизация.

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