EDUCATIONAL METAMORPHOSIS TO THE NEW SOCIAL CHANGE

Kalin Kalinov
Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy, Republic of Bulgaria, k.kalinov@nvna.eu
Anna Karadencheva
Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy, Republic of Bulgaria, a.karadencheva@nvna.eu

Abstract: The dynamic transformation of the society places the state in conditions of exceptional challenges in relation to the sociological needs for the formation of the human as an effective social creature of the New Time.
This leads to the necessity for the transformation of the educational system as the main method for the development of public awareness in relation to the needs of the state. Based on this finding, the research aims to propose an educational metamorphosis in the educational sector at university level in order to respond to some specific aspects of the dynamic needs of this innovative social change. Based on EU and US educational goals, as well as Japan's innovative social concept for the development of Society 5.0 as a way to achieve sustainable development goals, set by the United Nations, this research uses the content-analysis methodology with starting point of the sequence "social factual trends - resulting changes in the needs of the state - educational models, corresponding to these needs". The characteristics and direction of the development of collective societies according to Hofstede's Culture Research Model are being considered, as well as the projection for economic development of the world leading countries regarding GDP by 2028, focusing on the thesis that the future belongs to collective societies. As a result, the research identifies some specific necessities of the innovative social change - formation of collective, long-term-oriented public awareness at the individual level, availability of a common protocol for communication under the conditions of network connectivity and refinement of the individual skills in person-oriented education. In order to meet these needs, the research proposes an alternative conceptual model for the development of a transformational policy in the Bachelor degree of the higher education sector. In this regard, it is crucial to provide freedom to the university to form the personality, considering the harmful consequences of hyper-individualism as a by-product of the information society and to direct the education of the younger generations to meet the current needs of the state.
From this perspective, it is advisable to pay special attention to the educational systems and methods in the collective societies that are emerging as leading nations in the world economy.
Keywords: social change, higher education, educational transformation, collectivity, soft skills

1. INTRODUCTION

The necessity for the transformation of the educational system in the higher education sector can be considered as a result of the dynamic needs of the modern information society - Society 4.0 (De Wit, 2021), which more than ever needs to understand and perceive human's place is in the new and changed world.
The intensive search for this answer places the state in conditions of exceptional challenges in relation to the sociological needs of the society to form the man of his time - adequate, capable and useful in his existence and behaviour.
The incredible technological progress, whose main goal is to facilitate and increase the quality of human life, has created a reality with a paradoxical bipolarity: immense possibilities of possession and existence along with the same immense value erosion of the content of these concepts.
As a result, strong social disunity, anxiety, self-absorption, fierce competitiveness, inability to create and maintain quality human relationships, erosion of morals and ethics, mass social ignorance occur.
Already as a (un)successfully adapted user of this paradoxical reality, Society 4.0 begins to ask the following social primordial humane questions: Does social belonging to a given virtual group, idea or platform make me really desirable and valuable? Does it make me better, more successful and happier? Does it really connect me with people? Does the place I belong to become better, more friendly, and stronger? Actually, is this what I miss?
The answers to these questions are reflected above all in the state of the highest system that humanity has managed to create - the system called "family" wherefrom they reflect on all other social systems. After the model of thinking and behavior adopted in the family, of fears and expectations, education appears to be the fine polishing of a person's desire to understand the world and integrate himself into it. A person is born but personality is built primarily in the process of learning, not simply considered as an access to a systematized volume of knowledge, but as an experience through multiple interpretations of the environment and the place of the person in it.
However, this experience cannot be fully developed in a virtual environment, nor can the enjoyment of it be replaced by the possession or use of a new technology.
It can accompany the experience, but not give meaning to it.

In its essence, this is one of the most valuable lessons learned from the Covid-19 crisis, as if summarizing all the accumulated experience of the information society which drove its next metamorphosis - entering the Society 5.0 stage (Council for Science, Technology and innovation of Japan, 2023) as a strategic vision for the development of the society and a path to achieve the sustainable development goals set by the United Nations.

The essence of this concept is the formation of a human-oriented society that balances economic progress with solving social problems through a system that strongly integrates cyberspace with physical space. The social reform (innovation) in Society 5.0 will achieve a forward-looking society that breaks the existing sense of stagnation, a society whose members have mutual respect for each other that transcends generations, and a society where every person can lead an active and enjoyable life." (Council for Science, Technology and innovation of Japan, 2023)

Such social change can occur when an intense deliberate influence is exerted on the individual, first of all by the educational system which should consider the specific needs of the state for the formation of the person in it as an effective social creature.

Based on this finding, the research presents an alternative conceptual model (Figure 3) for the development of a transformational policy in the higher education sector.

This research uses the content-analysis methodology with the starting point of the sequence "social factual trends - resulting changes in the needs of the state - educational models, corresponding to these needs".

It is based on the following factual trends that have a specific impact on the higher education system at this very moment (Kalinov, 2022):

1. The intelligence of the organizations is "outsourced".
2. The specialization of the education begins earlier.
3. The hierarchy of the society is becoming more complex.
4. Covid 19 has changed the world.
5. The dynamics of society's development is increasing.
6. Occupations are run out or highly transformed in a short period.
7. There is a clear emphasis of the education on the "soft skills".
8. The "bachelor - master - work for life" system is phased off and replaced by the "lifelong learning" system.

Based on EU and US educational goals, "The Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training (Education and Training 2020)", "The US Department of Education Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2022-2026", as well as Japan's innovative social concept for the development of Society 5.0, an educational metamorphosis in the higher educational sector in the Republic of Bulgaria is proposed.

The characteristics and direction of the development of collective societies according to Hofstede's Culture Research Model (Country Comparison Tool, 2023) are being considered, as well as the projection for economic development of the world's leading countries regarding GDP by 2028 (NSBC Global Research, 2023), focusing on the thesis that the future belongs to collective societies.

2. RESULTS

1. Social need

The social change has been focused on the necessity to form an awareness of global collectivity at the individual level considering multicultural future and the needs of the state. The following were identified as key trends in developing this awareness:

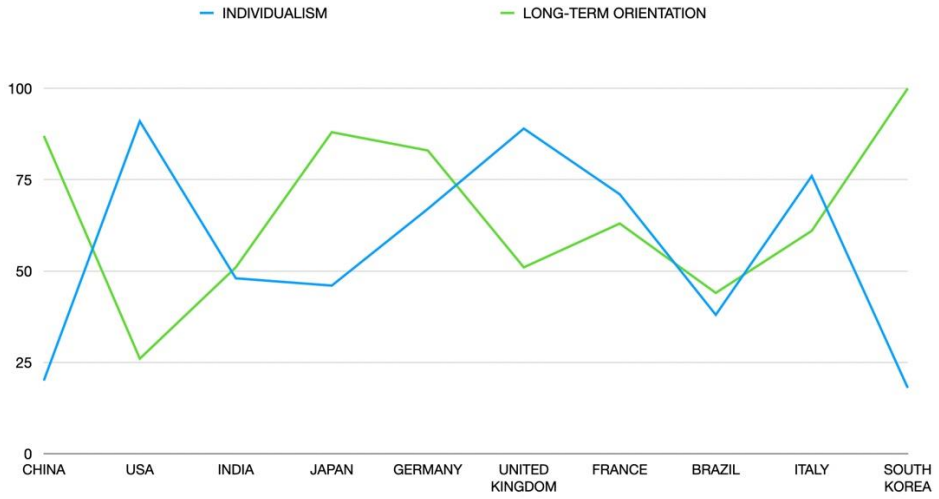
• community-oriented collective thinking (unity, teamwork) as a necessary condition for personality development;
• ability of personality flexibility (to be subject to change, adaptation and transformation);
• highly developed social skills in an intercultural environment.

Education, above all in its present form, has emerged as the main way to achieve this social change and as the main method of socialization, forming specific stereotypes of behaviour in a given social environment.

2. Economic need

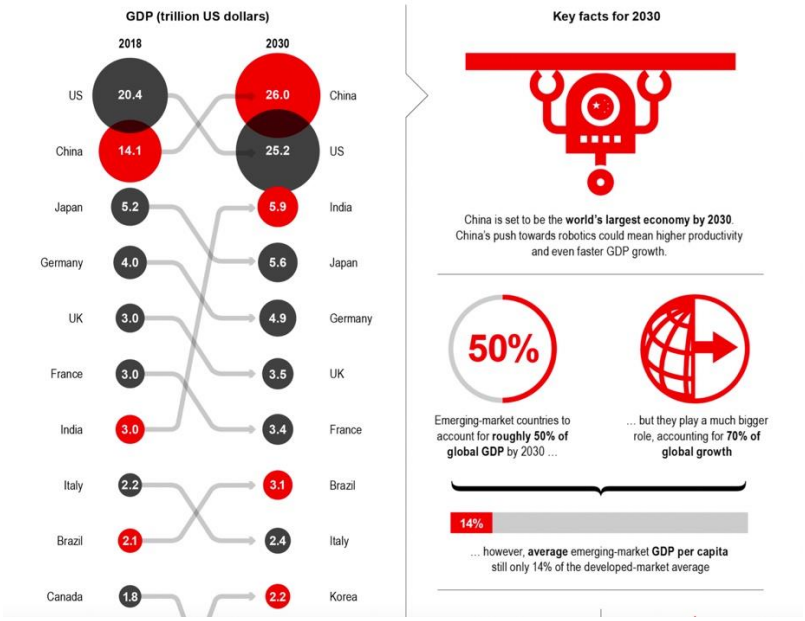
The cultural analysis (Figure 1) has found out that the more collectivist a country is, the more long-term orientation it has.

Figure 1. Hofstede's Culture Research Model



The comparison with the projection for economic development of the world leading countries (Figure 2) has brought the collective countries, precisely (China, India, Japan, Germany, Brazil, South Korea), to leading positions in the formation of the New Time. This has proved that the future belongs to the collective nations.

Figure 2. 2030: Long-term Global GDP rankings



3. EDUCATIONAL NEED

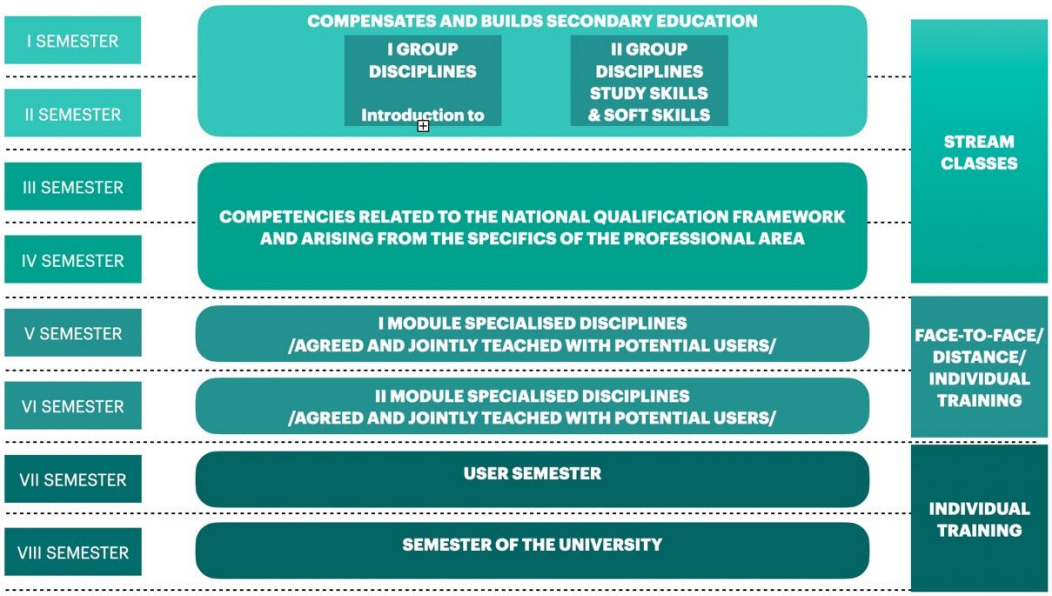
The deduced social and economic needs of the state, along with the content-analysis of EU and US educational goals, formed the following fundamental guidelines of the educational metamorphosis:

• The rapid evolution of networks and the intensively growing variety of narrow specialization have led to the need for a common communication protocol in network connectivity conditions.

• The model of person-oriented education has changed in the direction of forming individual skills, applicable in the time that Will Be focused on the development of skills for lifelong learning and soft skills with a strengthened positioning in the field of teamwork and intercultural competence.

• In response to the described educational need, the following alternative conceptual model (Figure 3) has been developed for the development of a transformational policy in the "Bachelor" higher education sector:

Figure 3. Alternative conceptual model for the development of a transformational policy in the "Bachelor" higher education sector



4. DISCUSSIONS

In view of the dynamic growth of narrow specializations in conditions of network connectivity, the university should obviously adjust to training small groups of students.

The implementation of the above-mentioned model can be supplemented and modified in view of any specifics of professional training and serve as a basis for the development of numerous "boutique" specialties and specializations, with simplified training in a second specialty. So constructed, it will bring about an educational metamorphosis that will enhance a full-time, eight-semester bachelor degree course as follows:

During the first two semesters, secondary education is compensated and upgraded. Two groups of academic disciplines are studied. The first group is necessary for the subsequent upgrade with the disciplines of the Professional field. The second group comprises disciplines that teach students "how to learn" and develop the basic "soft skills" related above all to collectivity.

During the second year the competencies related to the National Qualification Framework and resulting from the specifics of the Professional field are covered. Until this moment, students from all the three specialties study together and classes are conducted in the form chosen by the university. It is considered that by the end of the second year students have already become job oriented and can chose a specialization.

This specialization starts in the fifth semester, where individual specialties are offered discipline modules. It is desirable that these modules are agreed with the potential users and even taught jointly. Two modules are recommended - one per the fifth and sixth semesters. If the number of students in the groups does not allow in-person and/or distance learning, it is switched to individual learning.

During this year, it is expected that students have contacted potential employers and have become job oriented. On this basis, a seventh semester is being prepared, called "user semester" for individual specializations within the specialties. During that semeter, the users chose the academic disciplines. The training is based again on a modular principle on an individual basis.

The eighth semester training is carried out in the university according to a specfic model which prepares the students for graduation. Such freedom of conceptual preparation requires enhanced knowledge and skills in the areas of teamwork, social responsibility and intercultural competence to increase social collectivity.

This model should certainly be viewed as a conceptual model rather than a complete training plan.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- The goals of the state, including social progress and the necessary cultural changes, can be achieved through a metamorphosis of the educational system with the above trends.

- The power of knowledge, particularly the educational system, is the main institution that can implement the new social change, transforming itself according to the needs of the state, therefrom forming the personality according to the specific needs of the New Time.
- Therefore, the freedom of the university is essential for the formation of the personality.
- It is necessary to understand and recognize the harmful consequences of hyper-individualism growing into a global narcissistic epidemic and to direct the education of the younger generations to a highly pronounced collectivism.
- It is necessary to pay special attention to educational systems and methods in collective societies, to borrow the best practices, cultivating similar values in their own societies. This means investing efforts in the development of cross-cultural intellectual exchange and competence, not only with the member states of the European Union, but also with the emerging collective, leading nations in the world economy.
- Thirdly, to continue the development of person-oriented education with a view to developing and improving the soft skills of the personalities to ensure their survival, adaptability and productivity.
- Finally, perhaps most ambitiously, to help the state to understand the urgent need for these changes, as well as that the self-aware and collectively educated person is the necessary transformation to establish successful, strongly related and interconnected societies.

With the presentation of the conceptual model constructed on the basis of facts, environmental factors and resulting considerations, our brief overview of the need for higher education transformation has been completed. It can be summarized that, like any system, even artificially and willfully created by people, higher education is a metasystemic organism. Understanding its problems and processes requires complex knowledge, logic and abstraction, applied with the full awareness that the system is always partially known and not all of its processes are sufficiently understandable. This is exactly the advice to the system architects of the education system – to get aside from the details of everyday life, to stand aside from the process, and to perceive the important trends in the country, Europe and the human society.

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