



ANALYSIS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL PROCESSES OF MODERN RUSSIAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Elena V. Susimenko ^{a*}, Sergey I. Samygin ^b, Dmitry V. Krotov ^b, Yulia V. Maslova ^a,
Irina I. Pavlenko ^c, Olga O. Afanaseva ^d, Nina N. Kapanyan ^a

^a *Institute of Fundamental Engineering Education, Platov South-Russian State Polytechnic University (NPI), RUSSIAN FEDERATION.*

^b *Department of Human Resource Management and Sociology, Rostov State Economic University (RINH), RUSSIAN FEDERATION.*

^c *Department of ICT, Math and Information Security, Pyatigorsk State University, Pyatigorsk, RUSSIA*

^d *Faculty of Social work department, Russian State Social University (RSSU), RUSSIA*

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ABSTRACT

This article presents an analysis of the transformational processes taking place in the system of modern Russian higher education. The main directions of transformational processes demonstrating the crisis of the modern higher education system include: weakening the role of the government as a structural and administrative basis of the education system; deideologization of the education system; the lack of linking mechanisms between education and the labor market; the problem of quality of education and effectiveness of the educational process; the problem of recession of the intellectual potential of youth; the problem of transformation of the value of education; lack of strategic development of the education system. Analysis of the changes taking place in the system of Russian higher education proves us that modern Russian society, while changing the economic course towards innovations, orientation towards increasing the efficiency of economy and its modernization, needs other, new approaches to the development of higher education system. A full-fledged and efficiently functioning market of educational services is important to be considered as a necessary condition for a high level of production and competitiveness in the world market.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Transformational processes at all spheres of Russian society, which have been going on for more than two decades, are caused by instability of socio-economical, educational, socio-cultural, socio-political and other systems, which leads to a serious systemic crisis in nearly all spheres of social life. Global trends affect the national system of higher education, dictating the dominant vector of transformation of the educational field: the

commercialization of the education system, the enlargement of the volume of paid educational services, the "diversity of standards and training programs used in various Russian universities; The unequal level of knowledge received by students in universities of large and small cities; Saturation with information" (Gafiatulina et al., 2017: 28). In addition, the emergence of a global market for higher education, its informatization, as M.G. Kehyan notes, causes a drastic change in the direction and quality of the teaching and upbringing process, reduction of the intellectual potential of young people (Kehyan, 2013: 85).

These negative processes inevitably led to a sharp decline in the performance indicators of the Russian educational system and to the growth of various anomalous processes and phenomena among youngsters (Samygin et al., 2016: 295). The indicated tendencies are manifested at all levels of higher education, areas of provision and activities of both the educational system itself (with a large fall in its performance indicators), and as the impact on society as a whole. They are defined as a systemic crisis directly related to the global world problems of the education system. Moreover, each specific system of education and each specific level of education, in the opinion of I.N. Alexsenko, "in addition to the generally significant manifestations and development trends of crisis nature phenomena, bears specific, unique for each educational system features that are systemic" (Alexsenko I.N., 2017: 79).

Transformational processes and systemic crisis of modern Russian higher education are written about by: Alexsenko (2017), Antipova (2014) Arapov (2004) Murashev (2012) Fomchenkova (2014) and others. These authors examine the consequences of the transformational processes taking place today in the Russian educational system; describe the risks that can give rise to the effect of dysfunctions in higher education (Gafiatulina et al., 2018: 71).

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF RESEARCH METHOD

The study of the system of modern Russian higher education in context of analysis of the transformational processes is based on methodological developments in the field of globalization problems, sociology of uncertainty and risk, sociology of education, and an institutional approach is applied. In addition, a set of scientific methods and approaches developed within the framework of the sociology of security are used in this article. Among the methods actively used in the article, methods of axiological, comparative, and socio-cultural approaches should be considered. This made it possible to investigate the consequences of the transformational processes taking place in Russian education at present stage of society's development that "fit" into a certain cycle of changes in all of its structures characterized by uncertainty and instability.

In general, the research is based on the most important general methodological principles of scientific knowledge of social reality: systemification, objectivity, historicism and social determinism.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In opinion of Russian sociologists (E.B. Gayazova, O.V. Gorbacheva, R.I. Zinurov, R.V. Kozenko, A.R. Tuzikov), main current trends in global development that determine significant transformations in education system, include:

- acceleration of the society development pace and, as a consequence, the need to prepare Russian student youth for living in rapidly changing environment;
- transition to a postindustrial, information society;
- a significant increase in the scope of intercultural interaction, seeing this the factors of communicability and tolerance acquire special importance; The emergence and growth of global problems;
- dynamic economic development, increased competition, a reduction in the scope of unskilled and low-skilled labor, profound structural changes in sphere of employment, which determine the constant need for professional development and retraining of workers, and the growth of their professional mobility.

So, let's look at the main directions of transformational processes, which demonstrate the crisis of the system of modern Russian higher education. The primary component of that crisis is associated with the government, which, being the structural and managerial foundation of all social spheres, incl. the system of education, at the present stage of development, significantly weakened its role, which led to imbalance in the structural and managerial sphere and uncoordinated, inharmonious activities in most spheres of public life, especially in education.

As a consequence of this process, there is a break in the chain of "higher professional education-status-income", and, consequently, younger generation of Russians has a reduced opportunity to realize their received education wishing to enter the "social elevator" to enhance their social status, social prestige and income (Hanefeld et al., 2017: 2359). A high level of education no longer guarantees the professional employment of young specialists in prestigious and adequately paid sectors of social life. In addition, the modern system of professional educational space lets there be good conditions for uncertainty of professional and social status of potential young professionals.

The modern system of higher education has a narrowly-pragmatic model, which is fundamentally incorrect, since the educational system must bring up, teach, educate, socialize and form higher universal values, on which, in fact, social and educational and upbringing work is built.

According to our study carried out among university students at the Southern Federal University and the Don State Technical University in Rostov-on-Don, (N = 312 people, age criterion - from 18 to 22 years, 2016), there is a trend towards the conversion of higher education into social norm. The overwhelming majority of respondents (96%) believe that modern young people need to have a higher education.

After analyzing the collected data, the following was discovered:

- The first place (87.9%) is about students, indicating an exclusively pragmatic function of acquired higher education;
- The second place is indicated the necessity of the function of professionalism (45.2%);
- The third place (29.8%) is about socio-cultural function (i.e. the desire not only to gain professional knowledge, skills and attainments, but also to expand one's own horizons).

Similar results of empirical research are seen in other researchers of this problem. So, according to sociological study of student youth conducted by Fomchenkova (2014), there is a trend towards conversion of higher education into a social norm.

However, 90.1% of respondents need a diploma of higher education only "to apply for a good job". At the same time, 22.3% plan to work in their specialty, and 46.5% of young people after they graduate are going to realize their labor potential in another specialty. In addition, the analysis of empirically obtained data showed that 86.7% of respondents point out the pragmatic utility of having a diploma, discarding the received knowledge in case they are supposed to work not in their specialty (Fomchenkova, 2014: 25). Thus, we can talk about the predominantly pragmatic attitude of modern youth towards education.

It should be noted that respondents are trying to get two or three at the same time, trying to combine full-time, part-time and distant ones, as well as budgetary and commercial (contractual) forms of education. This fact, in our opinion, may indicate a new stage of adaptation to a market economy. About 48.9% of respondents among students are not in a hurry to enter the labor market, because they want to get another higher education. This is due to the fact that this category of respondents believes that presence of several higher educations will help them in future employment for prestigious work.

At the same time, we found paradoxical and contradictory of thinking among young people: despite the fact that the majority of respondents want to get higher education for sake of having a diploma, 74.9% of these respondents answered: when employing, first of all, each employer appreciates some work experience in the specialty. Therefore the contradiction in the answers was revealed: at the beginning of the sociological survey almost all the students answered that, in their opinion, at present people are striving for getting higher education in order to have a diploma for successful employment for a decent work. This fact is explained by the fact that students receive higher education mostly because of the social norms accepted in society rather than for successful employment. Unfortunately, higher education does not appear as a rational social technology, which requires not only a practical understanding of large amount of information, but also efforts to learn a full range of professional specialization, but as a kind of ritual in a market economy.

Empirical research allows us to judge that a much larger proportion of student youth demonstrates the mechanisms of market thinking. However, about 32.1% of the respondents chose the answers to the questionnaire "prestigious position of the future specialty" and "ease of admission" in the questionnaire. Such answers point to non-market forms of behavior, dooming themselves to the lack of demand for a modern labor market. This fact confirms that a significant part of the respondents are dominated by the value of diploma as

such over the value of education itself, which means that the attitude towards the education received is correspondingly developing as something common. According to empirical data, only about 35.8% of respondents believe that higher education should provide general knowledge and skills, provide a broad outlook, in order to be able to independently study and learn new areas of theoretical and practical knowledge.

It should be noted that the evolution of market standards of behavior of the current Russian youth in sphere of educational activity is revealed in:

- Reduction of state and private investment in higher education; Market standards of behavior in a non-market economy;
- Non-market forms of behavior in the labor market;
- Social paradox of the conflict of youth educational status (career strategies) and professional roles.

Consequently, there is a paradoxical situation: on one hand, young people seek to acquire a profession, become a certified specialist, and on the other hand, the problem of professional and social self-determination arises (Vereshchagina et al., 2015: 226).

The next component of the crisis in Russian educational system is related to the process of de-ideologization – the loss of deep value content in education system, which entailed:

First, the weakening of socializing and educational functions of the educational process;

Second, there is nothing unreasonable revision of the content of curricula and taught disciplines at all educational levels;

Third, a significant change in humanitarian component of educational process.

In the end, all these factors generally negatively influence the formation of a common culture of youth, professional, social and spiritual self-determination of young people, lead to a rethinking of the value and importance of education, the transformation of cognitive abilities, and civic positions (Vereshchagina et al., 2017: 138).

Thus, according to empirically obtained data, the dominant value of personal, material well-being, doing one's favorite thing is revealed in student's environment, provided that it is adequately paid (the first ranking place). Meanwhile, the values of a different, social order, civil-patriotic, connected with spiritual and moral development, related to the strengthening the security system of the individual, society and state (that characterized youth until the early 1990-s), are not perceived as prevailing objectives of youth activities and conflict with the interests of security of Russian society (Natalya et al., 2018: 34).

The third component of the crisis in Russian higher education system, which tells us about transformational processes in this sphere, is directly related to the first and second ones, since it concerns the formation of innovative market and commercialized relations that have led to unjustified growth of those wishing to obtain higher education guided by pragmatic goals. Thus, when studying the social dynamics of the realization of the demand for education, it is observed that after their relative reduction, which is connected to the reforms in education, two tendencies are noted today: a constant increase of the demand for

educational services and a significant increase of the number of student youth. In particular, according to the statistics data of M.V. Arapova, for the period of 1993-2010. The number of student youth has increased more than 2.5 times. And the particularity of this social phenomenon, which is a consequence of transformational processes in education system, in opinion of the aforementioned Russian researcher, is that so-called "massification" of higher education is formed not because of the economic growth or growth of the young population. It is determined by a very contradictory socio-economic situation and a protracted demographic decline, because socio-economic and demographic processes transform the very structure and essence of the functioning of the system of higher education (Arapov, 2004: 30).

It is also important to note that the transformational processes taking place in the system of modern Russian higher education are also revealed in deepening the gap between the constitutional guarantees in this sphere, the real financing of educational institutions and the level of the quality of education.

Proceeding from the third component of the crisis, which indicates the serious transformational processes of the system of Russian higher education, the fourth result is the violation and further disruption of education connections with Russian production (employer) and the economy due to the transformation of socioeconomic principles, the decline in production in many sectors (Shakhbanova et al., 2016: 3891).

So, the modern employer, on the one hand, is trying to solve the problem of providing himself with qualified personnel through promotion and professional retraining of his employees; On the other hand, when employing new employees, the employer gives the main advantage to those people who, along with the diploma of higher professional education, also have certain work experience (this fact is indicated by about 80.1% of student youth) (ESM, 2018). Proceeding from such contradictory behavior, it can be concluded that a negative tendency of employers mistrust growth towards the traditional mass education system has been developed. This trend is confirmed by empirical data: 30.1% of respondents are confident about their ability to find work and about 59.7% expressed doubts about their successful employment; Moreover, most of the young people surveyed believe that the education system does not give them an opportunity to receive high incomes, since employers need already experienced specialists.

The discrepancy and inconsistency of the system of Russian higher education and the labor market that is characteristic today forms a special mechanism that fills the gap between labor market and the vocational education market. As stressed in A.V. Murashev's article devoted to the sociological interpretation of the transformation of the education system, "this is also an education, but of a special kind. It is not received in the same way as in "ordinary" educational institutions. This education takes effect long before the full-fledged professional activity of the graduate begins. This parallel education involves obtaining a new specialty or certain skills, knowledge and attainments. According to the explanations of A.V. Murashev, it is closely connected with an inadequacy of the education received by student youth, "making it difficult for a newly-born specialist to move from a student's bench to a

working chair" (Murashev, 2012: 89). And this is understandable, since the analysis of everyday social practices shows that graduates of modern universities, in the vast majority, usually do not possess the necessary applicable knowledge, skills and attainments that will be in demand at professional activities and, in addition, they are not ready to position themselves on Labor market (Litvinova et al., 2018: 53).

The main reason for this of course is, first, the reduction of the intellectual potential of youth; Secondly, the lack of necessitive communication skills received in business and interpersonal communication during the learning process (which is associated with a significant reduction in the component of humanities in educational process); Thirdly, an inadequate view of one's own market value as a professional and the realities of the production space to which a young specialist falls into.

Thus, proceeding from the foregoing, the fifth component of the crisis, indicating about the transformational processes of the Russian higher education system, is the empirically noted decrease of the intellectualization rate of Russian youth, which led to the devaluation of intellectual labor, which can also be explained (Taranov P.V., Basenko A.M., Roshchina L.N., Kulikova I.V., Israilova E.A., Samygin S.I., 2018: 354). In the system of Russian education, global changes are taking place: on the basis of the state educational standard, a transition to a multi-level system of vocational education is being realized, the functioning of higher education is being reformed through an organizational and economic mechanism, property relations are changing, and competition inside of the educational services market is intensifying (Shakbanova et al., 2018: 117).

In such conditions of total devaluation of higher education in the first years of market reforms, a decrease in cognitive needs among young people and a deformation of educational and motivational needs towards their pragmatization were recorded. At the present stage of functioning of the education system, according to Fomchenkova (2014), the corresponding index does not exceed 15%.

The sixth direction of transformational processes in the system of Russian higher education is connected with the lack of vision of strategic ways of its development. This is manifested in the following: a young man, increasing his educational status, tries to implement his own needs and personal interests in the educational process (Vaskov et al., 2018: 138), however, the ongoing reform of the education system while the absence of immediate prospects for at least one young generation cannot support the realization of these needs, since the goals of strategic development of this sphere are not taken into account.

Thus, after examining the main transformation processes observed in the system of higher education and highlighting the components of the crisis of this system, let us summarize some of the results of this survey study.

The sociological analysis of changes taking place today in the system of Russian higher education shows us that this sphere is going through profound transformation processes and therefore needs new approaches to the development of the education system, since the latter is of paramount importance in providing the human resources for all spheres of the social

division system of labor and in forming highly professional, intellectual and creative resources for normal functioning and further progressive development of society.

The most actual problems of modern Russian higher education, which arose as a result of the impact of transformational processes, include:

- 1) the problem of weakening the role of the state as a structural and administrative basis of the system of higher education;
- 2) deideologization of higher education system;
- 3) the problem of lack of a clear link between the modern higher education system and the labor market;
- 4) the problem of the quality of education (the market of educational services) and the effectiveness of the educational process;
- 5) the problem of reducing the intellectual potential of students;
- 6) the problem of the transformation of the value of higher education as such;
- 7) lack of vision of the strategic development of higher education system.

4. CONCLUSION

As long as the modern system of higher education is in a state of crisis, escaping which depends on an accurate understanding of its causes. In our opinion, this spiritual and cultural impoverishment of the society, both in the former Soviet command and administrative system, and at "restructuring" and "post- restructuring" periods, is conditioned by the higher education system being financed by the residual principle, and also by the reduction of prestige and quality of acquired knowledge.

In this regard, the transformational processes taking place in the modern system of higher education must take into account the fact that education is the primary branch of the national economy and the priority objective of Russian policy in the context of transition to the formation of a social state, a market economy (Vereshchagina et al., 2017: 139).

Transformation processes occurring in Russian society create a fundamentally new situation in the sector of higher professional education, which inevitably leads to changes in the relations of educational institutions with Russian and foreign regions and with each other, in the content and organization of the educational process. We believe that the main factor in the renewal process of the system of higher professional education should be development needs of the labor market, science and technology at the federal (state) and regional (local) levels and as a consequence of the social and economic sphere as a whole.

Also Russian sociologists fear that the freedom that is given today to organizations and enterprises in the formation of human resources can contribute to the appearance of another problem. In particular, there may be difficulties in satisfying the nation-wide need for specialists, as already today, utilitarian requirements for the training of future specialists, pledged in the educational standards, are clearly traced. The formation of a new IT-society via the industrial production requires a change in the system of higher education and further

monitoring of the proportions of changing production via social institutions that ensure the satisfaction of the needs of society. Due to the fact that the organic connection between the economy, production and the education system is violated, there is a situation of risk, uncertainty and a danger of uncontrolled "supply" of qualified personnel without taking into account the labor market needs.

In order to overcome all the components of the crisis described above, which testify to the transformational processes of the system of Russian higher education, it is necessary to solve the following socially significant tasks:

- First, to strengthen the role of the state as a structural and administrative basis of the system of Russian higher education;

- Second, in every way contribute to overcoming deideologization by means of a meaningful filling of the system of higher education;

- Third, to develop mechanisms that enhances the links of higher education with Russian production (employers);

- Fourth, to search for ways of coordinated and harmonized interaction between the system of professional higher education and the labor market;

- Fifth, to develop educational standards (with the predominance of the humanitarian component in the educational process) aimed at a comprehensive increase of the intellectualization coefficient of modern Russian youth;

- Sixthly, at the state level, develop strategic ways to develop the system of higher professional education.

In a turn, the solution of these tasks will contribute to realization of three main goals of the system of higher education:

- 1 - meeting the needs of the individual, social group and society as a whole in educational (professional) services;

- 2 - training of highly specialized young specialists who are able to realize the needs of the main structures of life of the Russian society;

- 3 - to ensure comprehensive education, socialization, adaptation, professional, social and spiritual self-determination of Russian youth, taking into account its interests, as well as society's needs for safe functioning and progressive development.

The sustainable development of society largely depends on how complete the conditions for effective, socially progressive perspectives of the education system are created, which will ensure the security of the individual, society and the state. It is obvious that the economic, military and national security of Russia as a whole does not appear to be possible without highly qualified personnel, specialists of a broad profile; Technological and information security is unreal without the same personnel and scientific developments; Social security is impossible without a socially adaptive, flexible, highly qualified youth

(Kasyanov et al., 2017: 6).

If in the past the role of the system of higher education was reduced mainly to ensuring the reproduction of socio-professional and socio-cultural potential, today's system of higher education realizes the functions of many social institutions, for example, political in goal-setting, economic in ensuring resource development, the institution of media in communication, and legal institutions in integration. In its turn, the traditional functions of higher education are wrongly delegated by other social institutions, for example, the economic institution as a subject of economic activity (enterprises), a political institution (through socio-political associations), and social services.

The problem of effective implementation of the functions and realization of the main mission of the higher education system is to synchronize its elements with the functions performed. Its resolution requires the formation of an adequate structure, based on state educational standards.

However, in our opinion, such are not a unifying, integrating element, but only unify the system. We believe that this role is played far more by the system of sociocultural values. The system of sociocultural values is the fundamental basis of the institution of higher education, since it is these values that set the parameters for the development of the education system, being consistently realized in the process of the activity of all educational subsystems.

A full-fledged and effectively developing market of educational services should be considered as an urgently needed and priority condition for a high level of production and competitiveness in the world market. The system of Russian higher education should develop at a faster rate than other social spheres, since it is the sphere of education that is directly involved into the process of personal and professional socialization, which is the basis of the social mechanism of professional self-determination of young people, behind which the future of Russian society stands.

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Professor Dr. Elena V. Susimenko graduated a bachelor degree with honors from the Faculty of English and German, Pyatigorsk State Linguistic University. She earned her master and PhD from South-Russian State Polytechnic University (NPI). Her research focuses on problems of higher education: modern pedagogical technologies, information and communication technologies.



Professor Dr. Sergey I. Samygin Professor of Judicial Examination and Criminalistics, Rostov State Economic University (RINH), Russia.



Professor Dr. Dmitry V. Krotov is Professor of Economic Theory, Rostov State Economic University (RINH).



Yulia V. Maslova is an Assistant Professor of Institute of Fundamental Engineering Education, Platov South-Russian State Polytechnic University (NPI), RUSSIAN FEDERATION. She is interested in skill developments.



Irina I. Pavlenko is Chair of ICT, Math And Information Security, Pyatigorsk State University at Pyatigorsk, Russia.



Olga O. Afanaseva is a PhD candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Faculty of Social work department, Russian State Social University (RSSU), Russia. She is interested in integration of education and labor market.



Nina N. Kapanyan is Senior Lecturer, Institute of Fundamental Engineering Education, Platov South-Russian State Polytechnic University (NPI), Russia. She is interested in resilient mechanisms of social organizations.