

# Implementation of US Higher Educational Institutions Experience in Formation of Students' Civic Consciousness in Ukraine

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## Abstract

Problem of formation Ukrainian students' civic consciousness is in the focus of research in philosophical and psychological and pedagogical sciences of Ukraine. United States of America is an example of the formation of civic consciousness in a democratic society. Education of citizenship of students on the basis of respect for the rights of every person, the recognition of the rule of law, conscious voluntary citizens to perform their duties and care for the common good is a key concept in US philosophy of higher education. This concept provides the priority of training students as responsible members of the democratic society to conscious activity for the benefit of the community. It is established that education Citizenship of student youth in the United States has a universal public nature. The state, higher education and social institutions are involved in this process environment (public organizations, mass media, institutions of the sphere culture, etc.). Students of higher educational institutions have been considered a resource for future social development in the United States of America that make a significant contribution to social transformation in society. Formation of students' civic consciousness upbrings certain personal qualities, skills and attitudes necessary for a citizen of a democratic society.

**Keywords:** civic consciousness, students of higher educational institutions, democratic society, the United States of America, experience

## 1. Introduction

In the context of development of the Ukrainian state the problem of raising the level of civic culture of Ukrainians became acute, the direction of which depends on the state of civic education in the country. Civic education in a democratic society is designed to teach individuals to maintain their own autonomy in relations with other people and the state, and to protect their own interests effectively. Civic education involves the process of political socialization, acquisition of knowledge and skills of socio-political action, a certain moral condition of people, a sense of freedom and at the same time responsibility, faith in social values (Zhadan et al., 2004).

The Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" defines the main task of higher education as the formation of personality through patriotic, legal, environmental education, establishment of moral values, social activity, civic position and responsibility, healthy lifestyle, ability to think freely and self-organization in modern conditions (Zhadan et al., 2004).

The Concept of national-patriotic education of children and youth states that among the most relevant upbringing areas nowadays are patriotic and civic education as core and fundamental, that meet both urgent requirements and challenges of today, and laying foundations for the formation of consciousness of present and future generations (The concept of national-patriotic education of children and youth 2015-2019, 2015). The revival of Ukraine is

impossible without awakening the consciousness of the Ukrainian people. Teachers of higher education institutions have an honorable task of forming civic consciousness in students to educate nationally conscious citizens of Ukraine.

In the United States of America young people have been considered a resource for future social development for a long time. Today young people are viewed not only as a social resource for future development but also as a social group that can already make a significant contribution to social transformation in society. This contribution depends to a large extent on the social activity of young people, due to the availability of the necessary social and human capital (Lubsky et al., 2019). Two types of social activity among young people are distinguished in academic literature. The first type is connected with direct participation in social transformations (Headley, 2002), the second one deals with civic participation, the purpose of which is to promote the common good and the solution of socially significant problems in society (Zimmer, 2005).

## 2. Theoretical Backgrounds

Problems of civic education of students are constantly in the focus of research in philosophical and psychological and pedagogical sciences, their solution now requires improving the educational process and attracting the potential of youth organizations. The role of the state is to coordinate educational efforts of all institutions of society, ensuring the directed activity of the individual in public activities for the benefit of society in accordance with social norms, laws and ethical ideals.

In Ukraine, the tasks of civic education of students are presented in the following legal documents: Laws of Ukraine "On Public Associations", "On Public Youth and Children's Organizations", "On Promoting Social Formation and Development of Youth in Ukraine". In addition, a certain role in this aspect is played by the State National Program "Education (Ukraine of the XXI century)", "The Concept of Civic Education in the Development of Ukrainian Statehood", "The Concept of National-Patriotic Education of Youth", the State Target Social Program "Youth of Ukraine" and other. The proclaimed laws, concepts, programs reveal the content of civic development of the individual: education of respect for the Constitution of Ukraine, State Symbols of Ukraine, human and civil rights and freedoms, self-esteem, responsibility before the law for their actions, conscious attitude to human and civil responsibilities; promotion of realization of individual rights for free formation of political and ideological beliefs; education of respect to the family, respect for folk traditions and customs, state and native language, national values of Ukrainian people and other peoples and nations (Yevzhenko, 2018).

Theoretical principles of formation of citizenship of an individual are covered in the Concept of Civic Education of an Individual of Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine (2000) where it is emphasized that citizenship is the integrated quality of a person which is formed in the course of education. It is also viewed that citizenship is a multifaceted concept and a fundamental spiritual and moral quality, ideological characteristics of an individual, which has cultural principles and is due by its state self-identification, awareness of belonging to a particular country. Civic attitude of a person to the established traditions in the state, laws, ensuring human rights, the virtues of civil society, readiness to perform duties and defend their own rights are related to this (Sukhomlynska, O. (2000). The Concept of Civic Education and Upbringing in Ukraine (2012) identifies innovative ways of civic education and the formation of a sense of citizenship of Ukrainian youth.

In academic literature, scholars have already addressed some issues related to the civic consciousness among young people and students in particular. The terms "citizenship" and "civic" were adopted by pedagogy from social sciences, where they define the manifestation of patriotism towards the state and its people. The Ukrainian Dictionary of Educational and Scientific Concepts and Terms provides the following definition: "Citizenship is a focus for the benefit of society, subordination of personal interests to civic ones, service to the Motherland; use of rights and fulfillment of obligations established by the laws of the state " (Vovk, 2001). In addition, citizenship is interpreted as the awareness and feeling of a person's own involvement in his/her country and his/her own responsibility for the state, family, etc. In particular, Ukrainian historian, public and political figure of Ukraine Mykhailo Hrushevsky noted: "I believe that the stage of Ukrainian life we have entered requires a high moral mood, a spartan sense of duty, a certain asceticism and even heroism from the Ukrainian people... Who wants to be a worthy citizen, he must extract from himself all the moral strength?" (Hrushevsky, 1921).

The issue of educating citizenship as the main component of the Ukrainians 'mentality dates back to the times of Kiyvan Rus ("Teaching children" by Vladimir Monomakh (Nimchuk, V. 2015)). The idea of civic education experienced its highest rise during the Zaporizhzhia Sich and the Hetman's Rule. In particular, G. Vashchenko in his

work "Educational ideal" (Vashchenko, 1994) determined the educational ideal that corresponds to the mental and natural properties of Ukrainian man. The scientist advises the forms and methods that should be used to form in a result of educational work an ideal person: a Ukrainian, a citizen, whose life goal will be to serve God and Ukraine. Instead, S. Rusova in her works argued that social life determines the course and direction of education of citizens, its tasks and content, and always expressed and defended the idea that school and education should function in full accordance with the characteristics and needs of their country and the nation (Rusova, 1997). According to M. Drahomanov, Ukrainians have a chance to win when universal principles are brought under national feelings: to seek a world truth that would be common to all nationalities (Drahomanov, 1970). Famous pedagogue V. Sukhomlinsky not only revealed the meaning of the concept of "citizenship", but also developed ways to form it on the basis of humanism, which believed that a real citizen should be first and foremost a real human personality (Sukhomlinsky, 1976). The educator considered citizenship in inseparable connection with humanism, which presupposes upbringing of a citizen-man, for whom personal and social as well as rights and responsibilities are inseparable, the one who loves his Motherland, gives all his strength to serve people. V. Sukhomlinsky organically combined citizenship and responsibility, defining citizenship as responsibility and duty which is the highest step in the spiritual life of a man, where he devotes himself to the service of the ideal (Sukhomlinsky, 1976).

One of the most important integrative features of citizenship, as well as the criterion of its formation is availability of a civic position. The core of the concept "civic position" is civic consciousness of an individual, which organically combined with moral feelings is expressed in action and activities aimed at establishing advanced views and ideals. Modern scientists M. Mykhailychenko (2008), N. Chernukha and T. Savrasova-Vyun (2014). substantiate civic consciousness as a broad educational concept aimed not only at the formation of future citizens' ideas about modern social problems and ways to solve them, but also to educate certain personal qualities, skills and attitudes necessary for a citizen of a democratic society (Voichun, 2020).

### 3. Results

A striking example of the formation of civic consciousness in a democratic society is the United States of America. According to V. Kovalchuk (2015) the purpose of civic education is the formation of the political culture of student youth as a necessary basis for the whole ideological culture of an individual. The specificity of political education lies in certain tasks aimed at forming a scientific worldview of political consent in a multicultural society, provided by the system of civic education. Legal education is an independent component of the comprehensive development of the individual in US schools and is carried out in close connection with political culture. Moral and legal norms formed in the team provide for the organization of life of each citizen in accordance with these norms and educate students in civic consciousness, interest in political life of their country, legal culture, and formation of independent critical thinking.

The main directions of the content of civic education in the United States are the formation of political culture, legal awareness, the culture of interethnic relations, motivation to work, awareness of moral values, ensuring an understanding of freedom. The idea of multicultural education aimed at preparing a citizen for life in a multinational environment has become especially relevant. This is due to the fact that the American system of civics focuses on the education of "citizens of the world", and is not limited to ethnocentrism (Kovalchuk, 2015).

American educators (Astin, 1997; Flanagan and Sherrod, 1998; Hart and Fegley, 1995; Youniss and Yates, 1997) are convinced that teaching and upbringing in a higher education institution changes the values, goals and views of students. Despite pluralism of American values, there are a number of civic values, the formation of which, according to US educators (Ehrlich, 2000; Youniss and Yates, 1997), colleges and universities need to pay close attention if they aim to build civic consciousness of students. These values include respect and tolerance for other people and different ways and lifestyles, respect for civil liberties and other key elements of democracy in the United States, as well as an interest in public policy and the promotion of positive social change. That is why today American educators are turning to rethinking philosophy and goals of upbringing to educate responsible citizens-leaders who will encourage lifelong education and development of collective capacity for a democratic and prosperous society. It should be noted that the Higher Education Research Institute in the United States includes civic values (e.g., helping others, promoting racial cohesion, etc.) as part of the recommended learning outcomes and personal development of students, which is then analyzed and evaluated in its rankings of American institutions of higher education. For example, the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (Civic Values Rubric, 2016) identifies seven core values that are the result of learning and personal development of students and which are

subject to evaluation: 1) Empathy; 2) Open-mindedness; 3) Civic Negotiation; 4) Diversity; 5) Human Dignity; 6) Social Justice; 7) Public Good.

J. Lott (2013), studying the formation of civic values of American students, notes that the educational process in college greatly contributes to the development of civic activity of young people. Students with established civic values, according to the researcher, are characterized by active citizenship, meaningful philosophy of life and leadership skills. According to J. Lott, the formation of civic values of students is positively influenced by training courses on cultural diversity and multicultural education. It also ensures the mutual exchange of socio-cultural experiences and gives harmony to relations between representatives of different cultures. The American educator notes that teaching community service and community-based activities for the benefit of one's community, including volunteering and participation in student government, are also associated with higher student civic values.

Ukrainian researcher S. Fedorenko (2015) studying the experience of introducing socially useful service training during general undergraduate training at a US high school, notes that this type of learning engages students in active participation in community life, fostering civic values and enabling them to observe how their activities are changing the lives of the community and themselves. At the same time students study the needs of their community that has a positive effect on their self-worth and opportunities for their own influence. In American colleges and universities teaching of community service, based on the principle of active involvement of all students in the implementation of socially significant activities and the integration of knowledge, aims to: apply in practice the acquired knowledge; a deeper understanding of democratic principles in the United States; development of leadership as an integrative characteristic of personality and ability of students to cooperate with different segments of the population; formation of citizenship.

In her study, Yu. Sharanova (2020) emphasizes that among the most important components of the educational process that ensure the successful formation of civic values of students. American educators (Astin and Astin, 2000) identify leadership training programs that guide students to active action on positive socio-cultural transformations, and community service training, which has a long history of development and has become widespread in the practice of American higher education institutions. These two types of training, according to A. Colby and W. Damon (1992), can lead to a gradual transformation of civic values and goals of a young person. Such a transformation can only take place in activity by interacting with others and reconsidering one's own values and beliefs (Colby et al., 2003). As a result, students begin to perform certain activities to achieve certain goals and gradually in the process of interacting with the situation and the people in its students' goals may change.

#### 4. Discussion

In her study L. Zarvanska (2013) argues that civic consciousness in the socio-historical plan is a product and consequence of socio-economic and spiritual-cultural processes. With the help of certain psychological mechanisms, such as traditions, customs, standards of behavior, etc., this phenomenon is not only preserved but also reproduced. State life permeates all manifestations of personality: perception, thinking, memory, emotions. As a result of these processes, civic consciousness is formed. A person with a high level of civic consciousness reflects and comprehends the facts of public life simultaneously in two dimensions: their influence on the nation-state and the meaning on personal life.

In practical terms, civic consciousness is an extremely effective tool that encourages and activates the state activity of the population. Therefore, the state formations of all nations have always been interested in the formation of this important psychological feature of their citizens. The question of understanding civic consciousness as a basic value orientation reflects the peculiarities of the development of modern society. Upbringing of patriotism, formation of civic qualities, respect for the individual and human rights, stable ideas about the world, society, state, basic social connections and relations, political and legal means of regulating public life are designed to prepare young professionals for responsible and meaningful life and work in democratic state governed by the rule of law (Boryshevsky, 2001).

In the process of civic education, citizenship is formed as an integral property of personality, the structural components of which are the system of civic traits and qualities of a citizen. For its part, each civic trait is a complex dynamic system that contains a set of legal, patriotic, national, moral-ethical and other qualities and manifestations of a personality. Taking it into account, the process of formation of civic personality traits is a process of complex civic education, which combines corresponding types of education of the same origin. The result of this process is the

formation of such basic civic traits as civic consciousness, a sense of civic dignity, civic duty and responsibility (Pechurkina-Shumeiko, 2001).

In their research Parissa J. Ballard, Alison K. Cohen, and Joshua Littenberg-Tobias (2016) discuss that public schools in the US are currently not well-equipped to provide meaningful civic experiences and many students leave school unprepared for civic life (Citizen, 2015). Schools largely prioritize subjects covered on standardized tests; civic learning is too often squeezed out (Godsay et al., 2012). Exacerbating the problem of too few civic opportunities, opportunities that do exist are unequally distributed across schools and neighborhoods, and race and socio-economic status are strongly predictive of civic preparedness and participation (Kahne and Middaugh, 2008; Levinson, 2010).

Youth today exhibit mixed interest in civic life. In general, youth show low levels of participation in formal political activities such as voting and campaigning; however, many seem interested and involved in “apolitical” forms of civic action such as volunteerism as well as activist forms of civic participation, such as #BlackLivesMatter (Galston, 2001; Citizen, 2015; Keeter et al., 2002; Syvertsen et al., 2011). Youth development researchers have shown that many youths are interested in social issues and that educators, both in and out of school, can capitalize on youth interests to inspire and prepare youth for effective civic participation (Ballard et al., 2015; Kahne and Sporte, 2008; Zeldin et al., 2005). Schools can play a role in closing civic development gaps by providing more civic opportunities, especially for those often left out of civic processes.

In our opinion, universities should become the flagship of the formation of civic consciousness of student youth. The most powerful in the process of transforming goals of student’s American educators C.A. Flanagan and L. R. Sherrod (1998) name general undergraduate training during the first two years of college. General training offers effective opportunities for moral and civic education and upbringing in higher education institutions, combining them with the interests, values and goals of novice students, and subsequently involving students in gaining experience that expands their life goals and responsibilities (Leskes and Miller, 2006). General undergraduate training in US higher education institutions provides students with the knowledge and practical skills in civic education that underpin upbringing of a responsible individual. This is largely ensured by civic engagement which means activities aimed at improving community life through application of acquired knowledge and values, skills, motivation to achieve goals, and which has personal and social significance, contributing to personal, community and / or public welfare (Ehrlich, 2000).

By the end of the second year of higher education in the United States, undergraduate students should have formed personal and social responsibility, which includes: civic responsibility and, accordingly, compliance with certain civic obligations; ability to express moral and ethical judgments, which generally contributes to development of a personal code of values and improvement of moral behavior; intercultural knowledge and ability to intercultural interaction, as well as natural need for lifelong learning, which is simultaneously manifested in a constant cognitive process (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2009). Thus, higher education in the United States can help students understand challenges of the modern world and realize their place in it; prepare them for integrated application of knowledge and skills in order to responsibly participate in public life (Sharanova, 2020).

Analysis of the US experience in civic education of students creates opportunities for implementation of educational projects in Ukraine to create standards of civic education, strengthening the role of public organizations in providing extracurricular education. Civic education enables young people to enter the space of civil society, to take a more active position among their peers, to form their skills and competencies to live in a civil democratic society. Today in Ukraine there is a need to build an effective system of civic education, which would unite various state and non-state institutions (Kovalchuk, 2018).

## 5. Conclusion

The sense of citizenship of Ukrainian students occupies an important place in state-building and has a strategic impact on the future of the country. A state striving for progress must promote participation of students of higher educational institutions in transformation process of society. Transition to civil society involves ensuring civic activism, rapid socialization, social stratification and real inclusion of students in socio-economic, political, spiritual and other processes, during which a sense of citizenship of the younger generation is formed, increasing interest in uniting youth efforts for public welfare.

Students is an active part of modern Ukrainian society, a carrier of intellectual potential, the main driving and determining factor of socio-economic progress. The prospects of the state-building process in Ukraine depends on the ability of students to be an active, capable and creative force.

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