

MULTI-CULTURAL APPROACH TO THE PROCESS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

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Higher educational institutions are featured as the most international establishments. Knowledge is universal in many areas, and the academic progress in most scientific spheres is intended to be spread worldwide. Academia is seeking for obtaining international reputation, increasing border-crossing knowledge transfer and providing to certain extent the similarity of higher education standards across countries. A part of numerous benefits, these activities cause quite a challenge [7, p. 7].

People of culturally diverse backgrounds are involved into common learning and researching processes amid a multicultural academic environment that enables setting contacts and collaboration between different cultural and social groups, comprising individuals with distinct religious, social, ethnic and educational backgrounds and taking into account various cultural and behavioral modes, ways of communication and interaction [2]. However, communicating with people, who belong to different cultural-ethnic groups, one may face more complications than harmony provoked by the constant mixing and intersection of different cultural patterns.

Certain complications in intercultural interaction may happen if the people, who are involved in it, lack cultural awareness of divergent values and beliefs. Numerous studies proved that the reasons of failures in interaction between culturally diverse group-mates or those who had different linguistic backgrounds were in most cases the striking differences in their worldviews, as well as stereotyping of other peoples [2, p. 160].

The emergence of stereotypes and alienation reduction is considered to be possible due to studying cultural, racial or ethnic differences. This issue is especially important for educators, because the learning process is a reflection of the processes taking place in society, and can model and embody new cultural patterns that will promote tolerance, mutual understanding, empathy and create a friendly atmosphere amid the multicultural academic environment [4].

Multicultural approach to education depends also on the organization of the learning process. Traditional teaching methods, represented mainly by the authoritarian style of academic interaction and dogmatic-ideological way of the cognition process, do not satisfy demands of the real life, that is increasingly in need for reorientation to multiculturalism, promoting such values as equality, justice, anti-discrimination, dialogue, openness and freedom [3].

Multicultural approach to education is regarded as a process of purposeful socialization of students, which provides their mastery of communicative and empathic content of diverse cultures and their national one at the cognitive, acmeological-motivational and activity-behavioral levels.

Multicultural approach to education should be supported at the cognitive level, as the assimilation of conceptual values of ethnically and culturally diverse groups. Such phenomena as interdisciplinarity, lifestyle mobility, polyglotism, dynamism are pointed out as the main characteristics of the modern process of cognition [1]. Numerous and diverse positions, roles and identities are complexly and inextricably embedded in the process of education and its outcomes nowadays. Therefore, positionality, as suggested by modern multiculturalists, contributes to the decentralization of government positions, thereby stimulating the involvement of all participants in cognitive activity, creating a dynamic multivariate knowledge by incorporating multiple reflections of different identities – racial, ethnic, class, sex, gender, gender [6].

Implementation of multicultural approach to education at the acmeological-motivational level enables the formation of students' intercultural communication skills, as well as the development of their tolerance and empathy for other countries, peoples, cultural and social groups. A multicultural approach to education confirms ideas of identity and diversity among peoples as a positive tendency; it also provokes questioning and confronting both historical and current issues of authority and discrimination of the marginal strata in the society [5]. Multicultural approach to education enables instructors' comprehension of the ways in which culturally and linguistically diverse students learn and collaborate amid a unified learning process. It proclaims not only recognizing and accepting cultural differences, but also equality and fairness. It is pivotal to admit acknowledging and emphasizing the importance of differences, in particular in language as it reflects the culture of its bearers. This approach will help ethnically and culturally students to 'become confident and well-adjusted learners, engaging them in an additive approach to teaching as opposed to a deficiency model of teaching' [6, p. 28].

Multiculturalism at the activity-behavioral level influences students' active social interaction with representatives of different cultures while preserving their own cultural identity. The more students know about their own genesis and cultural background, the more they can perceive and comprehend other cultures and social strata that exist around them. This 'may, and hopefully will, cause students to question their rank in the scheme of things and challenge preconceived societal ideals in hopes of achieving equality' [5, p. 34]. Such multiculturalism in education characterizes the co-existence of many cultures,

none of which is dominant. It teaches students to perceive complex cultural processes as a natural evolution of many inextricably linked communities [1]. Students become both bearers of cultural traditions in which they are studied, and participants in constant socio-cultural interaction, which develops their tolerance, friendliness, perception of others, comprehension of cultural diversity worldwide.

References

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