

The Impact of the Environmental Students' Extracurricular Activities on Formation of their Environmental Consciousness

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Abstract

The paper deals with the extracurricular activities of the students of a higher educational institution. The authors revealed the importance of the extracurricular work through the scientific research of the students.

Keywords: extracurricular activities, scientific research.

1. Introduction

Extracurricular activities of a higher educational institution are an important part of the process of qualitative specialists training and the integral system of every higher educational institution. The system-forming factor is the aim which is the development of activity of a student's personality realized in his or her interconnection with the society of the higher educational institution and social environment; rendering support and assistance to the student in self-realization, the readiness to stand for his or her professional independence and responsibility.

There is a solid experience in environmental education of the youth accumulated in our country. Although, as a research of the special literature showed, the issue of the students' extracurricular activities is understudied. It is known that environmental education in the conditions of a higher educational institution should be focused on formation of the personality with a new environmental consciousness that allows interacting with the environment and developing the skills of cooperating with the nature rather than ruling it.

The importance of the problem and its understudy in the pedagogical science has defined the choice of our research issue.

The aim of the research is the scientific and methodological as well as the methodic substantiation of the core, content and the technology of formation of environmental consciousness in the process of extracurricular activities of the students in specialties Ecology and Health and Safety and Environmental Protection.

Environmental education is connected with the formation of environmental consciousness in the students' minds, including the complex of views and ideas on the problems of the best correlation of the interaction between society and nature in accordance with certain living needs of people and the capacities of nature. Education in this sphere is aimed at changing the technocratic way of thinking and creating the emotional and psychological setting for the attitude towards nature not only as to a primary resource, but also as to the living environment ensuring social and cultural progress of humanity.

The tasks of the extracurricular activities are implemented in certain directions in accordance with the stages of the students' socialization.

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The most challenging is the period of adaptation experienced by the first year students. One may highlight social and individual parameters of successful adaptation to the system of education in higher educational institutions. The social parameters include the formation of a students' group with the reference settings towards the increase in the educational level. The individual parameters include the degree of interiorization of the higher educational institution standards by the students, the degree of the information awareness about the higher educational institution and the faculty: the specifics of the chosen specialty and its relevance to the current labor market.

Successful adaptation allows students to integrate into the system of higher education. The integration period usually lasts from 1-2 to 3-4 curricula. The duration of the period depends on the level of the extracurricular infrastructure development in the higher educational institution and the individual activity of the students. The criteria of the students' integratedness into the system of higher education may be deemed the measures of the education results, and alternatively the systematic participation in one or several directions of the extracurricular activities.

2. Methods

The methodological base of the research is made up of the common scientific methods of theoretical study (analysis, synthesis, interpretation, comparison, classification, induction, deduction, generalization, modeling etc.), empirical methods (observation, survey, study of the documentation) and statistical methods (quantitative and qualitative analysis of the experimental data). The theoretical base of the research is the works by the scientists in the sphere of environmental education and ecology.

3. Discussion

There are a lot of scientific and pedagogical researches [1], proving that various forms of extracurricular activities have the same as and sometimes even greater efficiency than the traditional forms of education in the process of the specialists training. It may be no accident that modern higher educational institutions usually actively involve students in various extracurricular programs and events which leads to more complete achievement of the psychological and pedagogical aims of education and training in the higher educational institutions.

Participation of the students in all the forms of the extracurricular work stimulates development of the key competences. In the process of organization of the student government, planning of the kinds of activities meeting the interest and requirements of creative self-realization, implementation of socially oriented programs, which allow making independent decisions and requiring thorough analysis, the students form instrumental, interpersonal and system competences.

Interpersonal competences include individual skills connected with the ability of expressing feelings and attitudes, critical re-evaluation and the ability of self-reflection as well as social skills connected with the processes of social interaction and cooperation, the ability of working in groups, and accepting social and ethical responsibilities.

Instrumental competences presuppose cognitive skills, the ability to understand and use the ideas and observations, methodological skills, the ability to understand and control the environment, to manage the time, to build up the education strategies, to make decisions and solve problems, and the ability of organization and planning.

System competences are the combination of understanding, attitude and knowledge which allow perceiving in what way the parts of a whole are correlating with each other and

estimating the place of each component in the system, the ability to plan changes with the purpose of improving the system and constructing new systems.

Students develop the key competences in the process of participation in the extracurricular events. First of all it is the organization of the student government as an independent organizational structure concerned about and authorized to influence the quality of the education process. Planning, organization and independent conduction of the events develop the ability of independent work, developing and controlling the projects as well as the material, financial and human resources.

The search of ways for improvement of the education process and organization of scientific research work of students stimulates the ability to learn, allows using the knowledge in practice, and developing the research skills. Working out and introduction of innovative methods and programs of students' work on development of social activities, and participation in trainings forms the ability of adaptation to new situations, to generate new ideas and to develop creativity and leadership.

4. Results

At the Innovative University of Eurasia the active extracurricular work of students is organized.

A great attention in the higher educational institution is paid to the improvement of system of the scientific and technical creative work and scientific and research work of students. Organization and coordination of the work in this direction in the university is laid upon the student government. There are also various societies, one of which is The Environmental Society, which organizes and coordinates various environmental promotions. To improve the quality of the specialists' training and the efficiency of the scientific and research work in the university, as well as for the activation of the scientific events, the further development of various scientific Olympics, competitions, exhibitions of scientific and technical creative work of the students as well as the schools and conferences for young scientists is being planned.

Extracurricular work with students is an integral part of the process of the qualitative specialists' training and is carried out with the purpose of formation of the civil position, reservation and multiplication of moral, cultural and scientific values among the students in the context of the modern life, the training of the skill of constructive behavior at the labor market, as well as reservation and renewal of the university traditions.

To improve the quality of the specialists' training and the efficiency of scientific and research work at the university, the activation of the scientific events, the scientific Olympics and conferences are carried out, and the student's scientific and technical sections are created.

The annual students' research and training conference of the Kazakhstan Small Academy of Sciences 'Integration of Education and Science is a Step to the Future' is carried out in April at the Innovative University of Eurasia; the regional research and training conference of young scientists and students 'Study of your Native Region is a Way to Science' takes place in October.

This year at the Innovative University of Eurasia the students of all the curricula in specialties Ecology and Health and Safety and Environmental Protection took part in the student scientific conference. The wide range and diversity of the problems involving the students one more time prove their professionalism and understanding of their specialty as well as of its importance. A special attention is paid both to the participants and the organizers of the conference and to their audience, the majority of which is not only freshmen forced to go there, but a great number of the students whose consciousness and attention is turned to the problems highlighted at the events. This shows the growing interest to the specialty in the process of education and to the participation in the extracurricular work.

One should note the participation of the third and fourth year students in specialties Ecology and Health and Safety and Environmental Protection at the All-Russian Scientific Student Forum.

The students also took part in the following events:

The Regional Research and Training Conference of Students and Schoolchildren 'The Noosphere: Economics, Environment, Society'. November 19, 2013, Russia, Omsk, the Omsk Institute (branch).

The International Student Scientific and Theoretical Conference 'Socio-Economic and Legal Problems of Formation of Knowledge-Consumptive Economics in Kazakhstan', the Karaganda Economic University of the Kazpotreboysuz (the Kazakhstan Consumer's Association). April 29, 2014.

The International Research and Training Internet Conference 'The Youth and Science'. The Almaty Academy of Economics and Statistics. April 25, 2014.

The 4th Republican Research and Training Conference of Young Scientists and Students 'The Mission of the Youth in the Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan', The Amanzholov Eastern Kazakhstan State University. November 13-14, 2014.

The 15th Republican Research and Training Conference for Schoolchildren, Students, Magistrands and Teachers 'New Century is New Technologies', Astana, the Kazakh University of Technology and Business. November 20-21, 2014.

The students in specialties Ecology and Health and Safety and Environmental Protection annually participate in the International Internet-Olympics among the educational institutions 'The Erudites of the Planet' (Moscow) with participation of the teams from Russia and foreign countries, the All-Russian Innovative Student Internet-Olympics 'Information Technologies in Complicated Systems' in specialty Ecology.

They annually participate in the discipline-related Olympics among the students of the Innovative University of Eurasia in specialties Ecology and Health and Safety and Environmental Protection. The winners of the higher educational institution stage are sent to the Republican Student Discipline-Related Olympics at the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (Almaty).

5. Conclusion

The authors of the paper developed the suggestions and recommendations on improvement of the system of extracurricular scientific research of students, which allow them to take an active part in the student conferences of all the stages, showing the best results and constantly developing.

The research of problem 'Improvement of the Control System of the Solid Municipal Waste in the City of Pavlodar', where the students in specialties Ecology and Health and Safety and Environmental Protection took an active part, has been completed. As the result of the research 6 graduate theses have been defended. The results of this research have been taken by the municipal authorities on board.

All this shows high professional qualities of the higher-education teaching personnel of the university and the education process, thanks to which the students form the skills of the scientific research experiment conduction.

The main goal of the extracurricular works in the higher educational institution is all-round development of the student's personality as a citizen of the Kazakhstan society, having deep professional knowledge and skills, being intelligent, socially active, respectful to the spiritual values and traditions, as well as to moral grounds and guides of the society.

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