

DOI 10.31651/2524-2660-2022-3-20-26
ORCID 0000-0002-5344-7928

AKHUNDOVA Sevinj Leffk

PhD in Pedagogy, Associate Professor,
Baku Slavic University, Azerbaijan Republic
e-mail: sevin90@rambler.ru

UDC 378.091.2-048.34(045)

**EDUCATIONAL PROCESS IN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS:
ISSUES OF ITS OPTIMIZATION**

The article examines the questions of optimizing a teaching and educational process of higher institutions. The article exposes the ways and forms of teachers' work directed at optimizing an educational process. The optimization of a teaching and educational process increases the efficacy of students' teaching-cognitive activity. It is asserted that the process of optimizing teaching and educational work requires a higher level of teachers' professional training. The article provides necessary recommendations for elevating the efficacy of optimizing the process of teaching and educational work in higher institutions.

Keywords: higher institutions; optimization; professional training of teachers of higher institutions; methods and forms of optimization; cognitive capabilities of students.

Formulation of the problem. The improvement and modernization of the educational system actualizes the issues of building the entire educational process with its focus on the development and self-realization of an individual. Therefore, the issues of finding the most rational methods, ways, and means of organizing the pedagogical process, building its optimal model are always relevant.

This article explores the "eternal" issues of increasing the educational and cognitive activity of university students by means and possibilities of optimizing the educational process.

Theoretical foundations of the research

are the fundamental works of such scholars as Yu.K. Babansky, T.I. Shamova, N.M. Mikhailov, Z.I. Yeremina, A.V. Barabanshchikov, M.A. Danilov, M.I. Makhmutov, I.Ya. Lerner, A.K. Markova, V.V. Davydov, D.N. Bogoyavlensky, A.M. Matyushkin and others.

In all the scientific works of the listed researchers, the main task was to find and scholarly substantiate the choice of such a variant of the educational process in which it is possible to achieve the highest results of the work done. To be more specific, we are talking about finding the most appropriate and effective set of organizational and methodological justification for the educational process and its optimization.

The analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature on this problem and its results, reflected in the mentioned above studies, enrich modern didactics, as well as practical recommendations for optimizing an educational process, taking into account the basic methodological principles of building a modern educational process, can be useful in the activities of teachers of higher educational institutions.

The purpose of the study is to actualize the issues of improving the quality of an educational process by optimizing it.

Presentation of the main material. The tasks of democratic building of society at the present stage put forward qualitatively new requirements for the education system to increase the level of efficiency of creative activity of students of higher education, based on solid training in the field of fundamental sciences. Improving the level of university students' training might create the foundations of their personal and social self-realization in reality and deeper professional and creative self-identification in their chosen career.

Modern pedagogical science along with effective managerial theoretical grounds for educational processes, and higher school pedagogy might equip the university teaching staff with effective scientific advances in the field with the aim of significantly improving the effectiveness of an educational process at the university. The wide choice of scientifically based and proven ways, methods and means offered by pedagogical science to achieve a high level of professional training of students, their professional self-identification and self-realization contributes to identifying the most optimal ways to achieve a set of educational and personal-professional goals. It should be noted that the issues of increasing the educational and cognitive activity of higher school students and, accordingly, raising the level of an educational process have always been in the focus of attention of scholars in the fields of Pedagogy, Psychology, and Social Sciences.

It is very important to keep in mind that the theory concerning optimization of an educational process is not aimed at introducing any new tasks in the process of academic work at the university; it is aimed primarily at the implementing the tasks set by using the most effective opportunities, ways and means to achieve the previously set goal [1, p. 18]. Such scholars as L.V. Zankov, T.V. Kudryavtsev, L.P. Aristova, E.I. Kalmykova in their scientific works emphasize that the educational process in higher education may be considered optimal if it organizes work in the way that provides the best solution to previously set goals.

A big role in the developing and implementing the ideas of optimizing educational work in educational institutions belongs to the famous teacher, educator and scholar Yu.K. Babansky. Having scientifically substantiated the idea of optimizing an educational process, the researcher also considers its components, which are a very important factor in achieving the goals of an education-

al process of higher education. Here we can mention the most important constituents that significantly reveal the meaning of optimizing an educational process – the level of spiritual development and intellectual training of students, professional training of university teachers, the ability of teachers to clearly employ students' capacities at a strictly defined time, the quality of the proposed material, taking into account the range of interests and inclinations of students, and much more. Insufficient attention to any component of the process of optimizing an educational process can negate all the efforts of teachers.

The scientific, practical and professional need for the development and scientific substantiation of the theoretical foundations for optimizing an educational process is also dictated by the fact that the education system is always in continuous motion; being incessantly improved and methodologically enriched, in order to increase the efficiency of the entire educational process. These processes of continual improvement enhance and shape actual requirements for the modern lesson, the professional training of students, creating new opportunities for professional self-realization. Such requirements substantiate and rationalize the necessity to develop a special theory of the optimization process, where the ideas and suggestions of A.S. Makarenko, G.T. Ogorodnikova, I.P. Rachenko, A.G. Moliboga, S.Ya. Batysheva, L.S. Vygotsky and other researchers will allow evolve logically sound and effective foundations for the optimization process in educational institutions. Recently developed new curricula and methodological recommendations may provide an opportunity for the teaching staff of higher education to most effectively implement modern ideas of optimization in their professional activities.

The modern approach to the theory of optimizing an educational process in higher education assumes (V.K. Kirillov, V.I. Gorbunov, A.V. Galanin, N.S. Nazarova, A.F. Menyayev, etc.) that students learn the educational material compatible with the level of their current capabilities and, accordingly, can enrich their vocational knowledge that contributes to their professional and creative self-realization. The teaching staff of the university should constantly study the real possibilities of students to predict the zone of their proximal development and improve the effectiveness of classes [2, p. 49]. The theory of optimization, in its essence, according to the assumptions of researchers

V.D. Portugalova, S.I. Meleshko, N.P. Oshchenkova, N.V. Tamarina, V.K. Elmanova and others, is not considered to be realized if there are no lagging behind students in the study group. This would be, in a way, a half-way implementation of the main idea of optimizing an educational process. It should be understood that the idea of optimizing an educational process involves the consolidation of personal and professional capabilities of all students of the study group and their orientation towards the implementation of both intermediate and final goals of educational work. This is a very important definition, since the mere assimilation of educational material can probably, to some extent, cause students to feel satisfied with themselves and improve interpersonal relationships with teachers. In this case, the algorithm “the student knows, the teacher is satisfied” does not correspond to the main idea of optimizing a learning process.

The orientation of university teachers to the zone of the closest development of students does not allow the latter to be exclusively content with the current level of professional development, but stimulates mutual efforts on the part of both students and university teachers to search for and implement continuous opportunities to improve the quality of an educational process.

Some specialists, researchers in the field of pedagogical psychology consider it very productive to use in the process of optimizing educational work such ideas of the teacher L.V. Zankov as teaching at a high level of complexity and at a fast pace. At each lecture and seminar session in higher school, a new topic was studied, a new teaching material was submitted by the teacher. This method assumed the constant inclusion of all the spiritual and intellectual capabilities of students to solve the problem of increased complexity proposed by them. Students were continuously in a state of creative search for answers, they generated original ideas and ways to solve the problem, justified and professionally argued them.

Of course, the idea of teaching at a high level of complexity, proposed by educator L.V. Zankov, significantly contributed to improving the effectiveness of students' academic work. The method stimulated the effectiveness of such a cognitive operation as analysis of the pedagogical task proposed to students, contributed to the constant search for the most effective ways to solve the problem. From the point of view of increasing the efficiency of optimizing academic work at lec-

tures and seminars, the method of L.V. Zankov contributed to improving the overall indicators of educational and cognitive activity of students.

Modern psychological and pedagogical scientific literature examines, analyzes, tests and offers many effective methods, ways and means of improving the quality of the educational process and stimulating the educational and cognitive activity of students. Specialists on the problems of higher education S.I. Arkhangelsky, E.P. Belozertsev, A.A. Verbitsky, N.I. Vyunova, I.F. Isaev, A.V. Korzhuev, N.V. Kuzmina, L.N. Granovskaya, V.I. Zagvyazinsky, P.I. Pidkasisty, G.I. Akse-nova, E.V. Bondarevskaya and others in their scientific research repeatedly emphasized the idea – not to elevate this or that method of activating educational work at the university into an absolute. The theory of optimizing an educational process assumes, first of all, not an exaggeration of the role of any type of educational work (even if it does not demonstrate its high efficiency), but to show in which educational situation of working with a student audience one or another theoretical and methodological variant of activating students' mental operations turned out to be most productive.

A lot in the successful application of the ideas aimed at optimizing an educational process depends directly on the level of spiritual, intellectual, personal and professional training of a high school teacher. The more variants of the approach to the organization of an educational process are analyzed and implemented in the professional activity of a university teacher, the more professionally and argumentatively he will choose effective approaches to academic work and adhere to optimization ideas in it.

It should be noted that the optimization theory proposed by scholars introduced a new category into didactics (very organically) – a system of optimal learning methods. This system is not justified as torn from the previous existing categories of didactics, it follows organically from the principles and laws of a learning process, but in essence, it has a more pronounced concrete character. The method of optimizing an educational process is an interconnected, interdependent activity of teachers and students of the university, which is already preliminarily focused on obtaining the highest possible level of efficiency of a learning process in a particular situation.

In practice, it is sometimes possible to encounter such a position of experienced uni-

versity teachers that an experienced teacher with a high level of professional training somehow owns the mechanism for building an optimal model of a learning process [3, p. 73]. Experts in the field of education hold a certain opinion on this issue. Of course, an experienced university teacher, based on the level of his high professional training, in one way or another can organize a particular model of optimizing an educational process in the course of academic work. However, as practice shows, university teachers, based on the realities of their long professional activity, prefer any one method of organizing optimal training, and this, as experts have repeatedly noticed, sometimes conceals the possibilities of the entire rich potential of optimizing an educational process. If a university teacher has the whole set of ways to build an educational process, the effectiveness of his professional activity will rise to a higher level.

Experts in the field of issues related to the problems of higher education note that even the presence of certain ways to optimize learning processes does not yet indicate that a learning process will be automatically optimized. In this case, it is appropriate to talk about the professional ability of a university teacher to build lectures and seminars in such a way that will be both interesting to students and will contribute to improving the level of their educational and cognitive activity and, at the same time, adhering to certain time standards and not overloading students, achieve certain positive results of mutual educational work. Not all university teachers can do such work, even if they have some professional experience: some teachers are perfectly able to present the new educational material, others are perfectly able to argue it and connect it with the realities of the day, others prefer the independent work of students directly, etc. However, even in such a variety of approaches to the organization of educational work in the classroom, the ideas of optimizing a learning process are not fully realized.

In the psychological and pedagogical scientific literature, researchers consider several levels (insufficient, critical, accessible, optimal) of the professional activity of university teachers. In the course of academic work, it is necessary to strive for the level of optimal professional activity in a learning process. The optimal level of professional activity of university teachers should be of a complex nature (concretization of tasks, identification of strengths and weaknesses of students' spiritual and intellectual capabilities, predict-

ing ways to increase the level of intellectual abilities, highlighting aspects of interdisciplinary coordination, building a rational structure of the proposed educational material, a reasonable choice of teaching methods and tools that allow the most complete and productive solution of the tasks set before the audience tasks, etc.).

Sometimes in the scientific literature you can find statements of experienced university subject teachers, as well as some researchers who hold the opinion that in order to successfully optimize the learning process at the university, it is necessary first of all to achieve the ideal resolution and implementation of all structural elements of the optimization process. In principle, such considerations have a certain basis, but it is also necessary to take into account the specifics of the optimization process: its multifactorial nature, many incoming structural elements, the complexity of their interaction and organizational compliance in a certain situation, and many other equally important factors and indicators. If we proceed from the considerations of these subject teachers and research scientists, then, strictly speaking, it is very problematic to achieve the implementation of optimization ideas in an educational process at all. The problem is precisely to achieve the implementation and realization of the ideas of optimizing a learning process under real conditions of higher education, focusing on the constant desire to improve their professional activities, which could create a certain basis for the implementation of optimization ideas in specific conditions.

The modern realities of higher school activities, the algorithm of organizing an educational process clearly indicates that not all university teachers (despite the high level of professional training) are objectively ready to implement the ideas of optimizing an educational process in their activities. This is due to the theoretical and practical complexity of the optimization idea itself, and secondly, the unsystematic resolution of the possibilities of structural elements of optimization theory by university teachers themselves. It should be emphasized once again that although the optimization theory is a complex expression of a certain system of ways to improve an educational process at the university, which is perceived by didactic scholars as a new theoretical and practical category of general didactics, it is based on and organically and logically follows from the general principles of higher school didactics.

Based on our teaching experience in higher education, we can state that the problem of optimizing academic work in practice comes up against many difficulties (a university teacher, relying on his professional experience, uses one of the methods of increasing the overall activity of an educational process, which is well known to him and yields, as the teachers themselves think, good results). We believe that for the successful implementation of optimization ideas, the teacher must have the basics of the problem-searching style of general pedagogical thinking. The usual dogmatic version of pedagogical thinking directs the university teacher to employ the already well-known, well-proven methods of educational work, which, strictly speaking, can be represented as imitating the general process of an already well-known phenomenon [4, p. 61].

With the problem-searching approach, there is a mutual stimulation of thought processes of both the teacher and the students of a study group. The teacher chooses the most optimal version of the presenting the educational material so that it is interesting, accessible to the student audience and contributes to shaping their feelings and attitudes and enhancing willingness to perceive the input as succinctly and deeply as possible. Based on this perception, the student, including his creative imagination, can begin to search for the most likely and affordable solution to this pedagogical problem.

In order for a university teacher to clearly understand that he applies and implements optimization ideas into an educational process, and does not use template methods of constructing educational work, he must comply with clear criteria that correspond to the idea of optimization and disclose it. Specialists (N.E. Shchurkova, I.S. Yakimanskaya, E.L. Yakovleva, T.A. Selevko, A.I. Uman, M.M. Levina, V.A. Bospalko, V.N. Kharkin, I.I. Vilensky and others) believe that the following should be considered the most clear, specifically directed criteria for the correct organization of an optimal learning process in higher education: the first and very important criterion is defined as the achievement by each student of a particular educational group of such a level of educational and cognitive activity, which most fully characterizes his real spiritual and intellectual capabilities and professional creative potential. It should be particularly noted that the concept of "real learning opportunities" is a very important factor in the whole theory of optimization. This concept is not limited only

to the level of spiritual and intellectual preparation of students, the mechanism of revealing and exposing their internal ideological reserves and willingness to accept everything new that the subject teachers of the university will offer. The concept is so important that neglecting it, it is almost impossible to achieve positive results while implementing the ideas of optimizing an educational process. The real educational opportunities of students is a very broad concept in every sense, it includes internal and external factors of influence on the personality, the influence of many secondary factors, up to the moral and psychological climate of the family and the level of interpersonal relationships with peers in a study group. Taking into account all these factors affecting the personality, as well as the level of professional training of the teacher, it is very important to keep in mind the zone of immediate development of students.

The guiding, motivating and stimulating role of a university teacher in an educational process requires him to constantly analyze various educational manifestations and situations, otherwise work with students will be dogmatic, mechanical in nature; moreover, it would be inappropriate to broach the issue of optimization ideas in this case [5, p. 57; 6; 7]. Proceeding from the premise that the professional attitude of university teachers to the introduction and successful implementation of optimization ideas in an educational process will steadily increase the level of its effectiveness, it is necessary to emphasize the ability of teachers to clearly navigate in a variety of efforts that enhance the effectiveness of general academic work in a student group. Some teachers, in the light of the implementation of optimization ideas, widely use explanatory and illustrative methods, others prefer the algorithm of problem-search educational work. In this case, it would be irrelevant to position some method as dominant, positively affecting the educational and cognitive activity of students. The choice of methods and forms of organization of educational work in a student group is exclusively the prerogative of a teacher and depends on many factors. For example, the specifics of the topic being studied, the interests of students, the level of their spiritual and intellectual readiness and, most importantly, the level of professional training of the teacher himself. Specialists in the field of organizational educational work in higher education (Y.A. Mikk, E.S. Belyaeva, N.Ya. Krasner, A.V. Uskova, A.M. Sokhor, S.I. Veksler,

Yu.B. Zotov, G.D. Kirillova, Yu.L. Lvova, V.M. Monakov et al.) note that university professors should strive to produce an effect of pedagogical resonance in each lesson with students. The effect of pedagogical resonance is defined as a creative community of teachers and students, where vocational knowledge, skills and abilities of a teacher are in harmony with the desires and interests of students themselves, the efforts on their part to harmonize the mutual desire of the parties to increase the effectiveness of an educational process in the group.

The second very essential criterion for optimizing a learning process in higher education is the ability of teachers to most organically correlate lectures and seminars with extracurricular academic work. This is a very important criterion: considering it a university teacher is supposed to organize such kind of work in order to take into account the interests, spiritual and intellectual capabilities of students, their desire to creatively process and assimilate the educational material offered to them. At the same time, despite numerous pedagogical tasks to be completed in the classroom, the teacher should keep the learning process under control to let students get overloaded. Strictly speaking, this in principle contradicts the very ideas of optimizing the learning process in higher education that is why university teachers are expected to observe this provision.

For example, in pedagogical universities, one of the important academic disciplines is "Higher School Pedagogy". This discipline considers a lot of issues of personal-social, spiritual-intellectual, creative and professional development of students, such as patterns, principles, methods, means, forms of organization of an educational process, patterns of shaping pedagogical culture of students, pedagogical foundations of learning, extracurricular activities of students, the study of the basics of the higher education system in our and foreign countries, management of higher education, professional competence of graduates, professional skills of building benevolent, positive interpersonal relationships, popularization of the basic ideas and provisions of pedagogy among the population – all these require tremendous efforts on the part of teachers who conduct this academic discipline.

Conclusions and implications for further research. This academic discipline is so multifactorial and multifaceted that it requires teachers to have an exceptional level of professional training, a broad and deep

worldview, multidimensional spiritual interests and a great professional desire to train students as comprehensively as possible and create adequate conditions for successful socio-professional activities in the future. And of course, bringing all this volume of vocational knowledge to students is not an easy task, however, if you professionally build an educational process with the use and widespread implementation of optimization ideas, it is possible to significantly increase the level of efficiency of a university educational process and achieve positive goals while implementing pre-set pedagogical tasks for the student audience. The introduction and implementation of the ideas of optimizing educational work is a very important structural element of the scientific organization of pedagogical work. University teachers and especially students should be in a continuous search, in the study of theoretical positions and in improving the methodology of optimizing the organization of a learning process.

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АХУНДОВА Севиндж Леффк гызы

кандидат педагогических наук, доцент,

Бакинский славянский университет, Азербайджанская Республика

ВОПРОСЫ ОПТИМИЗАЦИИ УЧЕБНО-ВОСПИТАТЕЛЬНОГО ПРОЦЕССА В ВЫСШЕЙ ШКОЛЕ

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются вопросы оптимизации учебно-воспитательного процесса высших учебных заведений. В частности, показаны пути и формы работы учителей по оптимизации образовательного процесса. Оптимизация учебно-воспитательного процесса повышает уровень эффективности учебно-познавательной деятельности студентов. В статье подчеркивается, что процесс оптимизации учебно-воспитательной работы требует более высокого уровня профессиональной подготовки учителей. В статье предлагаются необходимые рекомендации по повышению уровня эффективности процесса оптимизации учебно-воспитательной работы высших учебных заведений.

Цель исследования – актуализация вопросов повышения качества учебно-воспитательного процесса путём его оптимизации.

Метод. При изучении данного вопроса использовались историко-сравнительные методы, анализ, теоретический анализ и методы обобщения.

Оригинальность. Совершенствование и модернизация образовательной системы актуализирует вопросы построения всего образовательно-воспитательного процесса с его ориентацией на развитие и самореализацию личности. Поэтому вопросы поиска наиболее рациональных методов, путей, средств организации педагогического процесса, построения его оптимальной модели всегда актуальны. Данная статья исследует «вечные» вопросы повышения учебно-познавательной активности студентов высших учебных заведений средствами и возможностями оптимизации учебно-воспитательного процесса.

Результаты. Анализ психологической и педагогической литературы по данной проблеме и его результаты, нашёвшие отражение в изложенном исследовании, обогащают современную дидактику; также практические рекомендации по оптимизации учебно-воспитательного процесса с учётом основных

методологических принципов построения современного образовательно-воспитательного процесса могут быть полезны в деятельности педагогов высших учебных заведений.

Заключение. Эта учебная дисциплина является настолько многофакторной и многогранной, что требует от преподавателей исключительного уровня профессиональной подготовки, широкого и глубокого мировоззрения, многоаспектность духовных интересов и большого профессионального желания как можно более всесторонне подготовить студентов и создать им адекватные условия для успешной социально-профессиональной деятельности в будущем. Подчёркивается, что довести весь этот объём профессиональных знаний до студенческой молодёжи – задача не из лёгких, однако, если профессионально чётко построить учебный процесс с использованием и широким внедрением идей оптимизации, то возможно существенно повысить уровень эффективности учебно-воспитательного процесса в вузе и достичь позитивной реализации предварительно поставленных педагогических задач перед студенческой аудиторией. Внедрение и реализация идей оптимизации учебной работы является очень важным структурным элементом научной организации педагогического труда. Преподаватели вузов и особенно студенческая молодёжь должны находиться в непрерывном поиске, в изучении теоретических положений и в совершенствовании методики оптимизации организации процесса обучения.

Ключевые слова: высшая школа; оптимизация; студенты; профессиональная подготовка преподавателей вузов; методы и формы оптимизации; познавательные возможности студентов.

Одержано редакцією 22.08.2022
Прийнято до публікації 06.09.2022