THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITY FACULTY MEMBERS IN THE
SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE TEACHERS
WITHIN THE EDUCATIONAL SPACE OF HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

The relevance of the problem under study is due to the fact that spirituality forms the personality and is the highest moral center where the whole essence and the whole meaning of human existence are concentrated. The social crisis and transformation of the last few decades particularly have shown that the current generation of young people has an evident mismatch and underdevelopment of certain properties and qualities. Motivation for material consumption and overconsumption has increased and the role and significance of intellectual and spiritual and moral spheres has decreased. The aim of the article is a theoretical study of the basic concepts of the educational process - spirit, spirituality, religion, and morality; attempts to associate the concept of "spirituality" and "morality" in the philosophical system of views. The article analyzes the existing approaches to the understanding of spirituality, the inclusion of spirituality in the context of psychological analysis; it also views possible ways of spiritual and moral formation of a person, the tendencies in modern education and the role of a teacher. The authors emphasize that the sphere of education is designed to resist the destructive tendencies of modern society and to support creative and innovative tendencies, which are realized through the action of social institutions, one of which is the University. Science should play a crucial role in the development of future society, in education of spiritual and moral personality, and higher school teacher acts as a translator of human values. The main national priority in Russia of the twenty-first century is the development of innovation. The development of the national project "Education" has led to a comprehensive modernization of education. Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University takes a leading position in the development and implementation of SAU, which, along with the change in the bachelor training model (subject teacher for modern school) also includes:

- increasing role of a teacher's personality and their professional competence in the successful implementation of innovative social and educational problems in the new socio-cultural conditions;
- the creation of the model (the portrait) of a XXI century teacher's professional competence in the new socio-cultural conditions.

Being one of the most important areas of public knowledge, morality nevertheless has not become an educational field in any school or university. The pedagogical community is increasingly aware of the fact that the goals, values and purports, which are now set in modern knowledge-centrist and even competence model of modern higher education, are far from ideal and do not meet the prognostic expectations, which would correspond to the real challenges of the contemporary socio-cultural situation in the world and in the Russian society.

The study used socio-cultural and conceptual approaches to forecasting purposes, and value-meaningful orientations of education of the XXI century. Analysis of the socio-cultural situation in our country, in the world, in economics, in science, education and in other spheres of human activities shows that we undergo a crisis situation. The crisis phenomena and processes have created complex, difficult issues that in the scientific world are recognized and perceived as a challenge to all the humanity, including a teacher-researcher of the XXI century. From the dialectical point of view, the world is a multidimensional binarity (good and evil, poverty and wealth, stupidity and human wisdom), which is interwoven in the contemporary world. What the world of tomorrow will be like largely depends on the role of teacher.

The crisis has aggravated, identified, highlighted and allowed us to formulate accurately and precisely not imaginary and farfetched problems, but real and urgent ones, as well as to identify priorities to address these problems. The professors of Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University see the solution of these issues in the development of the model of the XXI century teacher. Diderot stated: "The
highest purpose of life is not economic and not social, but spiritual. Greatness of a nation and its contribution to the history of humankind is determined not by the power of state, not by the economic development but by spiritual culture.”

Keywords: spirituality, secular spirituality, personality of the teacher, culture, morality.

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses a timely issue: the necessity to develop an educated, intelligent and highly moral person on the basis of spiritual and moral education and family traditions, a person who is ready for creative work and able to maintain the moral high ground.

The spiritual and moral formation of young people is a key task of modern education. Education is called to maintain, develop and enhance humanity in people and awaken their desire for moral transformation, cultural, social and spiritual growth. Today, the government realizes the importance of the spiritual and moral development and upbringing of Russian citizens to ensure social and cultural modernization of the Russian society. Our society, consisting of diverse individuals, social groups and current social trends, has become aware of immorality, which has been in progress since the end of the 1980s (L.V. Yassman, 2011)[1]. Spirituality is the content of life, improving its quality, making different manifestations of human personality possible and facilitating socialization (A.C. Edwards (2003)[2], S. Glazer (1994)[3].

Universities, being at the top of the scientific and educational pyramid in a multistage system of educational institutions, play a critical role in the spiritual and moral development of students. University is supposed to act both as an educational-scientific and spiritual center, developing a new teacher identity (V.L. Pustovalov (2002)[4], E. J. Tisdell, (2003)[5], O.A. Bakhchieva, (2013)[6], the task aimed to implement innovative models of training teachers in the 21st century. It is a university teacher who is a key figure in the formation of students’ worldview on the basis of spiritual and moral education.

In the course of university preparation, students develop their first professional skills and define their beliefs and worldview. The most significant changes in terms of personal and professional development occur in adolescence, they are related to the system of values in life, interests and favorite occupations. The age of youth, students’ age, is sensitive to intensive self-awareness and self-development. This is the most fertile time for the development of young people’s spiritual and moral potential based on self-awareness, moral self-realization and self-actualization.[4]

Currently, vast experience has been accumulated in the area of spiritual and moral development of the personality V.I. Andreev (2015)[7], A.G.Asmolov (1998)[8], V.S.Bibler (1998)[9], L.I.Bozhovich (1995)[10], V.P.Zinchenko (2001)[11], L.M.Popov (2000)[12], V.I.Slobodchikov (2009)[13], V.D.Shadrinov (1996)[14], A. Edwards (2003), C.Rozuel (2011)[15], N.Strohminger, S. Nichols (2014[16]), F.Nunspeet, B.Derks, S.Nieuwenhuis (2014)[17], K. Aquino, A. Reed (2002)[18], and others, which testifies to the relevance of this issue and practical complexity of its solution. However, in our opinion, the problem of spiritual and moral formation of future teachers requires further systemic and conceptual interpretation, due to the increasing influence of the teachers’ personality and their professional competence on the successful implementation of innovative social and educational tasks and on the preparation of teachers under new socio-cultural conditions of the 21st century.

2 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

2.1 The Concept of “Spirituality” in Modern Pedagogy and Psychology

There exist different approaches to this issue: spirituality is associated either with morality, or culture, or is referred to the sphere of philosophy and religion.

To clarify this issue, let us consider the existing points of view concerning the concepts of “spirituality” and “morality”, and compare these concepts in terms of philosophy.

People interpret spirituality as an aspiration of spirit, which urges them to seek the fair ideals of truth, love and beauty. In religion, it is a manifestation of divine power, elevating people above their everyday life, making it morally meaningful and giving a moral sense to their deeds. In philosophy, it is a certain mysterious creative power, exciting inspiration (the spirit of creativity) in artists, authors and scholars, all those who are engaged in studying people’s life.
In the Pedagogical Dictionary “spiritual education” or the development of spirituality is defined as “the formation of axiological attitudes to life, which secure the consistent and harmonious development of a person … the development of a sense of duty, justice, sincerity, responsibility and other features, attaching a higher meaning to people’s deeds and thoughts”.

In her thesis, N. Koval (1997)[19] defines spirituality in the following way: “Spirituality is a systemic psychic phenomenon. Its structure includes personal emotional elements of a rational-irrational type in ethical-aesthetical, intellectual-cognitive and moral-ethical spheres. They are formed as a result of an active life quest, finally leading to the understanding that the meaning of life is one’s spiritual growth, and this is the determining factor of spirituality as a personality phenomenon.” A. A. Andrushakevich (1999)[20] defines spirituality as “… people’s ability to distinguish and select real moral values, when their deeds, conduct and way of life are subordinated to them”.

A.A. Avraamenko (2005)[21] associates spirituality, first and foremost, with Christian God as a True Spirit, a creature transcendent in relation to the nature of our being. Man, in his opinion, is a creature of personality, who manifests oneself in two types of nature – animal and truly human, potentially connected with the other Heavenly world.

E. Schockenhoff (2014)[22] also believes that by appealing to religion we can resolve conflicts of the modern society.

I.A. Solovtsova (2006)[23] notes the existing equivalence of the concepts “spirituality” and “morality”. Orthodox pedagogy considers that both morality and spirituality are inborn qualities and they cannot exist without each other. Both of them are eventually revealed in a person with his/her spiritual growth: Spirituality determines the meaning and morality dictates the rules and manners of actions.

When analyzing current theoretical and methodological approaches to the studies of the “spirituality” concept, N.A. Buravleva (2011)[24] comes to the conclusion that spirituality is the human’s highest substructure, which performs a system-building function in developing the psychic integrity of the world of a person and his/her relationships with other people. The most important psychological characteristics of spirituality are values and axiological attitudes and one’s responsibility for his/her actions and behavior. The phenomenon of spirituality is closely connected with the issue of personal self-realization and self-actualization.

Thus, spirituality develops human personality and becomes the highest moral center, which comprises the essence and the meaning of human existence. Spirituality grows out of the integration of knowledge, living experience and internal students’ desire to comprehend the meaning of their profession, their personal development and constant and anxious care about “humanity in humans”, about children’s soul and their past, present and future. The meaning of their profession is revealed to them through the hierarchy of values in students’ personal spiritual world, which is capable of understanding, inclusive and tolerant attitudes to the axiological worlds of their future pupils (I.A. Il’yn) (1993)[25].

2.2 The Development of General Cultural Competences in Future Teachers

The Federal State Educational Standard, the Third Generation, was adopted as a result of the changes in the structure and content of the Russian education. According to this Standard, general cultural competences should be mastered by learners as the final result of learning at each level of training and area of knowledge.

The competence approach is a key tool in designing CAE, a new model for the preparation of bachelors (a subject teacher for modern schools). The concept of personal competence is a kind of “focal” notion in the world educational practices for the following reasons:

- firstly, it comprises both intellectual and practical components of education;
- secondly, the idea of competence presupposes the interpretation of content in education, which is based on the result (“Standard output”);
- thirdly, the integrative nature of a personality competence incorporates a number of similar or closely related pieces of knowledge and experiences from a broad field of culture and activities.

In this regard, we note that professional competence of the teacher, being a leading category of educational theory and practice, lacks unambiguous interpretation in modern pedagogical consciousness.
Let us analyze the various understandings of the category "professional competence of the teacher" found in scientific-pedagogical and psychological-pedagogical literature and related research and try to systematize (generalize) the existing trends.

The first trend: The category of “professional competence is connected with the phenomenon “culture”, which comes as a result of the personality development, its education and upbringing (E.V.Bondarevskaya (1999)[26], B.S.Gershunsky (1997)[27] et al.

B.S.Gershunskiy (1997) interprets the concept of "competence" as prospective in nature, associating it with the adaptation of new discoveries in its content and development, concerning human cognition and practice. It enables researchers to determine educational requirements for each type, profile and level of education systems.

General cultural competence is presented as a combination of three aspects: semantic (including the adequacy of understanding situations in the cultural context, i.e. in the context of existing cultural patterns of understanding, relationships and values); problem-practical (providing adequate recognition of situations, adequate setting and effective implementation of goals, objectives and norms in this situation); communicative (focusing attention on adequate communication in situations of cultural context and about such situations, taking into account relevant cultural patterns of communication and interaction). Professional competence is a component derived from of a common cultural competence of any person.

E.V.Bondarevskaya's (1999) idea of the essence of pedagogical competence is also based on the concept of the pedagogical culture. The pedagogical culture is a dynamic system of pedagogical values, ways of life and professional work of the teacher.

The second trend: Professional competence is understood as a system of qualities and skills.

T.G.Brazhe (1990)[28] presents professional competence as a system, including the aspects of philosophical, psychological, sociological, cultural and personal type. "Professional competence of people, working in the area which requires interpersonal contacts (teachers, doctors, lawyers, members of the service industry), is determined both by their basic (scientific) knowledge and skills and their axiological orientations, motives of their activities, understanding of themselves in their world and the world around them, their style of relationships with other people working with them, their general culture and their ability to develop personal creative potential. Teacher's profession adds to this list the skills in methods of teaching his/her subject; the ability to understand and influence the spiritual world of students and respect them; professionally significant personal qualities. The absence of at least one of these components breaks down the whole system and reduces the effectiveness of teacher's work. "Consequently, we distinguish the following indicators of the studied concept: possession of professional knowledge and skills, axiological orientations in society, culture which manifests itself in speech, the style of communication, the attitude of teachers to themselves, their practical activity and its implementation.

Thus, general cultural and human values, which are desirable in the ideological system of future teachers, are both the result and the strategic direction to be followed in the implementation of educational work at the university.

2.3 Diagnosing the effectiveness of education and the development of students' moral culture

In order to determine the effectiveness of students’ upbringing and their spiritual-moral development, we diagnosed the moral culture in students of different faculties, using the methodology of V.I. Andreev (2007)[29]. This technique is based on a test with a 10-point scale, assessing the level of a moral personality, it uses a students’ self-test of their moral qualities. The test consisted of five blocks: Block I - questions relating to the general culture; Block II – the culture of communication; Block III – the culture of moral self-development; Block IV – the attitude to bad habits and qualities; Block V diagnosed the amplitude of manifestations of moral qualities of opposite values.

This test assisted in conducting an anonymous survey of 90 students from several departments of Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University.
Table 1. Evaluation of the moral culture in the personality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>General culture</th>
<th>Culture of communication</th>
<th>Culture of moral self-development</th>
<th>Attitudes to bad habits and qualities</th>
<th>Average points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>6,3</td>
<td>6,4</td>
<td>6,4</td>
<td>8,5</td>
<td>6,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>7,5</td>
<td>8,0</td>
<td>7,4</td>
<td>8,3</td>
<td>7,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>7,5</td>
<td>7,8</td>
<td>7,5</td>
<td>8,7</td>
<td>7,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>6,3</td>
<td>6,0</td>
<td>6,1</td>
<td>8,8</td>
<td>6,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average value</td>
<td>6,9</td>
<td>7,0</td>
<td>6,8</td>
<td>8,5</td>
<td>7,3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data obtained allow us to make general conclusions concerning the evaluation of the moral culture in students from different faculties. Thus, according to the data in the table, the students of the Faculty of Physical Education and the Faculty of Physics have difficulty in communicating, so their self-esteem is lower than that of the students from the Faculty of History and the Faculty of Biology. All students have negative attitudes to bad habits. The majority of students favor sports. Thirty percent of students do not mind smoking. As for drugs, they are rejected by everybody.

The indicator “General culture” included:
- culture of conduct and communication;
- culture of intellectual activity;
- aesthetic and artistic culture;
- physical culture;
- ecological culture;
- legal culture;
- political culture.

The results of students’ self-assessment yielded rather low points. Forty percent of the respondents found that their culture of intellectual activity was low, thirty percent lack legal knowledge, thirty nine percent rarely display any interest in politics, ninety percent of students favor sports. Taking into account the indicator of students’ general culture, we have come to the conclusion that we should elaborate creative technologies for the development of general-cultural and personal-cultural competencies for future teachers with the aim of preparing a new type of teachers. These teachers should be able to interact with children of transforming personality, initiative children who can easily adapt to the changing demands of the labor market and technologies, children who can work in a team.

At the next stage, we studied axiological-semantic attitudes of students from different faculties, as the system of axiological attitudes belongs to the sphere of spirituality and the person is guided by certain values existing in society or in social groups, which are important to him/her.

We considered axiological attitudes at the level of normative ideals and at the level of individual priorities, using the method of S. Schwartz (2001)[30]. These values are components of the personality worldview structure as certain patterns of evaluating the surrounding world, which determine the choice of his/her personal actions.


The obtained results enabled us to identify the most and the least preferable values in students from different faculties.
Table 2. Average indicators of value items of significance and their ranking at the level of normative ideals and individual priorities (based on S. Schwartz method).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of values</th>
<th>Average points and value type ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The level of normative ideals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformity</td>
<td>2.69 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditions</td>
<td>2.25 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindness</td>
<td>2.45 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universalism</td>
<td>1.84 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>3.95 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulation</td>
<td>1.90 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonism</td>
<td>1.65 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>4.72 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>2.05 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>2.99 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we see in Table 2, the students value most their achievements (personal success in accordance with social standards), independence of thought and actions and security (stability in society, relationships and oneself) both at the level of normative ideals (i.e. at the level of beliefs) and at the level of individual priorities (i.e. in their specific actions). The youth of today appreciate independent thought and the choice of the method of activity, meaningful existence, personal independence, persistence, independent goal-setting, responsibility and success.

At the level of normative ideals, the least significant are the following values: hedonism (experiencing pleasure), universality (understanding, tolerance and protection of all peoples and nature’s welfare) and stimulation. At the level of personal priorities, these are universalism, traditions and kindness. Respect for traditions and their maintenance, acceptance and recognition of ideas of a certain culture, understanding and tolerance are not among the priorities of the modern youth from this selection. Although these values hold the places of priority at the level of normative ideals in the system of students’ axiological attitudes, they are not always realized in specific actions and behavior.

3 CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the analysis of students’ axiological attitudes demonstrates which values are translated to a new generation and which are realized in specific actions and behavior. According to the research results, the respondents have a high commitment to individual values of self-enhancement and neglect altruistic values at the level of individual attitudes.

We can use the following backup possibilities of improving the quality of the moral culture development in university students in the elaboration of the CAE project and creation of the model of teachers’ professional competence in the 21st century:

1. Integrate the most valuable achievements of the pedagogical practices in the moral development of the personality and use all the gained pedagogical and psychological knowledge about the human spiritual-moral core.

2. Enhance the self-development of students’ moral culture by means of university subjects: “Foundations of pedagogical activities”, “The history of education and pedagogy”, “Pedagogical skills”, “Psychological culture of teacher”. Purposefully develop the following competences:
   o ability to solve the issues of upbringing and spiritual-moral development of the learner’s personality (PC-2);
   o ability to understand the significance of culture as a form of human existence and base one’s activity on fundamental cultural values, modern principals of tolerance, dialogue and cooperation (GC-3);
   o readiness for tolerant reception of social and cultural differences, respect and care for the historical heritage and cultural traditions (GC-14).
Introduce a block of ethical subjects related to the essence of human values.

Consequently, the university preparation of future teachers should include the spiritual-moral development of students’ personality along with knowledge acquisition (T.Z. Mukhutdinova, N.P. Yachina, N.N. Khaziyeva (2013)[31].

REFERENCES


