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PEDAGOGICAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR DEVELOPING ACTIVE CIVIC COMPETENCE IN STUDENT YOUTH

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Abstract

The article analyzes pedagogical technologies aimed at developing active civic competence among student youth. Furthermore, the study examines methods for developing active civic competence through pedagogical technologies, the outcomes achieved through these technologies, as well as proposals and conclusions for enhancing civic competence.

Keywords: Student youth, active citizenship, competence, civic competence, pedagogical technologies, debate, brainstorming, project-based learning, critical analysis.

Introduction

Active citizenship implies the conscious and active participation of every citizen in social, political, and legal processes within a democratic society. Today, the formation and development of active civic competence among student youth is considered one of the important tasks facing the education system. In the development of our country, the level of active civic competence among students and young people, their independent thinking, intellectual potential, diplomatic communication skills, awareness of changes and opportunities in the educational process, volunteerism, and understanding of fundamental reforms play a significant role. Therefore, the education system requires the development of active civic competence among student youth. In this process, the effective application of pedagogical technologies occupies an important place. In this regard, it is appropriate to provide analyses, proposals, and conclusions

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concerning pedagogical technologies that contribute to the development of active civic competence among student youth.

Main Part:

The development of independent and creative thinking, innovative potential, as well as the ability of student youth to critically and systematically analyze the existing reality in society is directly related to the organization of lessons in educational institutions on the basis of non-traditional teaching methods. In this regard, the following pedagogical technologies aimed at developing active civic competence among student youth can be highlighted:

1. “Debate and Discussion” Pedagogical Technology

The term “discussion” originates from the Arabic language and means “exchange of opinions.” In terminological usage, discussion refers to the exchange of views between two or more individuals on a specific issue based on evidence and arguments. Such discussions may concern religious, social, or political matters. Like other sciences, this field is also based on certain principles and conditions [1].

The “debate and discussion” method is an instructional approach in which students are divided into two groups and engage in argumentation and exchange of opinions on a specific topic. This method is applied for discussing various topics and problems based on knowledge and experience. The method encourages independent thinking among students, motivates them to justify the correctness of their views, and contributes to the development of listening skills. Many academic subjects and their topics require discussion-based instruction depending on educational standards, curricula, syllabi, the characteristics of educational institutions, and the contingent of learners. First, such discussions ensure student activity and engagement. Second, they eliminate uncertainty and ambiguity. Third, they satisfy learners’ interests and needs. Most importantly, under such conditions educational materials are mastered comprehensively and effectively. Arguments, conclusions, judgments, and perceptions acquire greater depth and clarity, while the persuasiveness of instructions and explanations increases significantly.

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Discussions are generally divided into two types:

- guided discussions;
- free discussions.

In guided discussions, the participation of the teacher is significant; however, such participation should not exceed the teacher's role as a moderator or facilitator. Free discussions, on the other hand, are conducted in a democratic atmosphere with the equal participation of teachers and students. In both forms, educational truth and scientific objectivity remain primary. Considering that scientific knowledge is acquired through observation, abstract thinking, relative and absolute truth, it is essential that concepts, categories, hypotheses, conclusions, theories, laws, and regularities are not distorted during the discussion process.

The teacher should design and anticipate the outcomes of discussions in advance. In this process, intermediate stages occupy a secondary position, while final conclusions should correspond to the principles of scientific cognition. Such consistency is ensured by the professional competence of the teacher. Preventing free discussions from turning into disorder is one of the most important pedagogical tasks. Nevertheless, the educational value of free discussions should not be underestimated in comparison with guided discussions.

For effective discussion sessions, the following conditions are important:

- compliance with regulations and time limits;
- conducting deep analytical preparation before the discussion;
- ensuring the maximum possible participation of students;
- avoiding authoritarian dominance of the teacher over students.

Ensuring the participation of passive students is often a challenging process for many teachers. Their engagement can be stimulated through:

- asking questions;
- requesting each student's personal opinion;
- encouraging correct answers;
- correcting and supplementing incorrect responses and mistakes.

The effectiveness of discussions largely depends on students' interests, knowledge, unity, freedom of thought, and the presence of a healthy pedagogical and psychological environment within the group [2].

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When discussions are organized among students, the following positive outcomes can be observed:

- increased self-confidence;
- reinforcement and systematization of acquired knowledge;
- development of analytical skills;
- ability to present arguments quickly and appropriately;
- learning to examine problems from multiple perspectives;
- development of skills for effectively communicating ideas to an audience.

Through discussions and debates, student youth learn to express and justify their opinions and to analyze different positions critically.

2. “Brainstorming” Pedagogical Technology

The “brainstorming” method teaches student youth a collective approach to solving social problems. Brainstorming is a widely recognized method used for generating numerous ideas, overcoming stereotypical thinking, and finding creative solutions to problems. It encourages participants to use imagination and creativity and helps identify multiple solutions to a given issue. Furthermore, brainstorming assists in selecting values and determining alternatives.

The effective application of the brainstorming method requires the following conditions:

- participants should be seated comfortably;
- boards or sheets for recording ideas should be prepared;
- the problem should be clearly identified;
- rules of work should be established;
- ideas should not be criticized or evaluated initially;
- freedom of expression should be ensured;
- emphasis should be placed on quantity of ideas;
- ideas should be read, revised, and expanded;
- all proposed ideas should be recorded immediately;
- filled sheets should be displayed visibly;
- new ideas should be encouraged;
- participants should continue working without interfering with others’ ideas.

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The essence of the brainstorming method lies in generating as many solutions as possible within a limited time. This psychotechnical exercise stimulates creative and unconventional thinking during the learning process. One or several groups are formed and presented with a problem. Students propose various ideas for solving the issue. The greater the number of proposed solutions, the easier it becomes to select the most effective one. Each idea is thoroughly analyzed and expanded until the most appropriate solution is identified. The time allocated for solving the problem is predetermined and strictly observed.

The brainstorming method helps students quickly identify solutions in difficult situations, broadens the boundaries of problem perception, eliminates stereotypical thinking, and promotes broad intellectual reasoning. In addition, it transforms relationships within the group from competitive attitudes to creative cooperation, thereby strengthening group cohesion [2].

The brainstorming method enhances civic engagement among student youth, strengthens initiative, and develops creative thinking. This method proves effective not only in the educational process but also in youth clubs, debates, and volunteer projects. It contributes to the formation of communication and discussion culture among students. They develop the ability to express opinions not only orally but also in written form, while also improving logical and systematic thinking skills.

Participation in group discussions enables students to express their opinions openly, fosters mutual respect and attentive listening skills, and strengthens teamwork culture. Through the use of brainstorming methods, joint discussions of urgent social issues contribute to the development of social consciousness among student youth, encourage participation in solving societal problems, and create opportunities for leadership and initiative. Students who propose innovative ideas often inspire the group and naturally emerge as leaders. Through creative and critical thinking, students learn to listen to, compare, and integrate diverse perspectives, thereby developing the ability to approach problems from multiple angles.

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3. Project-Based Learning Pedagogical Technology.

Project-based learning technology enables student youth to independently design and implement socially beneficial projects. This technology develops competencies related to identifying social problems, analyzing them, and finding solutions. Project-based learning is a pedagogical technology based on organizing the educational process through project design, practical problem-solving, and independent research activities. It aims to connect theoretical knowledge with practice and to develop students' creative thinking and independent decision-making skills.

Currently, interest in gradually mastering and effectively applying this technology is steadily increasing. It is well known that such an approach contributes to the development of important personal qualities among students, including independence, creativity, and initiative, while also recognizing their interests and needs. According to researchers, one of the earliest forms of project-based teaching dates back to the sixteenth century in Italy, where socio-economic conditions created the prerequisites for the emergence of the “project method” in education. The methodology was first applied in the training of architects and artists at the Academy of Arts in Rome, as new professional requirements necessitated the reconsideration of traditional teaching methods.

The widespread view is that project-based teaching technology emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the United States on the basis of the theoretical concepts of “pragmatic pedagogy.” Educational innovations sought to reform traditional schools fundamentally by bringing education closer to real life and basing instruction on children’s natural activities, interests, and needs. The founder of this direction was the prominent American philosopher and educator John Dewey. He regarded education as the continuous reconstruction and expansion of personal experience.

For the effectiveness of modern educational searches in this field, John Dewey believed that the acquisition of knowledge is not a spontaneous and uncontrolled process. Therefore, students should formulate problems that emerge from their own lives and are meaningful to them. He emphasized that education should be carried out through purposeful project activities corresponding to students’

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personal interests, since knowledge is mastered not merely through sensory perception but through active participation in the learning process.

Project technology, also referred to as the “problem method” or “project method,” is closely connected with the ideas of humanistic education. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the project method became widely used in Western countries due to its rational combination of theoretical knowledge with practical application in solving real-life problems [3].

Through project-based learning technology, student youth do not simply absorb ready-made knowledge; rather, they independently analyze problems, set goals, create projects, and defend the results of their work. In this process, the teacher acts as a consultant and facilitator. Project-based learning develops independent inquiry and creative thinking, forms teamwork skills, prepares students for solving real-life problems, and cultivates a culture of working with information through analysis, comparison, and critical evaluation.

The purpose of critical thinking development technology is to cultivate intellectual abilities that are essential not only in education but also in future life, including the ability to make informed decisions, work with information, and analyze phenomena from different perspectives. The formation of critical thinking skills among student youth largely depends on the ability of higher education professors and teachers to organize lessons through effective educational technologies and create favorable conditions for independent learning.

Today’s educators and parents are required not only to pay special attention to the upbringing and education of young people but also to engage in more communication with them and encourage them toward critical thinking. Critical thinking is regarded as the process through which young people collect information about certain events and phenomena, consider both positive and negative aspects, think systematically, verify information, and make reasoned decisions.

Critical thinking manifests itself at different levels of interest and analytical ability. Among student youth, it develops through education, practice, life experience, and personal approaches. Moreover, critical thinking enables students to function effectively in a complex and information-rich world, solve

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real-life problems, make conscious decisions, and understand issues more deeply.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the development of active civic competence among student youth serves to strengthen the foundation of a democratic society. In this regard, the correct selection and effective application of modern pedagogical technologies make it possible to educate student youth as conscious, active, and responsible citizens.

Through critical analysis and reflective thinking, students develop a deeper understanding of democratic principles, human rights, and civic responsibilities, thereby laying a solid foundation for active citizenship. In addition, the teaching of political and social sciences enables students to understand their participation in socio-political systems and to learn the role of active citizenship in society. Moreover, through discussion-based learning and project-oriented educational activities, students gain the opportunity to apply socio-political knowledge to contemporary issues and to explore practical ways of solving social problems.

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