Issue of fairness in modern Russian society and the humanitarization of education as a way to solve it

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Abstract. The research reflects on the contribution of the humanitarization of education in solving the problems of fairness in contemporary Russian society. The authors reveal the concepts of humanitarization of education and fairness, as well as analyze the relationship between the humanitarization of education and the crisis of value system, justifying the importance of creating conditions for the development of a humanitarian personality who has the competencies needed for orientation, and who is capable of self-actualization in the contemporary socio-cultural space. The authors attempt to explain the relationship between the process of humanitarization of education and the mechanism of achieving social fairness in Russian society. The research presents the attitude of individual stakeholders of educational services to the humanities in the university curricula. At the end of the research, the conclusion is made about the need for making joint managerial decisions by the federal executive authorities and educational institutions of Russia to enhance the role of higher education institutions in forming the population's value system, as well as moral qualities of the individual.
Keywords: fairness, humanitarization of education, values, Russia, worldview, education.

1 Introduction

The situation in contemporary Russian society is characterized by several development challenges. The issues of the blurring of value system boundaries and moral norms in society have become particularly relevant. As V.V. Kotlyarova correctly notes, "The processes taking place in contemporary culture indicate the unfolding of a global value system crisis, which includes a change in the value basis of human life, and a change in the value system" [1, p. 86].

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The crisis of moral values, including the problem of fairness, is reflected in all life sectors of society and is the cause and consequence of socio-economic problems taking place both in Russia and in the world, which also emphasizes the relevance of this topic. The hypothesis of the present research is the assumption of the most important role of the humanities in forming a versatile personality who can actively evaluate the world in terms of fairness and unfairness.

A large number of studies are devoted to the problem of fairness, but few works consider the humanitarization of education from the perspective of fairness.

The purpose of the present research is to analyze the category of fairness, and the role of the humanitarization of education in the formation of ideas concerning this category. Sociologists believe that "the idea of fairness is still one of the key values in the value system of Russian society, and, according to citizens, is among the three most significant (after trust and responsibility) values necessary for social functioning" [2, 3].

However, despite the demand for social fairness, Russian society is not ready to take active actions for its rights and freedoms. In the population's opinions, all responsibility for ensuring the fairness of the social structure is borne by the authorities.

2 Methods

In the course of preparing the research, the method of dialectics, the system-based approach, logical correspondence, harmonization, and structural-logical modeling were employed. To confirm the hypothesis put forward in the research, the authors used the findings of sociological surveys conducted by VTsIOM (the All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center) and FOM (Public Opinion Foundation) to study the views of Russians about the fairness of the social structure.

3 Results and discussion

Humanitarization of education as a prerequisite for the educational environment is a necessary component for the successful socialization of the individual, the basis of their social capital. The authors agree with I.V. Naletova that education "on the one hand, ensures individual's entry into the social space, while on the other hand, ensures the effective functioning of social networks and norms in society, as well as supports social trust" [4, 5].

In the Russian scientific literature, there are several definitions of the concept of "humanitarization of education", which is interpreted "as a special paradigmatic quality of cognition and thinking that determines the value-semantic and content-target attribution of a particular phenomenon to the existence of man and humanity" [6].

The authors agree with T.M. Elkanova, who writes: "Humanitarization of education can be defined as a purposeful pedagogical process, taking into account the peculiarities of the creative development of the individual in the new paradigm of the informational support of society; ensuring the development of humanitarian orientation of a person, capable of self-determination and self-actualization in the contemporary socio-cultural space; contributing to the formation of intercultural competence ... and ... a system of fundamental axiological orientations of students with their subsequent actualization in professional and social activities... in situations of rapid change in the information environment" [5].

Previously, it was accustomed to consider that the humanities and information technologies are far from each other. But the pandemic has confirmed that without a high level of digital competencies, remote work, learning, and joint scientific research are impossible. Digital competencies are widely used by historians and philosophers. The knowledge area called "Digital Humanities" has appeared, and is becoming increasingly

popular as a special field of research and education, situated at the intersection of the humanities and computer sciences [7].

In the middle of the last century, the British scientist Ch. Snow, in his lecture "The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution" noted that the division of society into two cultures, namely, scientific and humanitarian, caused him deep regret [8]. But individual stakeholders of educational services often argue about the need to reduce the number of humanities in favor of natural sciences. However, there are several arguments against this idea.

Fairness is one of the main categories in the value system of any society. Since ancient times, philosophers have paid much attention to its consideration. In the age of Aristotle, two views of its meaning were formed. According to the first view, fairness was understood as the equality of citizens before conditions, primarily before the law (equalitarian standpoint). According to the second view, the concept of fairness was considered through the prism of the distribution of various benefits according to the merits, role, and significance of the participants involved in distribution to society (distributive standpoint). The equalitarian standpoint was more typical of liberal representatives of political philosophy, while the distributive standpoint on fairness became widespread in the philosophical trends of the social-democratic and socialist persuasions.

The philosophical encyclopedic dictionary interprets fairness as "a prerequisite for the implementation of other values and consists in respecting the individual, avoiding intruding on their freedom to preserve it, and not hindering the creation of cultural values" [9].

The history of the societies' development suggests that fairness is implemented toward two main vectors. The first one involves mainly the normative approach, characterized by certain norms and rules which are formed to contribute to the socialization of the individual in society. The second vector focuses on the freedom and creativity of individuals and social groups [10]. Thus, depending on the dominance of a particular vector, fairness is more actively manifested either through ensuring security or supplementing freedom as a factor of self-actualization [11: 341].

It should be noted also that the political and socio-economic situation in the country directly affects the public's perception of fairness, shifting the focus to the most important issues of public concern (political freedoms, quality of life, etc.). Based on the above, one can conclude that the idea of fairness can become a value basis for the views of the population, as well as increase confidence in both people and various social institutions.

It becomes relevant to consider fairness from the viewpoint of its association with the problem of social inequality. In a certain sense, social fairness can be an indicator of the extent to which the problem of social inequality is widespread in society [11: 161-162].

In this case, the concept of fairness acquires a certain historical, national, and mental specificity. As a result, "the real manifestation of fairness is the distribution structure of the goods in society, the satisfaction of the needs of the population, and the remuneration for merits" [12: 342]. Given the large gaps in the income and standard of living of the Russian population, the growth of social tension, it can be assumed that the problem of social fairness may aggravate.

In this context, the findings of sociological studies on the problems of fairness are of particular interest. According to the results of a survey conducted by VTsIOM in 2013 [13], in the views of the Russian population, fairness is associated primarily with the equal protection of the citizens by the law (36%). At that, these associations have been stable for more than six years. A fifth of the population (20%) of Russia associates social fairness with a decent standard of living and the absence of sharp property differentiation.

The VTsIOM findings have also shown that the public opinion of Russians is dominated by the idea of the decisive role of state power in solving social fairness problems. Thus, more than half of the respondents (58%) believe that only a strong state which ensures order and protects national interests can support the implementation of the idea of social fairness in

contemporary Russia. The alternative version, in which fairness would develop based on democracy and freedom, was chosen by half as many respondents – just 27%. "It is interesting that the first option was preferred by residents of small settlements and elderly people. Among the supporters of the second approach, a significant share was made up of residents of large cities." [13: 342].

According to FOM surveys for 2017 [14], since 2011, there has been an increase in the share of respondents (from 16 to 42%) who believed that the structure of Russian society was fairer than that of the West. Almost a fifth of respondents believe that the Russian state has the resources and can ensure fairness in society. However, there are twice as many people (almost 40%), who are skeptical about the aspirations of the authorities towards fairness. Skeptics suggest that government agencies do not properly build their work in this direction, although there are opportunities for this. The smallest share of Russians surveyed (13%) believes that the authorities have neither the desire nor the resources to establish a fair society [14: 342].

4 Conclusion

Thus, focused attention to the value and moral content of the humanities within the framework of humanitarization of education will contribute to solving the problems of fairness in contemporary Russian society, and may reduce the level of social tension in the country.

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