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Tutor System as a Source of Harmonizing the Educational System with the Needs of Economics

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify the sources of harmonizing employers' orders in business and graduates of higher education. According to challenges posed by the economic environment the development of tutor-support system has the great potential to solve the problem. In the paper trends of modern specialists' educational preparation are discussed. New pedagogical position of university instructor in the organization of students' research work is denoted; some historical insight of Tutoring concept is taken; objectives and methodology of tutor-support system is provided.

Keywords: tutor-support system, students' research work, pedagogical position, communication skills, adaptation to future profession

Introduction

In the context of growing global economic and geopolitical turbulence the need for creating a new model of economic growth increases. The ability of organizations to adapt to new business conditions determines their success and provides every country's global competitiveness. Upon this background there has increased shortage of skilled professionals. Thus the results of a global survey conducted by Transnational Auditing Company "PricewaterhouseCoopers" (PwC) among 1300 managers in 68 worldwide countries show that after a period of retrenchment which lasted for several years half of the companies who took part in the study are now ready to resume the recruitment of new employees. Many international organizations already hire graduates and young professionals actively (PwC review, 2014).

However the rapid development of artificial intellect and robotics leads to the increase of the dependence on technology. The inevitable increase in efficiency and new technologies displaces many employees. Nowadays a new type of specialist is demanded. Modern employee is simultaneously the researcher and the strategist, the analyst and the creative director, the manager and marketer equipped with technologies and IT-solutions, without which it is no longer possible to do at a competitive market.

All these changes have a major impact on the development of higher education all around the world and make it possible to see signs and elements of the emerging new model of higher education. There are new types of universities ("problem-oriented" or "innovative" Universities) to train individuals and teams capable of designing new activities and to ensure the transformation of existing corporations, industries and territories in accordance with the challenges of the time. They become the area where the emerging specialists join universal values, expand horizons, get

knowledge and the global professional competencies. The demand for such professionals is growing rapidly around the world due to the increasing global competition, the emergence of new technologies and geopolitical uncertainty.

That is why the objectives and the content of education changes. New tools, educational technologies and the open spaces of social and individual practices appear. The processes of shaping the future specialist are particularly important there. From the point of view of economic-oriented discourse the process of higher education is always distinguished by two components of the educational goals:

- The order of employers – the establishment of clear priorities in the content of education in accordance with the comprehension of competencies and capabilities of each employee that modern business needs;
- The order of the student – the understanding of what he is going to study, what competences he wants to acquire.

Changes of educational technologies are the most controversial issues in modern education. However, the so-called “lecture – colloquium” model is changing, universities introduce active learning methods. The central processes of the new education are communications and researches aimed at solving urgent problems. This approach enables bringing into use the position of tutor and developing the tutor-support system that meets students’ needs and interests and is aims at obtaining new knowledge, new solutions of practical problems, self-education and self-realization of research abilities and skills. It contributes to obtaining competitive behavior skills in interacting with partners, staff and society.

Trends of modern specialists’ educational preparation: economic-oriented discourse

Education is designed to solve problems of economic development and competitiveness of the person in the labor market. It is time for practitioners in education to reflect and develop plans that take into consideration the changing landscape of special education and the impact these changes may have on current and future practices (Gordillo, 2015). The certain set of knowledge and skills doesn’t satisfy the employer anymore. According to most experts there are the basic competencies demanded in modern economics. They are: to carry out the deliberate choice in professional life and take responsibility for it; to communicate effectively and constructively; to interact within various professional, social, national and cultural groups; to improve personal and professional qualities continuously; to solve problems creatively. But what are the qualities demanded in future? The rapid changes in the world show the impossibility of prediction. So, we are to pay attention to:

- Adaptation of knowledge and skills to future conditions and changing situations at the markets;
- Evaluation of actual situation’s significance and its possible consequences;
- Building and maintaining productive communications;
- Defining the strategy of set goals;
- Responsibility for the choice produced.

Knowledge is the basis of students’ modern key competences necessary for the development. Yet the very existence of knowledge does not claim prospects.

Knowledge in itself has ceased to be the human capital. The education system needs to meet the challenges posed by the economic environment. It must not proclaim the value of graduate's qualities, above the value of his economically oriented skills. The ability of the person to coordinate internal and external resources provides him with new opportunities to succeed in a changing world.

The educational process is a multi-factorial science-based system aimed at students' preparation to work in terms of their future activities. The research work of students is an integral part of this process and is inextricably linked with other forms of educational activities. It is the most effective method of development students' motivation regarding creativity, responsibility and independence.

The research work consists of very different processes: application of experimental and observational data; collection of facts and concepts; versatile analysis. This determines the use of the most holistic competence model of the famous British psychologist John Raven. According to him the competence – is a specific ability required for effective implementation of specific actions in a specific subject area, including highly specialized knowledge, a special kind of substantive skills and ways of thinking and understanding, the responsibility for actions (Raven, 2002).

Economically oriented competences, regardless of where in a particular area they appear, require the presence of a high level of human initiative, ability to organize other people to achieve their goals, willingness to evaluate and analyze the social-economic consequences of actions, etc. According to this position the development of sufficient competence can take place at the university only in an organic unity with the students' values. It provides a deep personal interest in undertaking activity. Thus, the organization of research work of students ought to meet the following conditions:

- Creation of the circumstances in which the values are updated and competencies are manifested;
- Creation of conditions for the students' experience acquisition that meets their actualized values;
- Allocation of important tasks which students believe they can cope with.

New pedagogical position of university instructor in the organization of students' research work

The main resource of this approach implementation is the instructor capable of creating a situation of the students' self-determination and self-realization, who has a high personal potential. Adequate, ongoing professional development of instructors who are required to integrate new technologies for students' research work is the challenge facing the higher education (Nagel, 2013). University instructors are expected to have the ability to attack non routine problems and to do so creatively. Therefore, they are expected to collaborate with students, to employ a variety of viewpoints, and ultimately to produce the very knowledge and insight that move their profession forward (Sagor, 2000). The professionalism of the instructor – the supervisor of research is:

- The motives of consciousness, orientation, personal characteristics and other psychological basis to ensure activity's efficiency;

- The level of professional knowledge, skills and abilities, qualifications where personal characteristic plays a role of activity support in its turn.

The main condition for instructor's productive activity comprises a profound knowledge of the subject, methodical kit, the ability to see both the student and the team, skillful use of personal qualities. We pick out such components of pedagogical skills as:

- The nonverbal techniques (that is to "read" the emotional position of students, to use accurate gestures, to organize the optimal space);
- The pedagogical communication (verbal expression: the ability to communicate professionally and constructively, the ability to organize constructive interaction with the students, the ability to work with the vocal apparatus);
- The emotional and volitional self-regulation (self-control, stress resistance, strong-willed regulation, emotional balance).

In comparison with the well-established point of view on professional skills of the lecturer the modern students' instructor must have the following essential features of professional competence: the mobility of knowledge, technique flexibility and critical thinking. The image of the instructor as a full factor of the pedagogical process is of particular significance in the conditions of the organization of research activity of students. The concept of "image" is mostly related to the sphere of politics and business. However the need to create the appropriate image (verbal, external, kinetic) ensuring the harmonious interaction of the instructor with the student and the society is evident.

Thus, the professionalism of teachers capable of instructing students in the course of research activities is regarded as a system of person's integral characteristic and represents the relationship of pedagogical competence, pedagogical skill, professional significant qualities and individual image that determines the unique identity of each instructor, ensuring optimal efficiency of educational activities.

The components of professionalism:

- The pedagogical competence – unity of theoretical and practical readiness for the implementation of research activities with the students, the high level of mastery, methodological (technological) and psycho-pedagogical knowledge and skills;
- The pedagogical skills – knowledge of modern techniques and technology; the ability to form a developing environment, to create favorable conditions for interaction between the subjects of the educational environment; culture of verbal communication, emotional self-regulation;
- The professionally significant qualities of the teacher's personality – the qualities ensuring the success of professional realization;
- The individual image of the teacher – integral, holistic and dynamic phenomenon, internal and external individual characteristics to ensure the harmonious interaction of the subject with nature, society and himself. This approach to defining the essence and the content of research activities with students provides holistic view on instructor's activity and allows introducing innovative academic position – the position of tutor.

Tutoring concept in the history of education

The terms “tutor” and “tutorial” are used in education quite often lately, but in figurative, secondary meanings. Therefore, we believe it is necessary to clarify their basic, original values in order that they could serve as a basis for conclusions.

Phenomenon of “tutoring” is closely connected with the history of European universities, and takes place in the UK. It was born in XIV century in classic English universities – Oxford and a little later – in Cambridge (Barbagira & Fedorova, 1979). The process of self-education was the main process of obtaining academic knowledge and tutoring originally acted as the support of self-education.

Tutors carried out the functions of mediation between the academic and individual education and the task of the tutor was to connect the personal content and academic ideals into practice (Kovaleva, 2002). The scope of tutor activities extends in XVII century. Educational functions began to acquire the growing importance. The tutors advised the students what lectures and practical exercises were the best to visit and to get assistance in all difficulties. Tutor system did not surrender their positions for XVIII-XX centuries, but, on the contrary, it took central position in the oldest universities in England and the lecture system served as a supplement to it (Belitskaya, 2012). Functions of tutors at different periods had a significant impact on the development of educational technologies and institutions (Gordon & Gordon, 1990). The system of tutorial teaching embraces both an ‘institutional’ and an ‘instructional’ aspects. As a pedagogic model, the tutorial system has great value because it creates learning and assessment opportunities which are highly authentic and difficult to fake (Shale, 2000).

Objectives and methodology

The aim of tutor system is to maximize the potential of competitiveness of graduates on the labor market, in the areas of management, business, consulting and research. Its implementation has the following purposes:

1. The development of skills and abilities of creative activity and rapid self-education in accordance with the curriculum and the profile of the acquired specialty.
2. Formation the profound motivational environment of the educational process.
3. Development the ideas of the interdisciplinary nature of any knowledge, education and researches.
4. Development the skills to mobilize obtained theoretical knowledge to solve professional problems.
5. Development of skills to solve the scientific and educational tasks methodically and consistently.
6. Creation of competitive conditions among students; of concentration on the prestige of the future profession.
7. Formation of sustained values of education, creative activity, solving of problems and challenges.

The main purpose of the tutor system is the creation of conditions for supporting student's ability to self-education and self-organization. Tutor support technology is based on the provision of new motives to study with high quality and efficiency. A

small group is the main method of tutoring. Advantages of group methods in the organization of students' research work are obvious. They are:

- Developing of communication skills;
- Using of group interaction methods to develop common solutions;
- Detection of different qualities: leadership, traits of an outsider, an independent member of the team, the critic, the expert;
- Testing the professional skills in a relatively safe situation;
- Development of creativity, original ideas, innovative solutions.

Group method of students' research work is carried out by the program of various activities in order to create and improve skills, enhance the quality and effectiveness of further education. These methods provide the adaptation of students to a higher level of educational activity; eliminating gaps in training; training in new technologies and working practices; rapid preparation for work in the new organization. While organizing the group it is important to solve several questions such as what the objectives of a particular research are; what the needs of the labor market and organizations in the scientific research are; what technology research to use; how to assess the effectiveness of the work.

One of the most popular technologies for this type of activity is the business game. It is directed mostly to the process than to the outcome and it develops psychological functions and abilities required for the effective existence as an employee. The game is a method of constructing the educational process in order to develop a social reality, where almost every employee has to carry out research activities. It includes the following components:

- Acceptance of different roles;
- Using certain rules of action;
- Modeling – creating layouts replacing objects of reality;
- Modeling emotional relationship to the corresponding object.

Business games in the organization of students' scientific-research work will help to identify collective and individual abilities of students, their degree of readiness to professional requirements; to enhance the interest of group members to the educational process, their involvement in the solution of common problems; to imagine the real situation on the labor market, to feel it and to identify possible strategies for their own actions.

Conclusion

Identification of motives, intellectual and physical abilities, knowledge and skills for students' future professional activities makes the tutor-support approach adequate and realistic.

The research activity is inherently the strategy of adaptation of the person to the professional environment. That is why it is the appropriate sphere for tutor's support, it generates professional maturity of the person responsible for their decisions, the ability to plan his actions and choices.

Moreover, such an approach to the organization of students' research work satisfies the demands of the modern labor market as employers need highly skilled, mobile, independent staff.

Only in the case of an active independent work with constructive support the student is ready to accept it as its own, and the most effective. The tutor-support technology generates high professional motivation of the student; it provides maximum identification in the professional environment, the ability and willingness to act in a variety of professional situations.

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