
UNIVERSITY CULTURAL ACTIVITY: EVALUATION NECESSITY

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The article analyzes the problems of evaluation of cultural activity of modern classical universities. It is emphasized that in the postmodern world this activity requires a triune symbiosis of science, education and culture, which should mutually enrich each other, i.e. it is proved that a new paradigm of university life is needed. The example of the activity of V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University demonstrates how the desire of a modern university to be not only a center of knowledge and professional education, but also a center of active creative cultural practices is manifested. It is noted that such practices are very diverse, that they differ in their focus, objectives and forms of work. It turns out that due to such diversity there is a need to subordinate these practices to the main goal and determine an integrated assessment of their effectiveness, development and improvement. It is demonstrated that the latest model of evaluation as an interactive, communicative, self-corrected process of evaluating the classical university cultural activities is best suited for the development of the university as a cultural hub. This model is described as contributing to a deeper and more systematic understanding and development of such activities. In this sense, evaluation is seen not so much as a tool for evaluating activities, but as a tool for its development and improvement in changing conditions, i.e. in emergent social contexts. It is argued that in the evaluatory process, in addition to communication, research methods to study and analyze the opinions, positions, proposals, critiques of all actors and beneficiaries of the cultural project should be actively used. As such, sociological surveys, expert assessments, focused group interviews are provided, which provide valuable information about the real state of the project, its strengths and weaknesses, current issues. Conclusions about the status of evaluation in modern educational practices are formulated. Potential directions of further researches of evaluative practices in educational contexts are described.

Keywords: universities, cultural practices, communication, evaluation.

Formulation of the problem. The problematic situation that determines the relevance of this article is that in the modern world universities, often claiming the status of a classical one, do not always correspond to the characteristics and criteria of such a status. An authentic university should be considered not only as a place for the production of scientific knowledge, the creation of new technologies

and the training of specialists on this basis. The university should also be a space for the storage and enrichment of spiritual values, be the center of intensive cultural activity.

This aspect of the university mission has increasingly receded into the background in recent years. The massification and commercialization of university education contributes to the positioning of the university

as a service organization offering “educational services” that are on a par with other services available on the market.

Such a changed environment for the existence of classical universities poses new tasks for them and throws up new challenges, one of which is a constant reflection of their own position and their own activities in such a highly competitive market. A possible tool for such reflection is evaluation, the identification of the possibilities of which in relation to the cultural activity of the university (on the example of V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University) has become the *goal* of our work.

Main material

And yet, let us designate a different view of the modern purpose of the university, its functions in the modern world.

The long history of classical universities has shown that higher education requires an organic connection with a systematic search for scientific truth. And, on the contrary, science cannot develop and solve its problems in isolation from education, from the mutually enriching intellectual communication of scientists and students. On this foundation the “Humboldt University” was built, which played a huge role in the formation of the modern world as we see it. However, culture both conceptually and practically dropped out of this dual interaction. Today, however, the relationship between classical universities and culture must be built in a different format [1].

The culture in post-modern world is marked by vast pluralism and fragmentation, growing axiological relativism, erosion of once stable criteria of morality and aesthetic perfection.

Therefore, authentic universities have to take responsibility not only for the fate of science and education but also for spiritual, moral and cultural development of their students and societies in general. They have to oppose cultural entropy. That fact stipulates the necessity for a tripartite symbiosis of science, education and culture as three mutually enriching and mutually impregnating creative sources, that are essential for a new paradigm of university life.

In line with this paradigm, Karazin University is striving to build up a single space of cognitive, educational and cultural activities. We have made an attempt to transform the university into the center of scientific cognition and professional education, but also into the

center of active creative and cultural practices. It became possible on the basis of extensive and multifaceted cultural infrastructure with the Museum and Exhibition Complex at its center.

It may seem that today, at the time of dominating computer technologies and mediaculture, university museums become absolutely excessive. We hold another opinion.

Firstly, at the time of “mass university”, tens of thousands of students, schoolchildren, attendants of particular programs are involved in the educational process within one educational establishment. Together, they make a big and self-sufficient audience of museum pedagogy.

Secondly, modern technologies themselves allow to transform museums into innovation centers combining in a genuine form education, science and culture as well as providing for the inheritance of cultural traditions and stimulating different forms of cultural creation.

Museum and Exhibition Complex of Karazin University consists of University History Museum, Museum of Nature, Museum of Archeology, Museum of Astronomy, Center of Modern Art “YermilovCenter”, Henryk Siemiradzki Art Gallery, Interactive Educational center “LandauCenter” as well as exhibition premises of Central Scientific Library.

University History Museum is nearly 50 years old. Its collections include about 20 thousand exhibits. The Museum is very active in virtual space; it has its own Facebook and Instagram pages whose information is updated on a practically daily basis.

Karazin University’s Museum of Nature, one of the oldest museums in Europe, is more than 2 hundred years old. Its collection amounts to more than 25 thousand exhibits. In the period between 2011 and 2020, more than 250 thousand visitors attended the Museum.

Museum of Archeology’s collection was started in 1907 and has been replenished on a regular basis since then. Today, it amounts up to 300 thousand artifacts.

Museum of Astronomy. The Museum gathered a vast collection of instruments and documents reflecting more than 200 years of astronomical research at Karazin University. The Museum provides a lot of activities for students and schoolchildren from Kharkiv and other Ukrainian cities helping them discover the mysteries of the Universe.

In addition to Museums, the University has a number of educational and exhibition centers and galleries. University Center of Modern Art “YermilovCenter” is a leading arts institution specializing in contemporary art. In addition to its exhibitions, the Center hosts quite a lot of cultural and educational events of different kinds dedicated to the history of avant-garde arts and design – master-classes, lectures, discussions, conferences, performances and film screening.

At the end of 2015, Henryk Siemiradzki Art Gallery was inaugurated. It bears the name of Henryk Siemiradzki – an outstanding artist and graduate of Kharkiv University who is known as the “last classic of the academic tradition”. The Gallery’s agenda also features film screenings, meetings with artists and talent nights.

Karazin University’s cultural infrastructure also includes Interactive Educational center “LandauCenter” whose aim is to popularize science and stimulate the revival of interest in science, especially among young people.

Central Scientific Library plays an important role in the cultural life of the University. Its exhibition spaces and reading halls are used for as many as 200 annual book reviews together with other types of events, such as exhibitions and presentations of new publications, literary works among them.

The University has a number of venues that are used for education together with leisure and recreation. Among them there is “Karazin Student Hall”. The Hall is used for trainings, workshops, master-classes, competitions, exhibitions, festivals and meetings with famous people.

Promoting intercultural communication and fostering the ideas of multiculturalism is another important area of the University’s cultural activities. Karazin University “Code of Values” states that “The University is open to intercultural dialogue, free exchange of information, publicity of scientific discussions, tolerant interaction with different groups, expansion of international scientific, educational and cultural cooperation” [2].

Almost 4,5 thousand foreign students from 93 countries study at the University. That is why, forming the culture of interethnic communication, cultivating tolerance towards representatives of other cultural traditions and maximal involving foreign students into the

cultural life of the University acquire supreme importance [3].

With the purpose of promoting the ideas of intercultural communication, the University hosts a number of international centers such as Confucius Institute, Ukrainian-Arab Academic Center, Ukrainian-African Academic Center, Ukrainian-Israeli Academic Center, Ukrainian-Indian Academic Center, Ukrainian-Italian Academic Center, Ukrainian-German Academic Center, Ukrainian-Polish Academic Center of Science and Culture, Ukrainian-Turkish Center, Ukrainian-Francophone Academic Center, etc. In addition to their academic functions, these centers organize all kinds of cultural events and help foreign students learn new cultural traditions.

We paid so much attention to the description of numerous cultural practices in order to demonstrate how varied they are in their functions, tasks and forms. At the same time, we feel the necessity to overcome this fragmentation, to subjugate different cultural practices to a single purpose, to evaluate their efficiency and to give prospects of their evolution and improvement.

The most suitable tool for solving these problems is evaluation. The history of evaluation as a special research practice goes back about a hundred years. Evaluation studies are used in democratic social systems, where free critical reflection is possible about projects being implemented in various spheres of public activity. One of the shortest definitions of evaluation belongs to H. Simons: «Evaluation is an invitation to development» [4]. This definition emphasizes two most important features of evaluation: a) voluntariness of participation, unacceptability of coercion; b) development, dynamics, interactivity and prospectiveness, which entails an element of socialization [5, 6]. Evaluation has gone through several phases of its evolution and its corresponding comprehension. Today, the emphasis is on the fourth generation of evaluation practices. From measurement, description, judgment, the evaluation came to a process based on the deep involvement of both the beneficiaries and all actors involved in the project (program) [7].

With regard to the cultural activity of the university, the most effective is the model of developmental evaluation proposed by M.Q. Patton [8, 9] and interpreted in relation to education by S. Jaskula [10, 11, 12]. In Ukrainian sociology, the same problems are

raised by a number of researchers, in particular, by V. Evtukh, M. Sachok, S. Zdragat and others [13; 14; 15].

Evaluation is a necessary instrument of integrating cultural activity within a university. Indeed, by allocating human, material and financial resources for the development of different components of cultural infrastructure we pursue the main task – to ensure university's integration into a new triune paradigm of mutual enrichment of science, education and culture.

We can register the number of exhibitions, excursions and other events, the number of visitors and participants of different cultural venues, but these calculations do not provide a possibility to evaluate the integral efficiency of all the subjects of cultural activity, to see the prospects and ways of its improvement, its conformity with the fundamental values of university way of living.

It is obvious, that in case of designing the project of a university as a cultural hub, we should apply the newest model of evaluation – as interactive, communicative, self-correcting process of evaluating activity that contributes to its deeper and more systemic comprehension and development.

This kind of process implies, first of all, active communication of all the different and relatively autonomous subjects of a university's cultural life, joint discussion of its essence, tasks and values. Besides, it requires systematic cooperation with potential beneficiaries of cultural activities, students in the first place. For this purpose, it is necessary to create permanent communicative spaces of "discourse, dialogue and negotiation" [8] where evaluation communication can be continuous and democratic which implies equal participation of all the involved parties in the process of determining its advantages and disadvantages, its axiological interpretation and in the search for the most efficient forms of interaction and collaboration as well as in producing managerial solutions.

In this case, evaluation appears not as an instrument of estimation this activity, but as an instrument of its progress and improvement in the ever-changing social context. To decide this issue evaluation process should actively involve research methods of analyzing opinions, positions, proposals and criticism from all the actors and beneficiaries of a particular

cultural project. These methods include public opinion polls, expert estimations, focus group interviews that allow to obtain valuable information as to the project's real state, its strong and weak sides, its pressing problems.

There is no doubt that general principles cannot substitute specific evaluation techniques that are vast and varied and depend on the character of the actors' occupations, their potential and other relevant factors. That is why, we need a thorough and professional design of an evaluation program that would take into account its specific organizational forms and research tasks.

Conclusions

Thus, a modern university, in search of opportunities to comply with the status of a classical one, differentiates its activities, paying more and more attention to various cultural activities and institutions, involving an increasing number of various actors and beneficiaries. However, the complication of these types of activities, as well as the complication of the environment for their implementation, leads to an exacerbation of the need for a scientifically grounded and multifaceted process of (self)assessment and reflection. Evaluation can become one of the most significant tools for such practices, the best practices for which are already available in educational institutions and are in the phase of rapid growth. Universities that ignore these opportunities run the risk of falling behind in the increasingly competitive educational market. The exponential dynamics of social changes, their rapidity and unpredictability will require universities to make independent efforts to monitor the environment, take into account its modification and their own responses to these challenges.

That is why the topic of evolution in education, as well as its possibilities in the analysis and development of cultural activities of the university, needs further development on the part of sociologists. Possible stakeholders and rules of competition in the educational services market, the experience of universities in different countries and different profiles in adapting to new challenges and the results of the implementation of various cultural and educational programs - all this can be an object of evaluation actions, and, accordingly, an object of further sociological analysis of such actions.

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УНІВЕРСИТЕТСЬКІ КУЛЬТУРНІ ПРАКТИКИ: ПРОБЛЕМИ ЕВАЛЮАЦІЇ

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У статті аналізуються проблеми евалюації культурної діяльності сучасних класичних університетів. Підкреслюється, що у постмодерному світі ця діяльність потребує триєдиного симбіозу науки, освіти і культури, які мають взаємно збагачувати і запліднювати одне одного, тобто доводиться, що потрібна нова парадигма університетського життя. На прикладі діяльності Харківського національного університету імені В. Н. Каразіна демонструється, яким чином проявляється прагнення сучасного університету бути не тільки центром пізнання і професійної освіти, але й центром активних творчих культурних практик. Зазначається, що такі практики є дуже різномірними, такими, що відрізняються за своєю спрямованістю, завданням і формам роботи. Доводиться, що через таку різномірність виникає потреба підпорядкування цих практик головній меті та визначення інтегральної оцінки їхньої ефективності, розвитку і вдосконалення. Демонструється, що для розвитку університету як культурного хабу найкраще підходить новітня модель евалюації як інтерактивного, комунікативного, самокоригованого процесу оцінки культурної діяльності класичного університету. Ця модель описується як така, що сприяє більш глибокому і більш системному розумінню і розвитку даної діяльності. Евалюація у цьому сенсі розглядається не стільки як інструмент оцінки діяльності, скільки як інструмент її розвитку і вдосконалення в умовах, що змінюються, тобто в емерджентних соціальних контекстах. Стверджується, що в евалюаційному процесі, окрім комунікації, слід активно використовувати дослідницькі методи вивчення і аналізу думок, позицій, пропозицій, критики всіх акторів і бенефіціарів культурного проекту. В якості таких пропонуються соціологічні опитування, експертні оцінки, фокусовані групові інтерв'ю, що дозволяють отримати цінну інформацію про реальний стан проекту, його сильні і слабкі сторони, актуальні проблеми. Формулюються висновки про статус евалюації в сучасних освітніх практиках. Описуються потенційні напрямки подальшого дослідження евалюаційних практик в освітніх контекстах.

Ключові слова: *університети, культурні практики, комунікація, евалюація.*

УНИВЕРСИТЕТСКИЕ КУЛЬТУРНЫЕ ПРАКТИКИ: ПРОБЛЕМЫ ЕВАЛЮАЦИИ

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В статье анализируются проблемы эвалюации культурной деятельности современных классических университетов. Подчеркивается, что в постмодерном мире эта деятельность требует триединого симбиоза науки, образования и культуры, которые должны взаимно обогащать и оплодотворять друг друга, то есть доказывається, что нужна новая парадигма университетской жизни. На примере Харьковского национального университета имени В. Н. Каразина демонстрируется, каким образом проявляется стремление современного университета быть не только центром познания и профессионального образования, но и центром активных творческих культурных практик. Отмечается, что такие практики являются очень разнородными, отличающимися по своей направленности, задачам и формам работы. Доказывается, что из-за такой разнородности возникает потребность подчинения этих практик главной цели и определения интегральной оценки их эффективности, развития и совершенствования. Демонстрируется, что для развития университета как культурного

хаба в наибольшей мере подходит новая модель эвалюации как интерактивного, коммуникативного, самокорректирующегося процесса оценки культурной деятельности классического университета. Эта модель описывается как способствующая более глубокому и более системному пониманию и развитию данной деятельности. Эвалюация в этом смысле рассматривается не столько как инструмент оценки деятельности, сколько как инструмент ее развития и совершенствования в изменяющихся условиях, то есть в эмерджентных социальных контекстах. Утверждается, что в эвалюационном процессе, кроме коммуникации, следует активно использовать исследовательские методы изучения и анализа мнений, позиций, предложений, критики всех акторов и бенефициаров культурного проекта. В качестве таковых предлагаются социологические опросы, экспертные оценки, фокусированные групповые интервью, позволяющие получить ценную информацию о реальном состоянии проекта, его сильных и слабых сторонах, актуальных проблемах. Формулируются выводы о статусе эвалюации в современных образовательных практиках. Описываются потенциальные направления дальнейшего исследования эвалюативных практик в образовательных контекстах.

Ключевые слова: *университеты, культурные практики, коммуникация, эвалюации.*