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Peculiarities of the education system in China

Modern processes of internationalization of education create the need to study and analyze the features of education systems in different states. The high position of Chinese education, close proximity and cooperation with the PRC prompted us to consider the specific features of the Chinese education system. The Chinese education system, along with the world's leading educational trends, is also characterized by traditional cultural and spiritual guidelines. The need to reform the Chinese education system is dictated by the fact that the country is experiencing rapid economic growth and, therefore, needs highly qualified specialists, that is, high-quality and affordable education. The status and value of education among all segments of the population is rising. In addition to the education of children, educational institutions are also engaged in extensive educational work. In general, having adopted the system of Soviet pedagogy, since 1978, the PRC has been going through certain stages of reforming the education system, ranging from restoring the school education system and raising the status of a teacher to improving the quality and accessibility of education for ordinary people. In the article, we have reviewed the modern system of Chinese education, consisting of preschool education, school education and higher education. The study of the system and modern trends of Chinese education, as well as the education systems of other countries, makes it possible to enrich the educational system of the Republic of Kazakhstan, adopting the strengths and successful pedagogical experience.

Keywords: education system, China, educational institution, education reform, upbringing, preschool education, school education, higher education.

Introduction

The education system is closely connected with the socio-political and socio-economic processes taking place both within the country and at the international level. Globalization processes also have their influence on the education system: they lead to the internationalization of education. Of particular relevance to the study of the characteristics of the educational systems of other countries is the increase in international cooperation between countries. Moreover, there is a need to form an objective idea of the educational, historical, cultural, worldview potential of other states.

Close proximity and active cooperation with the People's Republic of China in various fields of activity prompted us to explore the features of the Chinese education system.

As a country of ancient civilization that has not lost cultural and spiritual landmarks in the process of numerous transformations, and a country that is among the top five countries in terms of the quality of education, China is of great interest in terms of education. The success of the school education system, the rapid development of the Chinese economy, the compliance of Chinese education with global standards, and the increase in funding for Chinese education have determined the relevance of studying the specifics of the Chinese education system. Thus, Chinese schoolchildren successfully completed the Program for International Student Assessment, PISA, receiving the highest possible scores [1; 6].

Rapid economic growth creates an urgent need for highly qualified specialists, and therefore great efforts and investments are made in the development of the Chinese education system. "Over the past 15 years, China has performed a rare miracle in the world in the development of education: it spent 3–4 % of the gross domestic product on national education, decided to make compulsory nine-year education among the population free of charge" [1; 11].

Results and Discussion

Let us start to reveal the features of the Chinese education system.

Chinese researcher Su Xiaohuan notes that the financing of the Chinese education system is affected by the pace of development of the national economy and social development [2].

Zhao Yong notes in his study that the Chinese education system is based on a set of standards and skills for successfully passing various kinds of exams, which, in turn, according to the researcher, deprives students of the development of creative abilities and individual development [3].

However, Chen Zhaoming notes that in modern China there is a gradual transition from “education for the sake of preparing students for the exam” to “education for the development of the personality of students” [4].

The multilevel and centralized system of education in China originates from the active cooperation between the USSR and China and the adoption of the experience of the Soviet pedagogical system [5, 34]. In general, the process of reforming the Chinese education system begins in the 80s of the last century and is conditionally divided into five stages.

1978–1985 — the first stage. At this stage, a reform plan was being prepared, which assumed an increase in the status of a teacher, the value of education. The tasks of the first stage were the restoration of the school education system, the approval of new directions, ideological and educational concepts [6, 78].

1985–1993 — the second stage. Educational institutions received greater autonomy, educational concepts, content, methods and forms of education were revised. The education system began to adapt to the demands of a new, market stage of the socio-economic development of the state [6, 78].

1993–1998 — the third stage. The need for compulsory nine-year education was recognized, spending on education was increasing, a non-state sector was being formed, and the focus was shifting towards improving the *suzhi-jiaoyu*, that is, the qualitative characteristics of the individual. The status of a teacher increased economically due to the “Law on Teachers of the People’s Republic of China” adopted during this period [6, 78].

1999–2009 — the fourth stage. The strategy of cultivating the qualitative characteristics of the modern Chinese citizen and his culture was promoted in every possible way. The tendencies of humanization and democratization, solving the problems of improving the quality of education, reforming the model of education of educators were becoming popular. The emphasis was on shaping the student’s personality, which has a high moral culture, self-discipline and is capable of becoming the successor to the cause of Chinese socialism. Organized in 2002, the 16th Congress of the CPC set a goal: to build by 2020 a “society of small welfare”, consisting of highly moral, cultured, and educated citizens [6, 79].

2010 — to the present — the fifth stage. The implementation of the course for raising the status of education among the common people, deepening educational reform under the slogan “human potential will ensure the power of the state” continues [6, 79].

“Obviously, the process of reforming the Chinese system of secondary and higher education at the beginning of the 21st century is associated with an actual understanding of the key world pedagogical ideas and practical experience of educational reforms in other countries, as well as a rethinking of previous miscalculations, shortcomings and errors in the planning and implementation of state educational policy” [7, 225].

At the present stage, the state policy of the PRC is aimed at building an effective market society, which is based on the intellectual, spiritual, and moral potential of the Chinese people. It is not so much the level of economic and technical progress that comes to the forefront, but the willingness of the individual to solve socio-economic problems for the benefit of man and, accordingly, the formation of the personality of a citizen who acquires planetary humanistic thinking.

However, despite modern reforms, China’s education retains its historical traditions in the context of education, focusing on ethics, moral perfection, and the principles of patriotism and humanity.

Since considering only the positive trends in China’s educational reforms will make our study insufficiently complete, we consider it necessary to dwell on the key problems of modern Chinese education. L.A. Novikova and L.A. Ushakova note the following ones:

- unequal access to education, educational infrastructure, and educational and methodological support for children from among migrants and children living in rural areas;
- uneven and insufficient funding of secondary education in various regions of the PRC;
- insufficient number of teachers;
- reduction in the number of secondary education institutions;
- decrease in the quality of knowledge due to the overcrowding of Chinese classes [7, 226].

The modern system of Chinese education is shown in Figure 1.

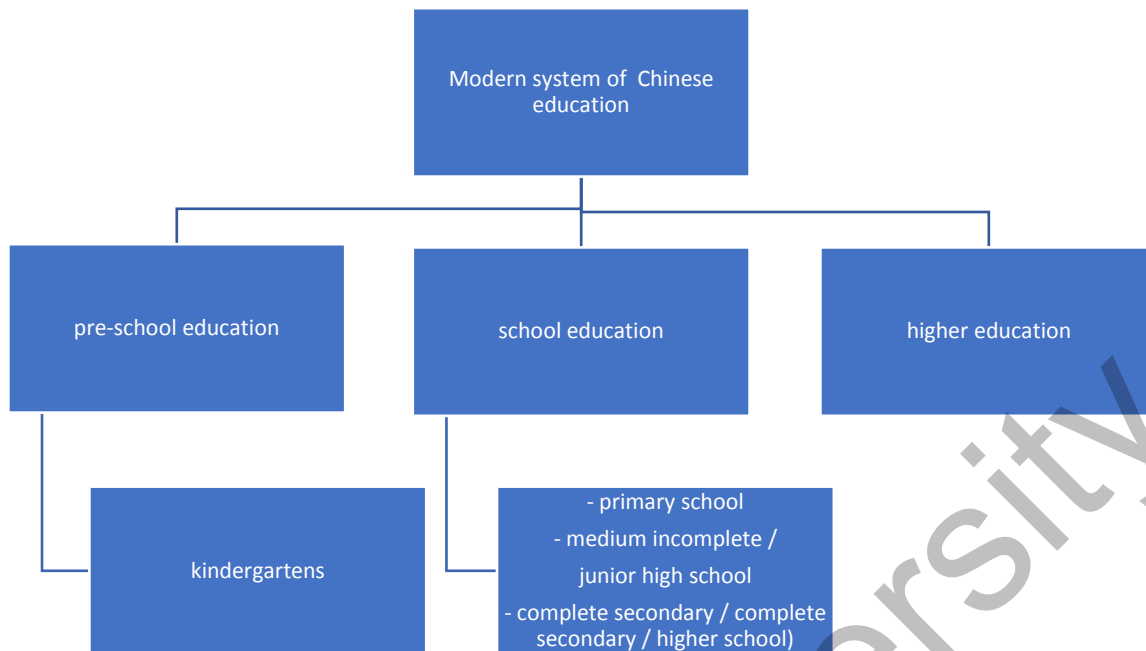


Figure 1. The modern system of Chinese education

Preschool education captures children 3–6 years old. The system of preschool education in China is aimed at the individual development of children and the disclosure of their talents.

Children get used to discipline and self-organization. A large role is given to the upbringing of the emotional-volitional sphere of the child's personality. Children learn to control themselves, their emotions and obey their elders [1, 66].

Since the late 1970s, the system of **school education** in China has been based on the system of Soviet pedagogy, but at present, it is based on global trends dictated by the tasks of socio-economic development.

After kindergarten, children go to primary school, the duration of which is 6 years. In elementary school, children learn their native language, mathematics, physical education, natural science, music, morality and ethics, receive the basics of literacy, physical and patriotic education, and basic knowledge about the world [1, 13].

At the age of 12, children go to an incomplete secondary school, where they study their native language, mathematics, a foreign language, physics, chemistry, computer science, geography, morality and ethics, and political literacy [1, 13]. Some provinces in China combine elementary and junior high schools; the total duration of education is 9 years.

At the end of junior high school, children take exams and move on to senior high school, aimed at major education. It prepares them for higher education and is paid. Children study the exact sciences, computer science, politics, and the state structure of their native country in depth.

However, after nine years of junior high school, children can enter a technical college or vocational school.

Thus, as a result of educational reforms in general secondary education in the PRC, advanced pedagogical concepts from other countries were adopted, which contributed to the development of interdisciplinary connections, the formation of student independence, and the importance of culture and science, taking into account the principles of variability, openness, and humanization. An increase in the share of art history disciplines is regulated at the state level [8].

C.M. Puzikova and Zh. Cao identify the following features of general secondary education in the PRC: the autonomy of educational institutions, functioning of the school in full-time mode, the formation of a healthy lifestyle for students, taking into account their inclinations and interests, the implementation of a competency-based approach in education, the assessment of personal and cultural and moral characteristics of students [6, 83].

The system of higher education in China is aimed at implementing the idea of nation-building and is characterized by the autonomy of higher education institutions in the choice of curricula and the content of

educational programs, the system for monitoring the knowledge gained by students [1, 6]. Emphasis is placed on programs of natural science and physics and mathematics, information and communication technologies, light and food industry, political, economic and legal sciences, finance, architecture, electronics, computer technology and mechanical engineering. Higher education institutions in China accept applicants with a complete secondary education. "Higher education in China includes universities, institutes, colleges, higher professional educational institutions" [1, 15]. For admission to higher educational institutions, applicants take exams in 4 subjects, including one general test.

Polytechnic universities provide educational programs in biological, physical, chemical, and oil technologies, etc. General universities in the humanities focus on the study of languages, history, literature, philosophy, law, economics, while general universities in the natural sciences focus on the study of mathematics, physics, chemistry, geography, and radio electronics.

Professional universities offer a three-year training program, after which graduates become mid-level specialists in industrial sectors. There are also four-year undergraduate programs offered to graduates of ordinary and special technical schools, and in the case of medical education, the study period is extended to 5 years. Postgraduate education consists of magistracy (2–3 years of study, age no more than 40 years) and doctoral studies (3 years of study, age no more than 45 years) both on a paid and budgetary basis [1, 16].

Conclusions

In conclusion, we can note that at the present stage, Chinese education is characterized by a transition to the level of advanced international standards: the structure and content of education are being revised, much attention is paid to improving the quality of teaching; education has become widespread. Moreover, educational institutions not only provide education but also educate students, form their basic values of the Chinese people, diligence and self-development.

The study of advanced trends and educational reforms in different countries, including China allows enriching the experience of reforming education in the Republic of Kazakhstan and finding the most effective way to develop Kazakhstani education.

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Қытайдағы білім беру жүйесінің ерекшеліктері

Білім беруді интернационалдандырудың заманауи процестері әртүрлі мемлекеттердегі білім беру жүйесінің ерекшеліктерін зерттеу және талдау қажеттілігін тудырады. Қытай білімінің жоғары позициясы, ҚХР-мен жақындық және ынтымақтастық бізді қытайлық білім беру жүйесінің өзіндік ерекшеліктерін қарастыруға итермеледі. Қытайдың білім беру жүйесі әлемдік жетекші білім беру үрдістерімен қатар дәстүрлі мәдени-рухани нұсқаулармен де ерекшеленеді. Қытайдың білім беру жүйесін реформалау қажеттілігі елдің қарқынды экономикалық өсімін бастан өткізіп жатқандығы, сондықтан жоғары білікті мамандарға, яғни жоғары сапалы және қолжетімді білімге мұқтаж екендігімен байланысты. Халықтың барлық топтары арасында білімнің мәртебесі мен құндылығы ар-

тып келеді. Білім ошақтарында бала тәрбиесімен қатар, тәрбие жұмысы да қолға алынған. Жалпы, кеңестік педагогика жүйесін қабылдаған ҚХР 1978 жылдан бері мектептегі білім беру жүйесін қалпына келтіру мен мұғалім мәртебесін көтеруден бастап қарапайым адамдар үшін білім берудің сапасы мен қолжетімділігін арттыруға дейінгі білім беру жүйесін реформалаудың белгілі кезеңдерін бастан өткерді. Мақалада мектепке дейінгі білім беру, мектептегі білім беру және жоғары оқу орындарынан тұратын қытайлық білім берудің заманауи жүйесі қарастырылған. Қытай білімінің жүйесі мен заманауи тенденцияларын, сондай-ақ басқа елдердің білім беру жүйелерін зерттеу Қазақстан Республикасының білім беру жүйесін байытуға, күшті және табысты педагогикалық тәжірибені қабылдауға мүмкіндік береді.

Кілт сөздер: білім беру жүйесі, Қытай, білім беру мекемесі, білім беру реформасы, тәрбие, мектепке дейінгі тәрбие, мектептегі білім, жоғары білім.

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Особенности системы образования в Китае

Современные процессы интернационализации образования создают необходимость в изучении и анализе особенностей систем образования в разных государствах. Высокое положение китайского образования, близкое соседство и сотрудничество с КНР побудили нас рассмотреть специфические особенности системы китайского образования. Для китайской системы образования, наряду с передовыми мировыми образовательными тенденциями, также характерны традиционные культурные и духовные ориентиры. Необходимость реформирования китайской системы образования продиктована тем, что страна испытывает бурный экономический рост и, следовательно, нуждается в высококвалифицированных специалистах, то есть в качественном и доступном образовании. Поднимается статус и ценность образования среди всех слоев населения. Помимо образования детей учебные заведения занимаются и обширной воспитательной работой. В целом, пережив систему советской педагогики, КНР с 1978 года по настоящий момент проходит определенные этапы реформирования системы образования, начиная от восстановления системы школьного образования и повышения статуса педагога до повышения качества и доступности образования для простых людей. В статье нами произведен обзор современной системы китайского образования, состоящей из дошкольного, школьного и высшего образования. Изучение системы и современных тенденций китайского образования, равно как и систем образования других стран, дает возможность обогатить образовательную систему Республики Казахстан, пережив сильные стороны и удачный педагогический опыт.

Ключевые слова: система образования, Китай, учебное заведение, реформирование образования, воспитание, дошкольное образование, школьное образование, высшее образование.

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