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Spiritual and philosophical background of building the concept of a comprehensive school on the principles of humane pedagogics

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Abstract

The present article is concerned with a philosophical concept of spiritual humanism as the core of humane pedagogics. This concept is artificial, since the meaning of humanity already holds a sense of spirituality, and vice versa. In modern philosophical and pedagogical literature, humanism has purely materialistic content and is defined as "the system of beliefs, expressing recognition of the person as an individual, his rights for freedom, happiness and equality", etc. The word "humanity", which has a Sanskrit origin, means the process of searching by a person of his immortal foundation – the spirit, searching for God inside, the meaning of life. In this searching process, a person acquires faith. The author considers that spirituality is the state of person's inner world, life through love and kindness, patience and compassion, through thinking and feeling, cognition and imagination; through dreams, images, creation, aspiration, the meaning of life, faith; through the cognition of him- or herself. Therefore, humane pedagogics is defined as a theory and creative practice of pupil's personality formation with the help of the teacher's personality, creating and thinking through the system of content and resources developed also on the basis of the spiritual humanism concept.

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Keywords

Humane pedagogics, spiritual humanism, human rights, philosophical concept, education.

Introduction

Over the last 3-4 decades, the so-called author schools occur more frequently in educational spaces of many countries. With their orientation, content, methodological equipment and structure sometimes they are very different from the schools that we call traditional. As a rule, traditional schools strictly follow government regulations and educational standards. They form a mass practice. Author schools allow themselves to expand the educational content and change the nature of relations between teachers and pupils. They are not popular but they can make certain prospects for the development of education in the near or distant future.

The implementation of the author school concept also has its own specific features, among which the main thing is that people involved in this process - teachers, parents, pupils in part, too - must agree with the proposed content and way of life. Another feature of author concepts is related to the possibility of their distribution.

Spiritual and philosophical background of the concept of comprehensive school in humane pedagogics

In the educational area of the former Soviet Union the world-famous "Shchetinin's School" and schools based on the ideas of humane education are typical in this sense.

"Shchetinin's School" is unique because it is difficult to replicate. It builds up a special practice of children's life and the organization of educational process, there are formed collaborative relationships between teachers and children, between children themselves, there are proclaimed spiritual and moral values the entire system of motivating pupil's sources is standing on. Many prescriptions behind the ideas of the School are contrary to the state prescriptions of mass schools. Replication of "Shchetinin's School" is associated with such intractable problems as special personnel training and legislative base for functioning of author school of this type. That is why, despite the fact that everyone admires "Shchetinin's School", it knows no equals in the world.

For the last 50 years the ideas of the humane pedagogics are increasingly spreading in the world of education in many countries. They affect mainly teacher's personality and the nature of the pedagogical communication. The expansion of educational content takes place on the basis of state educational standards. If one has the desire and enthusiasm to establish qualified training of teachers, the ideas of humane pedagogics may enter into a mass practice. Under current conditions, it happens this way: thousands of teachers, nursery teachers and parents use humane pedagogics as a basis of upbringing and educational activity. In this regard, here appears a problem of author programs development for pedagogical collectives.

Author educational concepts established under humane pedagogics can vary depending on local conditions, foreground values and pedagogical collective's capacities and even on the level of their understanding of humane education essence. There are psychological and pedagogical

preconditions, on the basis of which the author educational concept of this or that level should be constructed. As a rule, the author concept is constructed for the community of people who are to perform it.

The basis of the author concept is the concept of spiritual humanism. Through it, the whole learning process with all its components is interpreted. Humane pedagogical consciousness opposes authoritarian consciousness. The latter comes from the fact that a pupil is an object, and a teacher is the subject of development in the educational process. A teacher is the indisputable authority for a pupil. As for the humane pedagogical consciousness, it puts Child's personality, his spiritual aspirations, motivations, interests, capabilities, the intellect endowed with a thirst for knowledge on the first place. It is important to have a real face-to-face contact with a Child when a humane teacher expresses his or her creativity and presents values accumulated in national and world culture to pupils.

The teacher's personality determines the quality and direction of the educational process, which is a subjective reality. In each case it is created by a teacher. The quality of the educational process depends on teacher's mind, heart, character, will, experience, knowledge, and aspirations, on his or her personality as a whole. Teacher is a reflection of an educational process. He/she may or may not believe in the capabilities of his pupils, he/she may like or dislike this profession and children, may be good or bad, be an innovator or a standpatter, etc. Anyhow, the subjective state of teacher's spirit affect and educational process created by him or her. From the position of the humane pedagogics, the main factors of education reform are not new educational standards or the so-called "technologies", not new didactic tools and "modern" equipment, not new curricula and textbooks, and so on, but a teacher, an educator.

A teacher reforms school and, unfortunately, deforms it. "In educating, in any school affair nothing can be improved without a teacher" – K. Ushinsky wrote. We may add that in educating, in any school affair nothing can be improved without teacher' mind and heart. Only a humane man with a soul can create humane pedagogics. It can't be created only by intellect; intellect must be passed through a good heart to make educational process joyful.

Thus, the possibility of the author conception realization in practice fully depends on teacher's personal aspirations, from the collective will of the pedagogical community.

For some teachers it will not be a problem: they are friendly by nature, they love children, and follow their hearts when they chose a profession. It won't be hard for them to raise their consciousness to the level of the spiritual humanism concept. Humane pedagogics will take hold as their own position.

In other teachers eager for creativity and open to everything new, the ideas of the humane pedagogics will arouse an interest and enthusiasm. They will find the will to reconstruct their minds, to improve their character and relationships, to cultivate the necessary qualities.

The third group of teachers, by virtue of their beliefs will not want to perform the humane educational practices and it is impossible to force them through the administrative pressure.

Author concept can be successfully implemented in those schools where most teachers tend to accept it, showing desire and enthusiasm. In those schools where most teachers adhere to authoritarian educational process, this approach will not pay for itself.

A teacher who steps on the path of humane pedagogics must understand that the main assistant and guardian of the Child's development will be an interested, educated and loving parent. That is why the teacher should devote sufficient time for communication with parents, their enlightenment and communion to educational and upbringing activities in the spirit of pedagogical humanism. And then the success will be ensured.

Typically, school heads are proud of their "good pedagogical collectives"; it means that there is mutual understanding and harmony in the school community, a lot of experienced and creative teachers work there and there is no fighting and conflicts.

However, the idea of a good team is not the foundation for any successful implementation of the author concept based on the ideas of humane pedagogics. The main concept is the concept of pedagogical ensemble: the school community is as an ensemble, which performs the pedagogical symphony. The author concept should be regarded as the score of the humane pedagogics symphony. Although each member of the ensemble is performing his or her own part in the symphony, but they all depend on each other and on the score. A symphony must be performed, and all the members of the orchestra create it together under the guidance of conductor.

Pedagogical ensemble represents a very high level of the collective organization. It solves two problems.

The first is the creation of school spirit. Since a pedagogical symphony sounds constantly, without change, there is a gradually emerging special spirit in the educational environment, that presents a synthesis of mutual love and respect, spiritual community, the joy of school life and the joy of cognition, faith in abilities, sense of security and mutual aid, value of communication and personality acceptance, sense of free choice and responsibility. School spirit is a motivating source of school life.

The second problem relates to the fact that everyone move to a single specific aim. The purpose is in everybody and in everything. Sometimes it is visible, talked about, reminded, and collated with pedagogical actions. However, as a rule, the aim is dissolved in educational process, it is not talked about, it is not visible, but it permeates everything.

The aim of education is the meaning of educational aspirations, concerns and creativity. It is the keynote of the symphony, which pedagogic school ensemble performs. The aim answers the question: who school teachers together and every teacher individually are seeking to educate?

Humane pedagogics based on its spiritual and moral values sets an aim for pedagogic school ensemble. The purpose is to promote the establishment, development and upbringing of a noble and magnanimous person in a pupil.

These concepts mean the most exalted qualities of the human person: the magnanimity, love for a neighbor, friendliness, kindness, understanding, patience, forgiveness, faith, assistance, compassion, joint joy, culture, and education.

Axiomatics of humane pedagogics stands that nobility brings up nobility, magnanimity brings up magnanimity.

This means that every teacher, every school employee lives in the community with pupils befittingly for a noble and magnanimous person; every teacher and pedagogical ensemble as a whole create ennobling environment and space around their pupils.

The aim in school life is approved in two ways. The first one is open, when through a special communication and targeted exercises pupils become aware of nobility and magnanimity meaning and values associated with them. They also practice in manifestation of nobility and magnanimity. The second way is hidden when the entire educational process is saturated with nobility and magnanimity as natural and imperceptible norms. This core in the school life is created by the pedagogical ensemble, by each of its participant.

Each participant of a pedagogical ensemble knows, according to the author's program, where he or she directs his creative efforts. A teacher feels his or her role and responsibility for the quality of an educational process created by the ensemble. Thus, pedagogical ensemble while performing a targeted educational program creates a symphonic pedagogical process for a pupil to feel harmony. And as the desire for beauty and harmony is a property of child's nature, he wants to be and to live in this spiritual atmosphere. There appear the opportunities for cooperation and spiritual unity between teachers and pupils.

Norms of pedagogical ensemble life are goodwill, sincerity, creativity, reciprocity and mutual aid, tendency, creative patience and dedication.

A pedagogical ensemble denies irritation, malevolence, envy, brutality, shouting, insults, humiliation, ribaldry, idleness in its environment.

The concept of life is one of the key concepts of the humane pedagogics. The postulate formed in the traditional (authoritative) pedagogics that the school prepares (adapts, fits) children for life, is considered wrong in the concept of humane pedagogics. "Children are not preparing for life, they already live", – stated K. Ushinsky.

Humane pedagogics states that

– children should be brought up in life with the help of life itself;

– children should be brought up as reformers of life. A humane educational process open life itself, states the infinity of life, immortality. Secondly, children live meaningful and happy lives, which lead them to the path of difficulties and success to overcome. Thirdly, they learn to improve their lives, change life circumstances for the better, help each other to improve the life, rely on the laws of beauty and goodness. And, finally, children think about the meaning of life, make choices and plans for the near and distant future, learn to be the creators of the future and their own destiny.

For these aspirations of pupils to become successful, we must take care of humanization and improving of the environment around children.

The environment in which an educational process is being performed is a closed space, that is why unacceptable things which are contrary to the aims of a noble, magnanimous person

education may occur. The exterior of the environment must accept the laws of beauty, simplicity, convenience, cleanliness, neatness. The internal organization of the environment should be filled with tranquility, care, love, respect, understanding, reciprocity, kindness, joy, and faith. The teaching ensemble and every teacher in the school create overall harmony of life and save their pupils harmless from all evil.

The improving of the environment around each child is the guiding principle for a teacher implementing the ideas of humane pedagogics.

Communication is the heart of the educational process, and a teacher puts his or her heart and soul into it. If a teacher's heart is inspired, kind, responsive, loving, caring, then the educational process will be the same – joyful and inspired. A teacher communicates with pupils so that they feel maturity, equality, freedom, and respect for their personality. They develop a speech culture, ethical norms, and convictions through teacher's personal example. Communication between a teacher and a pupil should not take the form of moralizing, mentoring teachings, jawing.

In communication with teachers, a pupil feels that they believe in him and are happy for his or her success. In the process of communication, a teacher, on the one hand, has the ability to slightly open the versatility of his or her own human nature for the pupil, the richness of his or her inner spiritual world. A teacher shows how to be frank and convinced, passionate and focused, serious and merry, tells through the examples of personal experience that human life is paired not only with love and joy, faith and happiness, but also with deception, betrayal, suffering and pain. On the other hand, only personal communication gives a pupil the opportunity to be sincere with a teacher, to show gratitude to him/her. In co-creative, mutually developing communication both the pupil and the teacher can give to each other their own uniqueness in the present and in the future.

The concept of a spiritual humanism is at the core of humane pedagogics. This concept is artificial, since the meaning of humanity already holds a sense of spirituality, and vice versa. In modern philosophical and pedagogical literature, humanism has purely materialistic content and is defined as "the system of beliefs, expressing recognition of the person as an individual, his rights for freedom, happiness and equality", etc. The word "humanity", which has a Sanskrit origin, means the process of searching by a person of his immortal foundation – the spirit, searching for God inside, the meaning of life. In this searching process, a person acquires faith. The author considers that spirituality is the state of person's inner world, life through love and kindness, patience and compassion, through thinking and feeling, cognition and imagination; through dreams, images, creation, aspiration, the meaning of life, faith; through the cognition of him- or herself.

On the assumption of that, humane pedagogics is defined as a theory and creative practice of pupil's personality formation with the help of the teacher's personality, creating and thinking through the system of content and resources developed also on the basis of the spiritual humanism concept.

The concept of spiritual humanism expands pedagogical consciousness making a single entity of spiritual and material. It involves such concepts as love, faith, hope, joy, success, cooperation, inspiration, cognition, protection, beauty, and truth as a guide to thought and action. Spiritual humanism helps to create child's imagination.

- Every child is a phenomenon in the earthly life,
- Every child carries his or her own path and mission,
- Every child has the unlimited power of the spirit.

Such faith in a child leads pedagogical consciousness to the creation of the appropriate educational environment, process and content. And main tool in this search is the concept of spiritual humanism.

Spiritual humanism seeks out the original meaning of the leading pedagogical concepts. TEACHER is a soul, the carrier of light. PUPIL is a soul searching for this light.

UPBRINGING is nutriment of growing person's spirit feeding with spiritual food (images).

EDUCATION is a process of disclosure of God's image in a person. This occurs through the flow of sublime beauty of images, love, kindness, knowledge, devotion, etc. The source of these images flow is a teacher, as well as relatives and friends, environment, sources of information.

SCHOOL (skoale – Lat.) is a ladder for the person's soul and spirit ascension. This ladder is a teacher. Teacher is school itself.

CHILD is a revived new being.

CHILDREN are people acting in truth.

These meanings are fundamental principles that distinguish humane pedagogics from authoritarian pedagogics.

1. Humane pedagogics creates, enhances and reinforces the spiritual communion between a teacher and pupils.

Authoritarian pedagogics builds relationships with pupils based on compulsion.

2. Humane pedagogics aimed at purifying of pupils' soul, heart, mind and knowledge is conceived as a way to climb to the goal.

Authoritarian pedagogics focuses on knowledge and skill forming. It is considered as the preparation of the young generation for life.

3. Humane pedagogics cares about a child and his or her inner world.

Authoritarian pedagogics only takes psychological characteristics of children into consideration.

4. Humane pedagogics brings up the reformer of life, a hero of the spirit.

Authoritarian pedagogics make a child fit for life.

5. Humane pedagogics is communicative, pupils are involved in a dialog.

Authoritarian pedagogics is monologic in its dealings with its pupils.

6. Humane pedagogics is following the axioms: love brings up love; kindness brings up kindness; nobility brings up nobility; success brings up success, etc.

Authoritarian pedagogics accepts such axioms: evil is punished, the good is encouraged; laziness is condemned, zeal is welcomed, etc.

7. Humane pedagogics is innovative.

Authoritarian pedagogics is conservative.

8. In humane educational process, a child is in the state of consent.

In an authoritarian educational process, a child is constantly going through a state of conflict and contradiction.

Conclusion

Construction of the author concept based on the ideas of humane pedagogics provides basic meanings of such notions as spiritual humanism, teacher's personality, subjectivity of teaching process, teacher ensemble, purpose of education (magnanimity, nobility, life, humane communication. The spiritual and philosophical basis of humane education is revealed in these concepts.

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Духовные и философские предпосылки формирования авторского понятия «комплексное образование» на основании принципов гуманной педагогики

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Аннотация

Сущность гуманной педагогики отражена в философском понятии духовного гуманизма. В современной философской и педагогической литературе понятие «гуманизм» представляется в материалистическом смысле и отражает систему взглядов, согласно которой человек признается личностью, обладающей правом на свободу, счастье и равенство. Слово гуманность происходит из санскрита и означает поиск фундаментальных основ – духовности, Бога внутри себя, смысла жизни. В процессе поиска человек приобретает веру. Автор статьи считает, что духовность – это познание и воображение, состояние внутреннего мира человека, познание себя; жизнь в любви и доброте, терпении и сострадании; умение думать и чувствовать. На основании вышеупомянутых значений духовности, автор определяет гуманную педагогику как творческий подход к изучению формирования личности у детей через личный пример учителя.

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Гуманная педагогика, духовный гуманизм, права человека, философский концепт, обучение, образование.

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