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Human-Centered Model of Interaction within The System “Individual – Higher Educational Establishment”

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Abstract

In this article the peculiarities of the model of interaction within the system “individual – higher educational establishment” which is centered on the individual’s integrity are considered. Statistic and dynamic characteristics are analyzed. The main principles, such as integrity, decentration, excessiveness, multidimensional resources, cluster organization are discussed. The key concepts of the model and interaction methods are pointed out. The systematic regularities of this model are described. Various types of relations between an individual and the educational environment are characterized.

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1. Introduction

The problem of interaction between individuals and environment is relevant in modern society. Individuals and environment influence and depend on each other greatly: an individual creates an environment, an environment forms an individual. An individual and environment can be regarded as interacting systems that mirror each other. There is a difficulty in the development of interaction model within the system “individual – higher educational

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establishment”, because this model represents a multidimensional system and has both statistic and dynamic characteristics. To test this model it’s necessary to reflect the specific object’s states and to describe how the states of this integral system can change. The model described in the article is based on the principles of integrity, decentration, excessiveness, multidimensional resources, cluster organization. These principles of psychological research of an individual as an integrated system were implemented by Russian psychophysicologist. Ananiev (Ananiev, 2001). He believed that in all kinds of development, even in specialized, there is the unity of human development as a complex of an individual, a personality and a subject of cognition, activity, communication and an ipseity. The principle of integrity determines a common approach to working-out and analysis of the educational environment of any higher educational establishment as an integral system. Interaction integrity can be provided by the congruence of structural elements of the educational environment (spatial, social, didactic and strategic elements), social and psychological individual competences, such as an individual’s attitude to himself or herself as a person or as a subject of life activity; an attitude to interaction between individuals, and an attitude to an individual’s activity (Ittelson, 1973). The principle of multidimensional resources means that every element of the model contains a wide variety of information. It can create a complete representation of diversity of recourses of internal and external environments and possibilities to satisfy both individual and environmental needs for every participant of educational process. The principle of excessiveness means that there is excessive information in any element of the model. So every participant of the educational process can choose required information in order to solve the necessary tasks. The principle of cluster organization assumes an integration of the system “individual – higher educational establishment” into other systems and spheres that exceed the bounds of the educational environment. The principle of decentration is based on the fact that the center of interaction is determined by the situation. Under the certain conditions the system “individual” becomes a background and the environmental elements are the figures. In other situations the elements of the system “individual” are the figures and the system “higher educational establishment” becomes only a background. The purpose of this study is to work out the model of social and psychological interaction between individuals and higher educational establishments as a multidimensional category.

2. Description of the model in general

The main elements of every model are concepts. In the described model the key concepts are “individual” and “higher educational establishment”. They reflect statistic and dynamic characteristics, and social and psychological peculiarities of the interaction between an individual and an environment within educational process. The first cluster consists of concepts which reflect the structure and mechanisms and processes of self-organization in the system “individual – higher educational establishment”: system, individual, educational environment, interaction, synergy, internal space, and internal time. The second cluster represents the internal conditions of interaction. It combines concepts which reflect basic needs of any individual in interaction with the environment as well as personal dispositions expressed by such concepts as: readiness to interact with the environment, identification and individualization. Moreover psychological features of metacognitive level (congruence, empathy, reflection) can be included in this cluster. The third cluster contains the following concepts: competence, ability to adapt, psychological health, and psychological well-being, social and psychological activity. When analyzing the model being developed, it is oriented on the universal nature of any individual (Rogers, 1957). It is based on the system of the essential principles: nature-alignment, multidimensional resources, centration, and positivity. Technological elements of the model are methods and techniques. They were worked out on the basis of methods of individually-centered interaction: analogy, dialogue, triologue. Another important peculiarity of the development of any model reflecting integrity between individual and environment is a systemacity of their construction. The closest way to understand an individual’s integrity is through the system approach (Feldshtein, 1995).

3. Individual as a system

An individual, as any system, is a complex of integrated elements and junctions between them with common purpose of functioning and developing. An individual can be defined as a system based on nuclear-spherical principle. Traditionally an individual is regarded as a pyramidal system. Since the ancient times this pyramid is

divided into 3 levels: the lowest level – corporal, the middle level – psychological, the highest level – spiritual. The pyramid has its laws of structural organization. This organization has a hierarchy and the peak of a pyramid serves as the key element determining the whole system organization (Maslow, 1967). Nuclear-spherical organization of the individual's integrity model gives a possibility to consider this system with a help of analysis of interrelations between its elements. The character of these interrelations is determined by the congruence of potential and actual, internal and external imperatives that provide dynamic stability and possibility of an individual to develop as a system in certain time and space. Such imperatives can be represented by imperatives which determine the contents of the relations between an individual and environment: an imperative of security and adaptation; affective and cognitive imperatives; imperatives of identity, subjectivity and individuality. The integrity of any individual is achieved by means of noetic imperatives (Grebneva, 2012):

- a) integrated creativity, based on the creative, theoretical, innovative and technological activity of any individual under the conditions of free choice, justice and necessary order as well as variety of creativity stimulus from the educational environment of the higher educational establishment.
- b) synergy, according to which the intensity and the speed of creative, theoretical, innovative and technological activity of any individual should not exceed the limits of stability and adaptive capacity of the individual's internal integrity and resources of educational environment of higher educational establishment.
- c) congruence, that assume the coherence of the environmental infrastructure (spatial, social, informational) with the structures of the individual's internal integrity on the levels of his corporal, sensitive, intellectual experience of relations with the educational environment of higher educational establishment;
- d) harmonization – stability of the environment which is to provide maximum self-realization of any individual's creative potential. In its turn, the individual's creative potential is to be aimed to provide stability of the educational environment of higher educational establishment.

According to systematic approach to the individual's integrity this integrity can be represented in the following way. The image of self-organizing individual can be represented as integrity with elements of self-organization on the basis of systematic regularities and conditions of interactions:

- a) functioning (adaptation, stability) and development (self-organization);
- b) readiness for the internal changes of individual's structural organization (history of development) in accordance with the external environmental changes;
- c) capability of energy-informational exchange with the environment (social – psychological interactions).

Any self-organized individual should be physically and psychically healthy, be active and ready for changes and be able to acquire information from the environment with least expenditure of energy. Personal scenery of any self-organized individual under the conditions of the implementation of human – centered educational strategy represents a specific configuration of internal (psychic) space and external (environmental) surround. In this case the development of the educational environment which is invariant to the individual's integrity becomes actual and necessary.

4. Types of relations between an individual and educational environment

The human-centered educational model assumes that the structural elements of educational system, such as individual and environment, exchange energy and information, and are exposed to transformation both on the psychic (in the system “individual”) and on the ecological (in the system “environment”) levels of functioning in the process of purposive interaction. In the system “individual – space-object environment” the dominant element is individual. But it is much more difficult to determine superiority in other systems: “individual – social environment”, “individual – didactic environment”, “individual – information environment” and etc. So in structure of the human-centered model of social and psychological interaction in the educational system there are three levels. The first level is the educational strategy of educational establishment according to which the staff of the establishment tries to harmonize the influence of all factors and structures of the educational community on the

process of development of individual's integrity. This strategy is a system forming factor of the higher education system. The second level reflects the character of mutual consistency between the levels of individual's integrity and the levels of the environmental organization in the system of the educational environment of the higher educational establishment including spatial and objective, didactic, social and educational environments. The efficiency of mutual consistency on this level is confirmed by the degree of their integrity. The third level can be defined as a system that provides an individual's adequate functioning due to the individual pathway of development. The final result of the interaction on this level can be the success of self-organization processes both in the individual's psychic structure and in the structure of educational environment. Substantial characteristics of these levels coincide with the characteristics of the internal space in the system "Individual", i.e. they are to be congruent to the structural organization of the model of "self-organized individual" and be based on the synergy principle. The development of the integral model of relations between an individual and educational environment allows designing and predicting various types of such relations:

- 1) Conservative and autistic ("object-object") type of relations. Such relations can be characterized as simplified: "object-object" relations are established between an individual and the environment on the basis of a high-level resistance to all types of changes. At the same time an individual and the environment exist independently from each other to great extent, and their environmental resources are congruent to each other only within a closed system (psyche, environment).
- 2) Passive and incongruent ("object-subject") type of relations. This type means a passive attitude of an individual to the educational environment, accompanied by a sense of deification of external to the detriment of the individual, by a sense of weakness in difficult situations, facing norms of the environment, by a sense of personal insignificance and disability.
- 3) Active and incongruent ("subject-object") type of relations. This type of relations is viewed as a lack of harmony between an individual and the educational environment due to the simplicity (inactivity) of the educational environment, on the one hand, and the activity of an individual, on the other hand.
- 4) Creative and congruent (balanced) type of relations. This type is an indication of high complexity of personal development and of the educational environment. The results of such interaction are new mental resources and new resources of the environment (the character of the interaction is "subject generating") and the development of a new system in future.

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