

A GENUINE REFORM OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN BULGARIA IS NECESSARY

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Abstract: The main goal of the article is to highlight the necessity of a genuine reform in Bulgaria's educational system! The primary task of those in power is the term "educational doctrine"- a state policy that determines the development of education for decades to come! For this purpose a new value system for the entire Bulgarian society is required. The current lack of such a system can be attributed to the following reasons: 1.Rejection of the old model without having a clear understanding of a new one; 2. Lack of well- trained specialists in various fields of education; This practically means guaranteed backwardness and conservatism; 3.The need to elevate the moral standards of individual citizens. In a society, democracy requires citizens to take responsibility; 4.To clarify the concept of emancipatory education- liberation from external authority and foreign will. It represent the process of freeing oneself from social, political, economic, and cultural constraints that limit individual autonomy and self-determination. Historically, emancipation has been used in various context. As a result, attention must be directed toward the spiritual development of young individuals. To completely reform the structure of Bulgarian education is necessary! To conclusions here are that political forces in Bulgaria must undertake two main tasks: to define the societal orientation and relevance of the educational objectives; -to utilize the achievements of modern pedagogical science; The conclusions here are that it is necessary to conduct a revision and analysis of how to formulate guidelines for education several generations ahead! This implies a comprehensive evaluation of current educational practices and an exploration of innovative approaches that can better prepare future generations for the challenges they may face. Such a review should consider factors like technological advancements, evolving societal values, global interconnectedness and environmental sustainability. By carefully considering these elements, educators and policymakers can develop strategies that foster critical thinking, adaptability, and resilience in learners, ensuring they are will- equipped to navigate an increasingly complex world. Recommendations: These two tasks are inextricably linked because one goal can only be achieved when both material conditions and the political will of the ruling authorities are present! This statement highlights the interdependence between practical resources and governmental commitment in realizing any significant objective. Without either component, progress toward a shared goal becomes challenging, if not impossible! The accumulation of knowledge is a challenging process that unfolds over time and even more difficult is changing the mindset of an entire nation!

Keywords : educational system, value system, doctrine, state policy

1. INTRODUCTION

When a country decides to become a democratic and rule-of-law state, one of its first tasks, which must not be postponed under any circumstances or at anyone's request, is to reform its education system.

This is an extremely serious, scientifically grounded move of immense political and economic significance. Education, as should be known to everyone, is the most important and long-term investment of society and the state! If it is not made wisely, taking into account not only present interests but also looking toward the future, it could prove disastrous for future generations!

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The primary task of those in power in Bulgaria is to define the term *educational doctrine*—this is the state policy determining the development of education for decades to come To achieve this, however, the following must be created

- **A new value system** for the entire Bulgarian society, which according to (Matev,2010) “will serve as the foundation for future generations, guiding their upbringing and fostering new qualities and abilities”. This will help change the mindset of all Bulgarians, especially young people. The foundation of education is the value system of a society! Unfortunately, we lack such a system. There are several reasons for this:

- One reason is the legacy of the communist era, according to (Kirova,2012) “ reflected in adherence to outdated dogmas and prejudices, reliance on decisions from "above," and the lack of creative initiative and responsibility.

- Another reason, equally if not more harmful, is the rejection of the old model without understanding the new one. In practice, according to (Chavdarova – Kostova, 2018) “this guarantees stagnation, conservatism, slavish imitation of foreign models, and the squandering of resources on goals that are outdated or becoming obsolete in the civilized world.”

- **Well-prepared specialists** in various fields of education are also necessary—specialists in education economics and management, education policy, various methodologies and didactics, developmental psychology, learning psychology, etc. This is essential because many still fail to understand that the idea of a socialist society collapsed not because its goals were unworthy or unattainable, but because the creators of the former socialist state saw critically minded intellectuals and scientists who did not think like ideological leaders, but served science with integrity, as enemies. As a result, they obstructed these individuals, isolating them, and instead created a new intellectual class—obedient, corrupt, and mediocre in both creative expression and scientific achievements. This applies fully to the intellectuals in the field of education. Unfortunately, a significant part of the Bulgarian scientific and artistic-creative intelligentsia lacked the moral strength to thoroughly analyze its own behavior. It absolved itself of blame without even considering the need to change its slogans, morality, or newly assumed responsibilities.

- Democracy must enter with greater force and lay the foundations of a new educational system that corresponds to the times and the interests of the entire nation. We must clearly and specifically explain that in a democratic society, citizens are required to bear responsibility, which is directly dependent on individual morality. Without morality, the results are negative! According to (Patil 2021) “A democratic state is one that, through its structures and legislation, provides its citizens, regardless of their political, religious, or other affiliations, with unlimited opportunities to participate in governance, public life, and the education system, while holding them accountable for their social group, family, and themselves, in accordance with their knowledge, experience, and skills.

3. RESULTS

It is unnecessary to emphasize that the Bulgarian state has never been democratic. If this serves as any excuse, we can mention that, according to leading scholars from developed industrial countries, the democratization process has not been completed in any state in the world. However, the level of development achieved varies. The reasons for this are not only political but also economic, religious, and educational in nature. Therefore, when discussing the creation of a democratic society, the question of the upbringing of its citizens, especially future generations, must not be overlooked.

It is necessary to clarify the concept of emancipation and emancipatory education. Democracy is a well-developed form of emancipation! In this context, emancipation means liberation from prejudices, illusions, and unfounded claims, from external will, imposed external influences, and any authority that contradicts the interests and understandings of the individual. An emancipated society consists of emancipated individuals, organized and cooperating according to the principles of ethics, humanism, and tolerance. According to (Hecht, 2013) “For a society to become emancipated, conditions must be created for its education. Therefore, the foundation of any mature, democratic pedagogy, which aims to prepare independent, knowledgeable, and capable future citizens, is oriented toward achieving the goals of emancipatory education.” This type of education seeks to replace uncritical attitudes with critical ones and dependency with independence. Additionally, it strives to implement the democratic principle of equal opportunity for all, fosters a critical attitude toward the role of teachers and the social positions of schools, introduces a new formulation of punishment and assessment of academic results, and aims to develop critical self-awareness and creativity.

A critical condition for creating a quality educational doctrine is allowing modern science and its representatives to address all problems concerning the education and upbringing of the younger generation. In other words, it is time to end the unjustified monopoly of bureaucracies and other artificial institutions, which until now have been the sole authorities in this field. According to (Vihert, 2021) “One of the first steps in this direction should be the creation of special educational and upbringing programs for disadvantaged regions and social groups”.

4. DISCUSSIONS

Equalizing educational opportunities for minority groups who also speak their native languages (e.g., Roma, Turkish) will not be achieved merely by recognizing their right to study these languages. It requires an understanding and appreciation of the foundational importance of developing the language used for instruction in educational institutions.

Serious attention must be given to the internal (spiritual) development, especially of young individuals. The state must work toward the internal growth of all Bulgarians, particularly the youth, to help them understand and adopt as their own the norms, principles, rules, and sanctions of society, which will serve as the foundation for their behavior and guide their actions accordingly.

A revision of the curriculum is necessary. Let us clarify what this concept means. In Western European pedagogical literature, the term *curriculum* is often used interchangeably with "study plan" or "educational program" in Bulgarian. The curriculum has taken on the meaning given to it in the early 20th century by the great German theorist Erich Weniger. According to him:

"The curriculum is the result of struggles between political groups, social unions, and other public forces interested in influencing the education and upbringing of the younger generation."

It synthesizes the interests of those in power, the state system, societal structures, and political forces. Based on this, pedagogical science outlines and formulates the main directions, defines the overall content, and establishes criteria for evaluating and controlling the activities of institutions responsible for education and upbringing.

According to (Preschool and School Education Act,2015) "A review and analysis must be conducted to determine how to formulate the directions for education and upbringing for several generations ahead! Discussions on the revision of the curriculum must begin immediately and be conducted openly, involving all constructive political forces genuinely committed to building a free and democratic society—not just in words but in actions."

5. CONCLUSIONS

The political forces in Bulgaria have two primary tasks:

1.The first task is to define the socio-political orientation and socio-economic feasibility of the goals of education and upbringing.

2.The second task is to make achieving these goals possible by utilizing the advancements of contemporary pedagogical science.

These two tasks are inextricably linked and interact with each other, according to (Streenivasan , 2024) "as a goal can only be achieved when both the material conditions and the political will of the ruling authorities are present. No matter how noble or desirable a goal may be, in the absence of one of these conditions, it remains an unattainable intention." Our recent past is full of examples of such discrepancies!

It seems difficult to understand that the accumulation of knowledge is a challenging process that unfolds over time, and even more difficult is changing the mindset of an entire nation!

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Our place in Europe does not mean imitation and replication, but rather the creation of progressive ideas, concepts, and models. Political maturity and responsibility to the Bulgarian people are essential from the leadership of our country. A true reform of the education system in Bulgaria and the development of a quality educational doctrine are among the first steps in this direction!

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