

Study of the Educational Space of a Higher Military Educational Establishment

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Abstract: The global situation changes quite quick and military education cannot keep pace with new social-economic and political conditions. In this regard the projecting and effective use of educational space potential of a military educational establishment becomes actual for providing qualitative preparation of the officer staff. The key idea of this investigation is the fact that in the process of individuality formation of the future officers the environment shall be skilfully used and the space shall be created by means of changing its institutional, didactic and culturological characteristics. In this article the authors reveal the essence of the educational space, its components (subjective, educational, ampliative, psychological, informational, administrative, conceptual, organisational, regulatory) and possibilities of use of its potential in formation of the individuality of the military students; there are the results of the interview taken from experts and military students and recommendations on providing optimal use of the educational space potential of the military higher educational establishment in the process of preparation of the officer staff.

Key words: Military education • Career guidance • Effectiveness of the educational activities • Components of the educational space of the military higher educational establishment

INTRODUCTION

The system of future officers' preparation in the Republic of Kazakhstan suffers changes which are conditioned by the modernization of the whole education system of the country. The modernization of the military education system is accompanied by the thorough rethinking of the educational processes during the training of military students. It is commonly known that the military education includes the officers' professional training for effective command and control of armed forces in time of peace and war. In contrast to the ideological training (transfer of group values, traditions and relationships) and education (development of the definite abilities and intellectual skills) the military education also tries to inculcate to the students the understanding of the abstract concepts and theories, it forms thinking and communication schemes. The future officers make up the highest leader category and must have special knowledge, skills and competences which

make him a leader [1-2]. This process has spiritual bases. It is connected with the formation of moral and spiritual guides, student's comprehension of the world-view approaches, which determine a graduate's idea of the future professional activity.

The above mentioned processes and phenomena of the educational activity in military higher educational establishments take place in the educational space. Educational space can have different ranges of actions- from a training group of military students to the armed forces in general. All the elements of a military higher educational establishment, family, mass media, culture, traditions can be educational space; they have their certain potential in the formation of the individuality of a future officer. We agree with the studies in which the thorough apprehension of the interconnection of education results and organization restructuring with educational activity management is emphasized [3-4]. We think that the problem of educational space potential of a military higher educational establishment in formation of

the future officers' individuality is of great research interest and needs an unbiased approach to its development.

Investigation Techniques: We have conducted the experiments aimed at testing of methods of educational space study in a military higher educational establishment, defining the possibilities of its potential use in the effective formation of the individuality of military students. To solve this task we have interviewed the experts who have great practical experience of managing and pedagogical activity on military staff training. During the study of the educational space of a military higher educational establishment took into account the fact that a military student's individuality can be being formed for decades. All the people who surround the personality from the birth-it is the hundreds of people: parents, teachers, friends, colleagues etc.-take part in this process. The environment in which a human lived and was raised also plays an important role.

Body: Many researchers who study and develop different questions in the sphere of education operate with the concept of "educational space", this can be seen from the analysis of publications and scientific magazines which we have conducted. In foreign sources the space as considered as the boundlessness, 3-D degree where objects and events have relative position and direction [5]. A.V. Shumakova suggests a generalized definition: "Educational space is the axiological integrated unit of the society and world educational space, it is structured in a normative or spontaneous way, has its system of coordinates which determine the possibilities for self-development and self-changing of individuality on different stages of its formation" [6].

M.T. Gromkova determines the meaning of educational space basing on the semantics of the word "education", which is connected with the change of the inner image in the process of apprehension. The cogitation, which is organized in a systematic way, is inclined to see the system as the whole, its planetary model and to apprehend elements and connections inside it, using procreational (previously known) knowledge and creating efficient, new (previously not known) knowledge. Their integrity, convergence is the content of educational space in which the following interpenetrating components should be marked: pedagogic space-is everything that subject is interested at, that influence and affect the subject; everything that he consciously absorbs, excluding anything that isn't valuable and interesting for

him or that he doesn't want to absorb; informational space inside which the information is learned, i.e. the educational process takes place-learning of new information, acquisition of knowledge; developing space is connected with the activity and with its main types: mental activity, communication activity and labour, work, connected with the overcoming and resistance, with bodily fatigue and transformation of material product [7, p. 81-82].

Basing on the educational space components, mentioned by M.T. Gromkova, let us suppose that the educational space of a military higher educational establishment consists of the variety of sub-spaces, which penetrate and complete each other. According to this theory we built a hypothetic model of educational space of a military higher educational establishment aimed at formation of the future officers' individuality. In this model we point out nine main components of educational space: subject space, pedagogical space, developing space, psychological preparation space, informational space, managing space, content space, organizational space and regulatory support space.

To the subject space of the military higher educational establishment we refer main participants of the educational activity-military students, teachers and commanders of student units. In the result of interaction of military students with teachers and commanders of student units, the students treat their profession as the value; they get knowledge of the content of their future professional activity.

We have already mentioned above the fact that the space is the environment utilised by human. Consequently the pedagogical space shall be deemed as the pedagogical environment which is being utilised by individuality. Today the social education is not restricted by the transfer of sociocultural norms only, it is supposed to form for an individual the ability to find and utilise such social-economical, social-status and social-psychological point that would allow the individuality to realise itself (be happy) and not feel loss-prone (be unhappy). The life itself demands a new approach to the education through the creation of educational space as the result of integrating and creating activity of all the components of the society with educational activity subjects taking part in it. Educational and pedagogical processes are performed within the space of common living of different society subjects [8].

The most important part of the developing space is the developing environment, which includes all the social growth factors including culture, education and upbringing process.

Basing on the specific nature of the military education, its aims and tasks its educational space has such component as psychological preparation space within which the students have the process of formation of positive attitude to their future profession, inherent availability to overcome difficulties of their future profession.

The next part of the education process is the informational space, the main components of which are the following: reference resources, means of information exchange and information infrastructure (block of data centers, data bases and knowledge bases and communication systems) [9].

Max H. Boist considers the information space as the basis for study and assimilation of culture, on his opinion the informational space is deemed as conceptual basis or instrument for studying the way of knowledge and information coding and spreading in social system [10].

Managing space includes administration and self-administration. The subjects of self-administration are the youth organizations of a military higher educational establishment.

The content space is, to our mind, the main content of the students' activity during their study in the higher educational: study, employment, pedagogic, social, sport, cultural and other activity. Content space influences the military students in the form of information, which they receive in the process of their activity. This means that the information becomes significant for the students' motivation only during the process of activity. However not any information will influence a student, but only that which content meets the up-to-date needs of individuality.

Organizational space is the space within which the process of incorporation of military students into the educational activity according to the education program takes place. Military students' motives, relationships of the subjects of education activity and the future profession of officer depend greatly on the organization of educational activity, on its conditions, on its orientation on certain priorities and aims.

Regulatory support space is the space within which and according to its requirements the education activity is implemented.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the experts' opinion the prestige value of the profession of an officer has an outspoken reducing trend.

It is remarkable that the experts and students have different opinions concerning the prestige value of the profession of an officer. Thus, the military students define the prestige value of their future profession in the society as follows:

As we can see the opinions of the military students of different years of study are significantly different. The conviction of the prestige value of the profession of an officer becomes weaker as the students come to their graduating class. Studying this contradiction we drew a conclusion that the first-year military students have a vague notion of the realias of their future professional activity.

The results of talk with school leavers and interviewing showed that the prestige value of the profession of a officer is reduced in big cities where the national average living standard is higher.

According to the assessment of the nominal financial income of people in the regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the 1st quarter of 2013, which was presented by the Statistical Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the biggest financial incomes per capita in the 1st quarter of 2013 are in Atyrau region, Almaty city and Mangystau region. The said value exceeded here the average republican level 2,1-1,7 times. The regions with the lowest incomes still remain the Southern region of Kazakhstan, Zhambyl and Almaty regions (60.4%, 66.9% and 79.9% to the average level respectively) [11].

Studying the opinions of interviewees on the question of "What is to be done in order to develop such qualities which are needed for the professional activity of an officer?" » we got the following results:

- It is necessary to relate all the knowledge to the professional activity-90 %;
- The "immersion" of military students into the professional environment is necessary-87 %;
- Trainings for personal and professional growth are needed-76 %;
- Involve students into an interesting activity-34%.
- Improve curricula, review documents on education process organization-6 %.

Taking into account the necessity of creating a positive informational environment, which makes a military higher educational establishment more attractive for the society, the experts outlined a set of practical suggestions:

- Activate the work on advocacy of the best practices and educational experience through mass media;

- Promote the participation of military higher educational establishments in the life of a city, country;
- Involve military students and officers of a military higher educational establishment into pedagogical and career-guidance work at schools;
- Differentiation of the work of officials in military higher educational establishments depending on their contribution. The participants of the educational process should be encouraged, preconized but without bating demands;
- Conduction of professional selection on higher level;
- Formation of positive image of a military establishment.

During our interview we tested the method of studying educational space of a military higher educational establishment. According to this method the interviewees were to answer 50 questions aimed at studying educational space, realization of its potential in the formation of individuality of military men. For every answer that corresponds to the given key was accrued with 2 points. According to the method, the maximum sum of 100 points means that educational space of a military higher educational establishment allows the effective

formation of a military man's individuality. If the sum is less than 100 points it defines which of necessary conditions in a military higher educational establishment are absent. The method allows analysing educational space of the whole military educational establishment (if more students are interviewed) and stuying educational space of the separate groups. The less the sum is, the less favourable is educational space of a military higher educational establishment for formation of the individuality of a student. With the help of this method we studied the opinions of the first-, second-, third-and fourth-year military students. The results are showed on the Figure 1.

Let us study the results of implementing of this method in details. During the assessment of educational space of a military higher educational establishment 38% of military students gave negative answer to the statement "The teachers constantly and purposefully perform the positive support of military students' successes". 37% of military students think that "The teachers notice every successes of the students, even insignificant ones". "The teachers think that military students are mostly lazy and do not want to study"-that's the opinion of 62% of military students.

Table 1: Assessment of the level of the prestige value of the profession of an officer

No.	Level of the prestige value	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
1	The profession is prestigious and honourable	77%	76%	46%	50%
2	The tendency of decreasing the prestige value is observed	11%	14 %	24%	24%
3	Average level of prestige value	12%	10%	24%	23%
4	Prestige value below the average	-	-	6%	3%
5	The profession of an officer is not prestigious	-	-	-	-

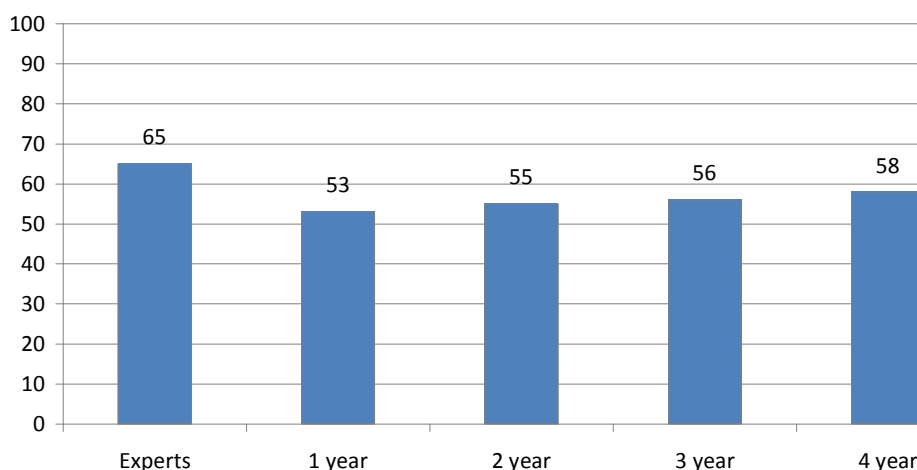


Fig. 1: The assessment of educational space in a military higher educational establishment by experts and military students

Here are some more examples. "The teachers think that military students will study better if the demands are higher and if they are punished for bad preparation"-this statement get positive responses from 69% of interviewees. "The teachers admit a student's individuality as the aim, result and main criterion of the effective educational activity of a military higher educational establishment"-that's the opinion of 40% of the respondents. "The military students are able to solve all the tasks at their lessons, the content of course units is understandable"-that's the opinion of 57% of respondents.

CONCLUSION

We think that the formation of the integral system of formation of the future officer's individuality is the result of finding out the effective ways and methods of improvement of main components of educational space and effectiveness of cooperation of military students and other participants of educational space in the light of formation of motivation to the professional activity.

Interaction of military students with other participants of educational space is one of the most important conditions for formation of positive attitude to the future profession of an officer. During the process of active interaction a military student undergoes the process of mindset, affirmation and character trait formation. We should understand that every personality is not only the subject but also the object of the interaction process. During the interaction process a military student can influence the environment and custom it for himself by means of accepting the conditions of the environment.

Every student is included in several groups each of which influences significantly his professional development during the interaction process. Moreover, the most important interactions of military students in educational space of a military higher educational establishment to our opinion are the following: interaction with commanders (directors); interaction with teachers; interaction with the administration of a military higher educational establishment; interaction with practising officers (during trainings on probation, meetings, talks, lessons etc.); interaction with formal staff members (training division, training picket, wing); interaction with non-formal staff members (formed micro-groups: interest

groups, association of fellow-countrymen etc.); interaction with family (relatives); interaction with military men of a military higher educational establishment; interaction with mass media (acquiring and apprehension of information through radio, TV, Internet, social networks etc.).

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