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Social Support of Integration and Education Development in the Eurasia

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Abstract. The article focuses on the Eurasian Education System (EES) as an integration of different education approaches, and stresses the importance of social aspects in the construction of the comprehensive EES. Based on the results of the research, the article identifies the dynamics of the social support of integration processes, and notes its development.

The authors consider main directions, practices and approaches to enhance the social support for integration and development. The authors refer to the works of contemporary Armenian, Belarusian and foreign authors who wrote on education systems that developed the methodological grounds for promoting solidarity, and identify ways to extend the EES's support base.

The article shows that the resource of social solidarity, unity and structural-functional integration of the EES is in the everyday efforts to strengthen it together with the social efficiency, and this resource can be discourse of the member states in the field of social-scientific cooperation. The development of the support base for integration processes includes such practices and resources that ensure interiorization of symbols, norms, values, and solidarity of the peoples and elites of the Eurasian Education System.

Keywords: Eurasian Education System, social processes, integration, social support, social management, social stigma, social-humanitarian cooperation

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Социальная поддержка интеграции и развития образования в Евразии

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Аннотация. В статье основное внимание уделяется евразийской системе образования (EOO) как интеграции различных образовательных подходов, а также подчеркивается важность социальных аспектов в построении комплексной ЕОО. По результатам проведенного исследования в статье выявляется динамика социальной поддержки интеграционных процессов, отмечается ее развитие. Авторы рассматривают основные направления, практики и подходы к улучшению управления социальной поддержкой интеграции и развития. Авторы обращаются к работам современных армянских, белорусских и зарубежных авторов в сфере образования, разработавших методологические основы продвижения солидарности, и определяют пути расширения базы поддержки ЕЭС. В статье показано, что ресурс социальной солидарности, единства и структурно-функциональной интеграции ЕЭС заключается в повседневных усилиях по ее укреплению вкупе с социальной эффективностью, и этот ресурс может быть обеспечен дискурсом государств-членов в области общественно-научного сотрудничества. Развитие опорной базы интеграционных процессов включает в себя такие практики и ресурсы, которые обеспечивают интериоризацию символов, норм, ценностей и солидарности народов и элит евразийской системы образования.

Ключевые слова: евразийская система образования, социальные процессы, интеграция, социальная поддержка, социальное управление, социальная стигма, социально-гуманитарное сотрудничество

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Introduction

Human capital today has become one of the main factors in the development of society and the education system plays an important role in the formation of values and morality.

"Human capital" does not mean the people themselves, but the knowledge and skills they possess that allow them to create value in the global economic system. Human capital is "formed from valuable qualities acquired throughout a person's life, which can be strengthened through appropriate investments" (Schultz, 1961: 8–9).

The global economy is already setting new challenges for colleges, institutes and universities (Lipai, Gevorgyan, 2020a; Lipai, Gevorgyan, Minasyan, 2021).

In the university community, we have the concept of "University 3.0", which gives

impetus to the activities of universities (Lipai, Gevorgyan, 2020b; Lipai, Gevorgyan, 2021).

Capacity Building Higher Education Projects (CBHE) promote cooperation and partnerships that have an impact on the modernization and internationalization of higher education institutions and systems in Partner Countries.

The article addresses an urgent need in the Reforming Education System in Eurasia in line with the Salzburg Principles with the emphasis on legal framework and institutional procedures supporting integrative and internationally-oriented high and doctoral studies involving universities, research institutions and industry. Expected impact on the international and national levels is seen as a contribution to the reform and modernization of higher and doctoral Education in line with the Salzburg principles.

The article aims to foster the rights of individuals with special needs to access inclusive education and enjoy the right of participation in everyday society, to combat discrimination and stigmatization of the individuals with special needs by instilling awareness and acceptance in society as in line with the Bologna Process and A guide to preventing and addressing social stigma.¹

The action foresees:

- strengthening strategic, infrastructural and human capacities in high and doctoral Education Institutions (HEIs) and Institutes of the National Academy of Sciences (SRIs), the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia and Belarus,
- development of national new policy and legal framework, including by-laws for higher and doctoral education in Armenia, in Belarus and further approval by national Ministry for pilot implementation,
- revision of institutional policies, procedures based on the redesigned national regulatory framework and design of the Institutional Handbook for high and doctoral Education.

Bases of interaction in the Eurasian space

A new educational policy was developed, based on the ideas of variability and free choice at all levels of the education system. Let us consider the interaction of Eurasian states within the main integration associations, as well as at their national level. It has become possible to distinguish two completely specific areas of Eurasian integration in higher education: (1) transformation the educational standards according with the needs of the Eurasian common market and (2) creation of Eurasian common scientific clusters and campuses based on universities, large enterprises, academies of science for the development of new technologies, and Eurasian common import substitution with centralized financing (Petrovskiy, 2018).

At the same time, it was pointed out that there was an infrastructure of science and innovations in Armenia and Belarus; it is represented by various development institutions, technology parks, and business incubators, which can and should be used to develop the education system. According to this approach, five basic directions of development in the same time, it was pointed out that there was an infrastructure of science and innovations in Armenia and Belarus; it is represented by various development institutions, technology parks, and business incubators, which can and should be used to develop the education system.

 $^{^1\,}$ A guide to preventing and addressing social stigma «Social Stigma associated with COVID-19». URL: https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/covid19-stigma-guid

opment of the education system in Armenia and Belarus are defined for the period up to 2023, including not only education itself but also the formation of research competencies and technical groundwork.

The Republic of Armenia

On May 19, 2005, the Republic of Armenia (Armenia) signed the Bologna Declaration. The agreement between the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia on cooperation in education was signed earlier on July 13, 2004, but did not enter into force. Only medical education has been with withdrawn from the Bologna system (Sandoyan, Mkhytaryan, Khachatryan et al., 2008).

It should be noted that the introduction of the Bologna education system in Armenia is rather positive (Avetisyan, Zaslavskaya, 2017). The credit rating system in universities under the Bologna system competes in Armenia with the traditional system of students' knowledge assessment adopted in Russia, which is adopted in universities focused on the Russian education model. The largest higher educational institution of this kind in Armenia is the Russian-Armenian University (RAU). The university was founded in Yerevan in 1997, in accordance with the Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Armenia.

In accordance with the mentioned interdepartmental Agreement on cooperation in education of July 13, 2004, the State Institute for Advanced Studies and Retraining in Informatics of the Republic of Armenia granted the status of the basic organization of the CIS in sphere of education of persons with disabilities and unemployed citizens of the EAEU states.

State universities in Armenia are autonomous nonprofit legal state entities that operate in accordance with government policies. Universities independently determine their budget and use of funds received from non-state sources. Funds received from the state budget are only part of the general budget of the university and can be used for a specific purpose in accordance with the standards established by law. Universities are also free to form their internal organizational structure.²

Student learning outcomes are evaluated based on exams and tests, which are conducted in written or oral form. Exam results are graded according to classification systems that vary significantly among institutions (5-, 10-, or 20-point marking scales, 4-point graduation of letters A–F, etc.) (Avetisyan, Zaslavskaya, 2017).

The main educational program is undergraduate (bachelor's) degree; in higher educational institutions, it takes four years, and for medical specialties, it is five years. The duration of training in the program of specialty is five years.³ Master's qualifications are awarded to persons with a bachelor's degree or specialist, according to the results of at least one year of vocational education program. The degree provides access to postgraduate studies based on the results of entrance examinations of applicants.

¹ Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University (RAU). Edu Scan. URL: https://eduscan.net/colleges/ra.

² Higher Education. Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia. URL: http://edu.am/index.php/am/documents/index/101.

³ About the Higher Education in Armenia. URL: http://studyinarmenia.org/hea.

At the end of graduate school and successful thesis, a graduate student receives a PhD degree.

The Republic of Belarus

The main law regulating the sphere of education is the Code of the Republic of Belarus (Belarus) No. 243-3 "On Education", adopted on January 13, 2011.¹ In accordance with this document, the state policy in education should be based on the principles of the priority of human rights, ensuring equal access to education, compulsory general basic education, integration into the world educational space, secular nature, and environmental orientation of education. The Belarus Code "On Education" also provides for the development of education, considering the tasks of the socioeconomic development of the state and the state-public nature of education management. Even though formally these principles can be called progressive, the degree of their real implementation in the education system of Belarus causes doubts among researchers (Pogorelskaya, 2016).

The Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus of March 28, 2016, No. 250 approved the State Program "Education and Youth Policy" for 2016–2020².

According to this document, institutions of higher education in Belarus include 43 public and nine private universities³. They are divided into universities (33), academies (8), institutes (10), and higher colleges (1). The main difference between institutes and universities is that they train narrow specialists, and in higher colleges, you can get a higher education only at the first level. The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus is the only state body for implementing state policy in education, organization of scientific research, and education international cooperation. In particular, the Ministry has jurisdiction over the quality control of education, coordination of the activities of state educational institutions, and licensing of educational institutions. It also organizes the development of educational programs and standards with the participation of educational institutions, provides scientific and methodological support for education, etc.⁴

The universities can submit their requirements and recommendations to state authorities through the Republican Council of Rectors⁵. Another feature of the Belarus education system is that, according to the Belarus Code on Education, employment of graduates of higher educational institutions occurs through distribution based on the received specialty and qualification (distribution does not apply to graduates of evening and extramural education and full-time graduates who have received education on a fee

 $^{^1\,}$ The National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus. No. 13, 2/1795. 2011. https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3961&p0=Hk1100243.

² The National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus. No. 92, 5/34264. 2011.

³ National Legal Internet Portal of the Republic of Belarus. No. 5/42890. 2016.

⁴ Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus. No. 1554. On Approval of the Regulations on the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus. National Register of Legal Acts of the Republic of Belarus. No. 118, 5/9561. 2001. http://law.by/databank-business/list-of-legal-acts/?p0=2.

⁵ Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus. On the accession of the Republic of Belarus to the Convention on the recognition of qualifications relating to higher education in the European Region. No. 5. 2002. URL: https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3961&p0=P3020000.

basis. The terms of compulsory work in the direction of work for graduates who have received education at the expense of the republican budget range from one to five years, depending on the qualifications obtained).

In 2012–2015 the new structure of higher education was formally approved (bachelor, master, and third degree — doctoral — remains beyond the scope of reform) (Vetokhin, 2014); the issue of the European Diploma Supplement on Higher Education became mandatory.

On May 15, 2015, at the conference of ministers of education of the European Higher Education Area member states in Yerevan (Armenia), Belarus received the status of a participant in the Bologna process (Pogorelskaya, 2017).

Therefore, in the context learning process, competencies act as learning objectives, and competence is a characteristic of the success of the learning process, its result. According to researchers, competence means not only traditional knowledge ("know what"), but also procedural knowledge ("know how"), as well as value-semantic knowledge (to know why and for what) (Zhuk, 2009). The education system fulfills the social and economic order of society. Emerging new and, as current experience shows, unpredictable challenges of our time, give education dynamism, set new tasks, the solution of which requires original solutions and approaches.

Collective solidarity and global cooperation are essential to prevent further transmission of the virus (COVID-19) and alleviate community problems. There are a number of initiatives to combat stigma and stereotypes. Key point to connect with these activities is to create a movement and a positive environment, which demonstrates caring and empathy for all ¹.

According to the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Belarus until 2030 «the education system should ensure that the acquired knowledge and skills are adequate to the rapidly changing requirements of society and the economy, engineering and technology, the development of personal initiative and human adaptability, due to which human abilities to integrate and create innovations expand».

Conclusion

The integration of higher and postgraduate education systems in the Eurasian space is quite successful. In particular, this concerns a change in the system of assessing students' knowledge, which has become much more variable than the Soviet system. Despite some "minuses" of integration of the educational space within the framework of the "Bologna process," it should be noted that it provided a certain unification of the construction of the educational process. Different "speeds" of this process in the EAEU member states are explained by the need to overcome the existing imbalances in education. The gradual unification of the state regulation of higher and postgraduate education not only provides a freer choice of place of study throughout the EAEU but will also allow to solve emerging problems in a more expeditious manner.

¹ A guide to preventing and addressing social stigma «Social Stigma associated with COVID-19». URL: https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/covid19-stigma-guid.

The implementation of Network Universities allows the students to independently form a program of study based on the individual choice of competencies mastered by them. This fact should be positively evaluated.

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