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A NEW MODEL OF EDUCATION AND UPBRINGING IN POLISH SCHOOL

Keywords: upbringing, education, the system of education, school

Abstract

Is it necessary and worth reflecting on the choice of a model of education and upbringing in contemporary Polish system of education? What ought to be done to make school not only the transmission of knowledge but also the introduction to the world of values?

The current model can be characterised with the decomposition of a teacher's role by the introduction of excessive pseudo-subjectivity of a student, and as a consequence getting rid of the "missionary" character of teaching profession, fulfilling the task of raising a conscious citizen and patriot, able to acquire knowledge necessary for finding one's place in the constantly changing world.

The alternative for the current Polish model of education ought to be sought in the upbringing of an individual in personalised spirit, at the same time expressing the need for shaping its character within the culture of Latin civilisation. Thus, it will enable a young individual to overtake the control over his own process of development. Such an activity ought to become the foundation of the new model of upbringing in Polish schools.

Introduction

This article concerns the significant issue of the contemporary state of education, its chances and opportunities, as well as the future perspectives. Hence it is worth pondering upon the methods of upbringing a man in the modern world. Which model of education and upbringing to select in the reality of Polish education? What shall be done to make school the place of not only the transmission of knowledge but also introduction to the world of values? We are currently witnessing the process of extremely disadvantageous educational

models that set various objectives. They need to be looked at critically, especially all of their philosophical and ideological assumptions, as well as far-reaching consequences. The article is not limited merely to critical overlook at the contemporary upbringing models present in Polish education. On the contrary, it aims at presenting the upbringing in the spirit of personalistic i.e. recognising personal dignity of an upbringing individual, at the same time pointing at the necessity of shaping its character basing on the values stemming from natural law, revealed as well as the achievements of the culture of Latin civilisation (Czekalski, 2008,

p. 183). What ought to be the contemporary model of transferring knowledge and values like? The attempt to respond to this question is possible after previous diagnosis, forecast and with the awareness of what we are expecting.

Diagnosis-what is the present situation?

The first years of the transformation period proved the faulty system of education and upbringing of the Polish youth, and showed that the school system is not capable of coping with the challenges that Polish society was facing. The system of education did not reflect the range of socio-economic transformations or changing social conditionings. Thus, it needed to be adjusted to the transforming conditions, and actually to undergo a complex reform (Szyszka, 2010, p. 258).

Despite numerous attempts, the new stage of work on the system of education started in May of 1998, i.e. the project of the ministry of education-the reform of the education system, was not successful. The project assumed the introduction of a new structure of the system of education which was supposed to be the means to achieving three main objectives:

- increasing the level of education of the society by popularisation of secondary and academic education
- leveling educational opportunities
- favouring the improvement of the education quality perceived as an integral upbringing and education process (The reform of the system of education, 1998, p. 10).

The project was extended throughout the following months, and was to be applied promptly and comprehensively (Szyszka, 2010, p. 261).

After the 1998 reform school does not shape clear and readable image of the contemporary world, does not teach good understanding and interpreting of it, does not bring closer the balance of chances and hazards of processes after the system transformation and European integration to the young generation. It does not take into consideration measurable values of the Polish culture as well as European values and European upbringing ideal sufficiently. It is still not prepared enough to transfer generative and objectively scientific knowledge. It is wrongly more rooted in theory rather than in practice. There is too much of the past in it, even archaic elements, too little pondering upon the future. It still lacks a powerful transmission of inter-

disciplinary knowledge on a human being and humanity as well as creating humanistic model of education (Banach, 2002, p. 751).

The reform of the Polish education initiated in the late 1990s has been the subject of interest for researchers since its beginning due to numerous controversies associated with its introduction. The creators of this undertaking assumed a complex and long-lasting activities aiming at the introduction of changes in the process of educating and upbringing, and through them in the education and attitudes of the Poles (Sobańska, 2002, p. 9).

Has it happened? The reform of education, however necessary and needed as the consequence of the system transformation, was actually limited to merely the reform of the education structure. It lacked the reflection on what is the highest value-the application of system solutions. The system reforms regard institutional, organisational transformations, associated with the change of relations between the system of education and the social system, the radical change of supervision over the quality and efficiency of educating (Śliwierski, 2004, p. 387–392).

As rightly stated by M. Kletke-Milejska, the education reform in such a manner has undoubtedly influenced the upbringing and education of the young Polish generation in a negative way. Firstly, it has not achieved the aim of leveling educational opportunities in a significant way. Secondly, the system of teachers' professional development has resulted in distancing them from the actual didactics. In addition, it has led to the overgrowth of bureaucracy concerning the upbringing and didactic processes. Last but not least, the reform resulted in the growth of pathologic phenomena amongst children and adolescents (Kletke-Milejska, 2007, p. 4–5)

The forecast

Nowadays, broadly comprehended education ought to adjust to the constantly changing reality we function in. Throughout the recent years our country has experienced the transformations resulting from the system change, the membership in the European Union, as well as more and more present influence of global processes (Kletke-Milejska, 2007, p. 7).

Despite the attempted reform, the model of upbringing has not changed, which is proved by the negative

consequences of the education system functioning. By analysing the materials of the above mentioned reform one may be amazed and anxious due to the conclusion that, "the materials of the reform did not determine the new upbringing ideal for schools and educational institutions beyond them, neither did they prepare detailed educational objectives in accordance with richer axiology, in order to construct modern curricula along with methodological requirements of their effective application. The curricula for primary and middle schools were established starting with setting the limited number of didactic hours to cut down the expenses, while neglecting subject and methodic needs. Integrated and block teaching was introduced not because of advantageous connection or correlation, but to save hours, without taking into account either needs or interests of students, not to mention the tendencies of developing teaching contents present in other countries, or the requirements announced by "The White Paper" of the European Commission and the report by Jacques Delors "Learning-our hidden treasure" the guidance for the development of education in the 21st century (Pułturzycki, 2000, p. 52–53).

Another question of concern that is present in the field of education, is a faulty system of teachers' professional development introduced, as it seems, but for the formal fulfillment of norms conditioning teachers' professional promotion, which has in fact not influenced in any positive way the process of upbringing. The contacts between teachers and methodic consultants became limited to factual and formal assistance necessary in acquiring the further stages of professional development. Taking advantage of methodic counseling ought not to be facultative, as it is at present, but obligatory. There should be a regulation introducing the obligation of participating in at least one training session prepared by a consultant in a term, e.g. in individual and group consultations, conferences or seminars. It is also necessary to set such changes in the professional development of teachers-professional promotion, which will result in systematic, continuous improvement of qualifications. It is unacceptable that a teacher with the highest rank of professional development (*dyplomowany*) can experience professional stagnation, especially since the main role of modern school is to act kinetically and adapt to the current socio-cultural conditioning. The above may be achieved only by a teacher aware of his mission, who himself is capable of finding the way in the intricacies of constantly changing social reality.

The system of professional promotion introduced by the 1998 reform has proved to be faulty when assessed from the present perspective. Although it had been constructed to promote creative, active, resourceful teachers willing to develop their skills, it soon proved to work only within the time of formal period of professional development. Whereas, teaching profession requires active participation in one's own development (Szulz, 2006, p. 109). Therefore, the work on the reform of education system ought to take into account the mechanisms that would force teachers to be dynamic while working on their own development and improvement of skills not only during the formal period of professional development, as the development of a teacher is reflected in creative, inventive and innovative development of a student. According to T. Gadacz, the crisis of contemporary school is firstly indicated by personal crisis, which means the deconstruction of the school concept-the community, where educationist exists as a master who already being on the way towards truth, goodness and beauty leads his students and thanks to them gets closer to the truth, goodness and beauty (Gadacz, 1993, p. 107).

The introduced reform, however, initiated the period of changes in the field of permanent education of educationists, whose preparation significantly influences the final result of the education and upbringing processes. The achievement of the set objectives as well as acquiring the intended state of education depends greatly on the level of teachers' preparation, their attitude, way of thinking and readiness for changes. It is worth mentioning at this place that numerous studies have been published that concern the preparation of teachers for work in reformed school (Kuźma, 2000).

While initiating further transformations one ought to consider whether the reform of but the organisational structure of school system and returning to 8+4 system is sufficient to achieve upbringing effects. It is highly doubtful. It seems that such a change will only result in minimal financial gains by limiting the number of managerial posts in education. There is no doubt that it is not only about the formal structure of school functioning but also the curricula which are to prepare for various aspects of life. The transformation must be accompanied with the complete abandonment of still present upbringing model, which was created in the 1960s and developed in the 1970s as the Communist model, we are still sadly stuck in. This model is strongly characterised with the destruction of a teacher's role

by over pseudo-subjectivity of a student, which leads to the erosion of teacher's authority, resignation from "missionary" character of teaching profession fulfilling the task of upbringing an aware citizen of Poland, a patriot who has sufficient skills to acquire knowledge necessary in order to find one's position in the changing world, a man conscious of a thousand years old spiritual and cultural heritage, and eventually abandoning the concept of excluding parents from both the influence and taking interest in the functioning of school.

S. Sławiński was tight when stated that, "The upbringing influence of school is about this, it is the place where a student experiences order which embraces him and shapes him as a man. [...] Axiological order [...] when each human being is treated with due respect, when the dignity of an individual is a fundamental value which school daily reality ought to be built upon" (Sławiński, 2000, p.10).

Anticipated effect

Taking into account presented currents and tendencies present in contemporary school, one sees more clearly the need of upbringing referring to objective values, being the antidote against the culture of nihilism and moral relativity. Such conditions, are no doubt fulfilled by personalistic upbringing. It aims at internal-moral integrity of a man and his freedom, which lets a human to be independent from various forms of external pressure, as well as internal-vital one. Only an individual who possesses internal freedom, can control and decide on himself, can resist all kinds of relativistic influence from the outside. Personalistic pedagogy aims at the conscious shaping of a young man to overtake his own process of development. It ought to be the basis of a new model of upbringing in Polish schools (Czekalski, 2008, p.185).

Jacques Maritain, an acclaimed philosopher of social ideas, distinguished two essential concepts of upbringing: traditional one, called also conservative, and liberal one. The traditional concept, referring to the philosophy of Plato, emphasised the dominating position of a teacher and state as well as the need of unconditional obedience. Whereas, the liberal concept warns against breaking the freedom of upbringing and excessive prohibitions. In modern educational concepts one may notice more of the liberal current. Sadly, it frequently results from the misunderstanding that regards

responsibility for upbringing citizens. These concepts neglect moral upbringing which shapes moral and social virtues (Czekalski, 2008, p.183).

Tolerance is a significant feature in a contemporary "open" and pluralistic society. We ought to remember, however, that the process of upbringing should have a certain axiological foundation, which is to be the basis of social order. The essence of personalistic upbringing, in the opinion of Teresa Kukołowicz, lies in the smooth inclusion of a young man into the society and its institutions. At the same time, the ambition to shape morality of a student as the basis of social order ought not to be neglected (Czekalski, 2008, p.84).

Conservative concept is defined in three ways. First of them, describes it as the moderation imprinted in human nature and skepticism towards revolutionary changes. It results in attachment to deeply rooted traditions and proven institutions. Whereas the other one perceives conservatism as a philosophy stemming from this natural attitude. And finally, the third one understands it mainly as ideological and political movement aiming at preservation and transmission of the social order rules, perceived as traditional ones (Bartyzel, 2012). For the last 25 years we have been witnessing the clash of two entirely different normative systems in the field of upbringing. The first of them, a conservative model, is presented unjustly by its opponents as extremely jingoistic, Victorian and martyrdom-like, full of ideology, imposed by the state and itself imposing fanatical attitude towards the history. On the other hand, the liberal model is presented as "the patriotism of shame", directed at transnationalism, interculturalism, representing openness for hypotheses, demythologising, and when it comes to education promoting the research paradigm (Jadczak, 2016).

And yet, the misunderstood and misperceived system of upbringing and education, based on liberal model has wed out the conscience and axiology of the young generation of Poles care for the love of homeland. Furthermore, the responsibility for its fate is also controversial and discussable in some social circles due to cosmopolitan or nationalistic tendencies. The lack of consciousness, and in consequence, the lack of the need for axiological upbringing contributes to the relativism in social life, particularly in the aspect of patriotism. Even more so since we live in the times of axiological dualism. On the one hand, one can clearly see the rapid technological progress, strong influence of media, especially electronic ones making the world "a global

village". On the other, the growth of moral relativity entering all the sectors of life makes one anxious.

In this context it is worth recalling the teaching of Pope John Paul II during his pilgrimage to Poland in June 1999, who said, "A lot has changed and is changing in Poland. Centuries are passing and Poland is growing in changing fate like a mighty historic oak tree with its roots. It is a great heritage we are carrying into the future [...] I wish to encourage you once again to protect your identity, taking care of family tights, deepening the knowledge of your mother tongue and trying to pass your rich tradition to the young generation" (John Paul II, 1999, p.19).

These days "new school" requires new concept in upbringing, understood as theoretical, conceptual approach of pedagogical activity into some general notions, rules and regularities. This conceptual approach may have two meanings. The content of the concept being either a particular process of upbringing or other concepts regarding such processes. The concepts of the first type are normative theories, presenting ideals, aims, rules, means and the organisation of the upbringing process. While, the concepts on the upbringing processes are descriptive theories, whose range is the characteristics of particular directions and currents in pedagogics as well as their analysis, comparison and critical approach (Kustra, 2002, p.12). These days we need the first concept-normative one, stemming from pedagogic science on theories and systems of upbringing, enriched with a personal experience of a teacher-educator-guide. If we wish it to be effective and bring intended result, this model of an upbringing concept ought to be adapted to social conditions present in contemporary Poland.

Observing present situation in the field of shaping young individuals participating in this process one may point at the upbringing concept basing on the normative theory. It is characterised with objectives, situations and attitudes based on the achievements of the Latin civilisation: Roman law, Greek philosophy and Christian ethics. While the process of upbringing and its realisation on the terms and rules of pedagogy. When it comes to methodology it is the concept of upbringing referring to care and education pedagogy, directed at the positive transformation of an individual living in a particular society. Hence, it is to affect wider social changes which are so desirable in our Homeland. In accordance with the contemporary theories and currents of upbringing, the concept of upbringing ought

to be included in the Christian current of personalistic-existential pedagogy (Kustra, 2002, p.13; Śliwerski, 1998, p.63), especially as Jan Szczepański remarks, the system of education is one of the social sub-systems of the system that has multiple connections with life and functioning of a particular society (Szczepański, 1989).

While creating the concept of upbringing in the reformed Polish school it is worth and necessary referring to philosophical concepts rooted in the culture of the Latin civilisation. The issues of ethics and pedagogy represented by Sophists and Socrates, especially Plato and Aristotle, were one of the most significant matters in the concept of upbringing in Greek philosophy of the 5th and 6th centuries B.C. It was not purely academic divagation, but a view that was to lead to the unity of reasoning and life practice. This method is efficient and verified in practice by reverend Bronisław Markiewicz, an educator living at the break of the 19th and 20th centuries. Pondering upon the values and spiritual development of an individual was the permanent point of reference for each of the philosophers of this period. According to them these values were to determine the ethical, social and life levels of a man, and at the same time it was philosophical wisdom that made the value of the highest significance. A man brought up on the basis of such virtues was deeply involved in the issues concerning his state since the upbringing mission was also a political mission (Przybylski, 2013, p.10).

Plato (5th/6th B.C.) referred to the upbringing concept of Socrates, whose core was identifying the nature of a man with his soul (psyche) and considering rationality to be the essence and aim of the soul, which makes it capable of achieving the virtue, i.e. ethical valour (arete). Socrates believed that his pedagogic activities: discussing ethical issues with his audience, is also of political significance since comprehending what a virtue is, correct forming of ethical notions and acquiring ethical knowledge allows an individual to act properly as a man and citizen. The concept of upbringing established in such a way ought to concern everybody, particularly the youth in the period when their existential attitudes are shaped, and no one should avoid it. In consequence, it was to make all citizens think, behave and speak in accordance with an objectively set canon of values (Tatarkiewicz, 2007, p.123).

One may also forward a thesis that educational reforms of the 21st century should be conducted in a two-track manner. On the one hand, they will continue attempts of improving traditional school by re-

placing classroom competition with cooperation of peer groups, who will gain information on their own and create knowledge in a variety of manners depending on their interests and intellectual curiosity, as well as motivation for systematic work. The role of a teacher will increasingly be concentrated on simplifying the process of learning for students by applying the skill of collecting and processing of knowledge. Students will become the real subjects of studying. On the other hand, however, one may assume the creation of an alternative useful for the ones who can and are willing to study at home (Pachociński, 2006, p. 3–4).

To grant upbringing the proper rank in contemporary school it is necessary to fulfill at least three conditions: firstly, providing appropriate amount of time for the process of upbringing-throughout the whole didactic process a young individual ought to experience the full development of his personality; secondly, guaranteeing a proper number of students in a class – there should be no more than twenty students in a group, it affects individualistic approach in upbringing; thirdly, convergence of upbringing influences – it is important that the teaching staff have a common vision of upbringing (Denek, 2000, p. 39).

Observing the significance of the current socio-political context of contemporary Poland, modern school has an important task of upbringing, educational and patriotic influence. A remarkable part of the Polish society experiences hardship resulting from the lack of integral education, including the low awareness of the meaning of social processes. These days, we are aware of the fact that Polish educational systems after 1989 did not prepare individuals sufficiently to fulfill their future social roles. As a consequence, there can be seen stagnation in various dimensions of social life, which slows down economic, cultural development as well as social and civic awareness.

Social groups suffering from poverty are particularly affected with this situation. Mass economic migration is also clearly visible, like on the break of the 19th and 20th century, at the expense of the homeland and its “internal pain” (Tischner, 1985, p.88). Furthermore, modern world is more and more aware of the fact that solution of serious national and international issues is not merely the question of economic production or legal and social organisation, but requires referring to a particular ethical and religious axiology as well as the transformation of mentality, actions and structures (CA no 60). Czesław Banach quotes an accurate

statement, “Education is a social value and capital, it is a hope, and a vast area of tasks. It also ought to be, in its objectives and methods of work, a serious opposition towards numerous anti-values and negative phenomena and threats of human existence” (Banach, 2002, p. 88).

The author of the article has made an attempt to present the analysis of sociological genesis and consequences of the complex situation in the Polish system of education as well as suggestions of solving critical problems. The urgent need for further changes in education and upbringing aiming at social, economic and political development is the main motif to initiate research in this respect, in order to present the suggestion of a coherent system of education and upbringing concept aiming at the broadly perceived upbringing and education of the nation. Furthermore, it would lead to integration and adaptation of the Poles living currently in specific socio-political conditions after the period of the system transformation. Hence, the author of the article has indicated the reasons for the crisis in the field of Polish education, which can result in multiple social consequences. Moreover, he pointed at particular solutions for the demanded and looked forward social changes. He presented the possibility of alternative choices to perceive the process of upbringing and education, and in consequence social renewal to make individuals living in the society understand themselves.

In the wake of modern threats and challenges the above suggested program of social upbringing seems to be the means to solving pressing social issues. It is even more so, since nowadays we can clearly see numerous negative phenomena being the consequences of incoherent, lacking axiological concept of upbringing and education Polish school. The suggested integral vision of upbringing may be of great importance in socialisation of an individual, thanks to which it will be properly prepared to play a significant social role. The results of pondering and debates that currently are held in our Homeland, concerning vision and shape of the Polish education may and ought to be a remarkably creative element of discussion over the dynamics of social life, over making social groups aware of their mutual relations and connections, as well as permanently significant issue of an individual's identity in atomic world of economics, politics and culture (Nowogórski, 2010, p. 318). The reflections and conclusions from national consultations on the state of the Polish education ought to contribute greatly to the discussion over the shape of broadly meant social upbringing of the Poles.

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