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The Mentor as an Implementer of the Methodology Practice in Democracy Education

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Abstract: *The responsibility for preparing the students to be part of the process of democracy is divided between all participants in the educational process, especially between parents and professional workers (teachers) who have a role of educators. The task is complex, and the responsibility is huge. The institutions of higher education have practical duty to educate the young students who should later become the professionals who will work with children, teachers and educators. The goal of this paper is to actualize the meaning and function of mentoring as educational category in general and in the preparation of the teaching staff in the methodology under democracy. Mentoring as an effective method is used for helping inexperienced individuals develop and progress in their profession. The keys for establishing a successful mentoring relationship include creating a relationship of trust, clearly defining roles and responsibilities, establishing short- and long- term goals, using open and supportive communication, and collaboratively solving problems. (Byington, 2010). To be learned the democracy should be practiced. It is applicable in the pedagogical practice; where for its study the most important is the teacher, which occurs as a mentor by implementing it and performing mentoring from that area.*

Keywords: democracy, methodic, mentor, student

1. Introduction

Today, in the modern educational process, we can see that the democracy and the civic education have entered in our system as a need. Their primary goal is to contribute in our attempt to be free, responsible and active citizens, to acknowledge the civic society, to be aware of our rights and the rights of others, to be tolerant and to take care of others, because that is the only way for us to survive and to develop democracy. In democracy the citizens enjoy their rights and freedom, but at the same time they are responsible for creating their future and further development.

The educational process plays an important but also a very sensitive role in the transformation of the society as a whole. It can change the society, it can simply reproduce it and it can open new possibilities for the human and for the society. That can be achieved by providing education which distributes knowledge, skills, ideas, opinions in a way that is acceptable for all groups and classes of people. The democracy and the civic education develop certain abilities and relations that are especially important for the young people. They are applied in the pedagogic practice, where the most important part is the role of the teacher who is a mentor, by realizing the practice itself.

The institutions of higher education have a practical duty to educate young students who should later become professionals in their work with children: teachers and educators. Because of that through this paper we will actualize the meaning and the function of the mentoring as an educational category in the preparation of the educational staff in the methodic of democracy.

2. Goal and Task of the Mentoring

The mentoring is a behavior and a process where one person helps another, advises, helps in the training and the development of the other less experience person. In other words, that is an experienced person who is an expert in

certain area, who is professionally connected with the academic and professional activity of the other person who is faze of training, instruction and education. The mentoring actually is a process in which the mentor, as a consultant and guide, as an expert under whose instructions a certain problem is examined, is an expert who dedicates his work on building and training of young scientists and experts of certain area.

The mentoring is a partnership between two free, independent and equal sides who discuss as such. This process is the relationship between the mentor and the mentored. The mentored is the person who is trained and there are many terms for him: trained, mentored, pupil, student, follower etc. He should absorb the knowledge of the mentor and to know how to practice it and to present it.

The solutions in the mentoring are built jointly between the mentor and the mentored during their work, by which the mentored is trained to find solutions for the further problems that will arise in his work.

Today, along with the development of the technology there are many new ways of communication and mentoring, connecting with the mentored who receive advises and at the same time there is a feedback about the work.

The main goal of the mentoring is to enable the students to improve their pedagogical mastery and thus enable the future mentors who will guide educational practice with students, teachers and future teachers in educational institutions. The task of mentoring should be how to help the person who is mentor to achieve successful job from which the both sides will be satisfied.

3. The Democracy and the Development of the Civic Education

The process of transition of our society from one to another system of values, especially in the area of education is a

possibility for implementing new, modern school subjects or contents. One of those contents is the civic education or basics of democracy.

According Butts, the civic education is an explicit and continuous study about the basic terms and values which lay in the ground of our democratic political community and in our constitutional order. The civic education includes skills for making decisions about public questions and participating in the public life.

According some authors, the civic education is a process of development of the person and preparation of the young man for social statements, dialogue and collaboration based on the respect for fundamental human rights of established moral position and knowledge of the laws of the state, the mechanisms and principles of democracy.

Along with the reform of education for its improvement, modernization and universality, an important role played the realization of the project, entitled under the general name "civic education". Thus it managed to penetrate into all facets of education and to increase the range of pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education.

The main goal of the program "Foundations of Democracy" is the formation and development of responsible and competent citizens who actively participate in the public life in a democratic society. The implementation of this program should develop the ability for identifying problems, asking questions about them and taking action to resolve them. [11] The teachers need to provide support for the students, directing them to informational researches, which help in creating a personal commitment to accept the responsibilities associated with the rights we have as citizens, the basis for the continuation of the existence of societies, based on the ideals justice, equality, freedom and human rights. [8]

4. Training and selection of a mentor

With the implementation of the program 'Foundations of Democracy with methodology' emerged the need of mentors to be trained in order to be more competent in future as mentors. The mentors' training in this area can be gained through attending seminars, seminar workshops, participating in projects in the field of democracy and civic education through continuous monitoring and retrieval of useful information from the Internet, etc.. Thus the mentors acquire new knowledge, exchange of views and experiences by foreign professors already developed theme by democracy in their countries. They gain a wealth of experience, with new perspectives, new methods and ways of working that will later apply in the implementation of the pedagogical practice of democracy.

When it comes to the mentoring program in the educational institution, mentors may be designated by the organization itself, but it can do that on their own. When we talk about democracy and the democratic choice of the mentor, it should happen by choice of the mentored. Often the choice may be based on geographic principle- if the mentor and the mentored live nearby, but it's not excluded for the mentor to live abroad too. Now that can be achieved thanks to the

Internet and it is called a distant mentoring, which is getting more and more present in the world.

5. Building An Effective Relationship Mentor-Mentored

The relation between the mentor and the mentored should be very professional from the beginning, and their behavior should be pleasant and productive with mutual respect. This relationship should know its way of development and its form which is necessary for realization of that collaboration. Many studies show that effective relationships have similar factors upon which they are build. They include: mutual respect, acceptance and flexibility, honesty and direct communication, preparation, commitment, some shared values, trust and willingness to work through obstacles. There are certain behaviors that could be considered requirements on the part of the mentored and the mentor in a mentoring relationship. These include:

- Taking initiative and risks.
- Accepting each other.
- Agreeing upon and working toward specific goals.
- Dealing effectively with unmet expectations or objectives. [1]

The mentor should guide the mentored properly and show him the right way to the goal. The successful mentor has good listening and communicating skills, he motivates, gives certainty, which the mentored needs.[8] For this process to be successful, the mentored should have a will for collaboration, he should acquire certain techniques in order to get better results, he should communicate with the mentor about the problems and the obstacles he bumps to during his work, he should give his own ideas, thoughts, he should accept positive and negative critiques, he should be punctual and patient in his work. The experience is very important for the mentor because that experience he should implement in the classroom through the practice.

6. Realization of the Democratic Practice

Learning democracy is much more effective if it is shaped and experienced by the students. Tolerances, respect, willingness to learn of one another, are the values that progress the democracy. The democratic principles need to be embedded in the curriculum and in the relationship between all stakeholders of the educational process. The teachers need to believe in democracy as an institution, to recognize and know that it is worth studying it. The students should practice democracy in order to learn it. One of the best ways they feel valuable is hearing their views and to encouraging their self-confidence, because it is the result of the evaluation of their own value, product orientation to one's self. It is the power of trust in their goals, thoughts and actions. It is established and changed throughout life under the influence of the communication and relationship with others. The self-confidence is the relationship between the real and the ideal. The main task of the mentor in the implementation of the teaching of democracy is to introduce the mentored with the principles of self-confidence, so in his future teaching he knows and respects those principles

because that is one of the requirements to be a good teacher. One of the most important values of democracy is the dignity of the person, which the teacher demonstrates by respecting the views of students through full respect for their intelligence and cultural behavior and courtesy on their part. Knowing and respecting the rights of children is especially important, because a democratic society is valued on how much respect it has for the fundamental freedoms and rights. [9]

Through the study of democracy and different cultures, religions and societies, students would have more understanding, more acceptance and tolerance of human differences and would easily collapse the perceived barriers that exist in society. The democracy requires development of strategies and methods through which learning and discipline, a person will grow armed with knowledge and skills as a useful member of the society in the context of the modern world. It is necessary to continue the development of curricula in the field of civic education and democracy; because that is the best way you can ensure active participation of students in the civic life and the development of democratic society as a whole. [5]

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