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Pedagogical conditions of training future managers for social interaction as a specific type of social responsibility

Introduction

Under the modern conditions, the society imposes new demands on social interaction between business organizations and itself. The joint efforts of businesses, government bodies and society are to solve the problems of social, economic and environmental spheres, such as: improving the quality of living standards by creating jobs; providing social security to employees; helping the poor, the disabled, orphans and the homeless; reducing environmental pollution; preserving cultural and historical heritage; developing social infrastructure and the like ones. The tool to regulate the social interaction between the society and businesses is social responsibility of all levels: individual, corporate (group), state and global.

Nevertheless, the Ukrainians show rather low motivation to responsibility, unreadiness to solve problems in any sphere of human activity, including professional or private, denial to take on responsibility in the decision-making. The main cause of such a situation is the crisis of values in the Ukrainian society due to the prevalence of the concept of “economic rights” over the concept of “social rights” and “socially responsible person”, political instability, corruption, as well as the chase for quick profits without taking into account the consequences of economic activity.

Managers are the leading element in the social interaction “businesses–society”. On the one hand, they bear the burden of social responsibility, on the other, they have to sacrifice their individual values to meet the requirements of their companies and company’s owners and make professional decisions that conflict their personal ones. It may lead to “moral schizophrenia” (Bandura, 1997, p. 25; Goodpaster, 2007), because managers lack knowledge of social problems, skills of a decision-maker, and experience in this field.

The Ukrainian higher professional educational institutions still underestimate the impact of managers’ attribute of social responsibility on their professional success and the outcomes of social interaction, as well as the welfare of the Ukrainian society. Consequently, future managers are not competent to cope with social problems and take on the role of a decision-maker within a business context.

Pedagogical conditions

The academic search results about this issue show that the concept of attribute of social responsibility is not unified. The modern concepts of social responsibility are the following: a specific type of social interaction that arises in the system of social relations and characterizes the person, his/her world-view, values, mode of existence; an internal individual attribute, complex social phenomenon which includes awareness of the need to act in accordance with social demands and social values, awareness of one's social role, self-criticism and permanent control of one's own actions, a willingness to be liable for one's deeds and socially important activities.

Lenk's construct of responsibility is six-component model asking: who (agent of responsibility) is attributed responsibility for what (object of responsibility), in view of whom (addressee) by whom (judging instance) in relation to what (normative) criteria and in what realm (of responsibility or action)? (Lenk, 1992).

Social responsibility is also referred to as a social interaction, it has the following components: the agent of social responsibility (individual, group, nation, humanity); the object of social responsibility is a part of the world with the agent interacts (social agent-object-agent relations in different spheres of human activity: political, economic, spiritual, cultural, environmental, educational, scientific and technological responsibility, responsibility in family and domestic relations); the subject of social responsibility is a particular object of some social relations (for example, the agent's activity is directed at individual or corporate responsibility in economic relations etc.).

Social responsibility as a social interaction in the business context is a mutual activity of at least two agents. The system-making center of any mutual activity are axiological dominants represented by the agents' common social or professional values. Hence, willingness and preparedness for a social interaction is determined by one's values affecting his/her world-view and cultivation of personal or professional attributes, the attribute of social responsibility as well.

According to Oyserman, values are internalized social representations or moral beliefs that people appeal to as the ultimate rationale for their actions (Merrill, 2009). Schwartz characterizes values as concepts or beliefs tied inextricably to emotions; motivational implications for a person's actions; abstracted goals that influence specific situations and actions; guidelines to evaluate the choice of one's behavior, actions, situations; values are ordered by relative importance and make up a system of an individual world-view and evaluative hierarchy (Rotter, 1966).

Scientists emphasize that the social responsibility of the individual, which affects his/her behavior should be considered in the particular context, because social responsibility is always connected with the existing norms or rules. It's the agent's choice whether to ignore, obey or violate them. Nevertheless, ignorance of the rules or norms does not exempt the agent of responsibility, so the agent is liable for his/her actions when violations have occurred, thus, the agent should be aware

of possible consequences of his/her actions and act upon the following scheme: “context–norm/rule–behavior”.

We can assume that the attribute of social responsibility exercised by managers in any social interaction can be examined in the relationship: “context–norm/rule–value–behavior”, where the context is the particular situation of professional manager’s activity (for example, concluding contracts with a business partner to produce cheap but health-harmful packaging for baby foods); the rule/norm is a requirement under which the individual performs actions to achieve specific goals (e.g. maximize company’s profits by using cheap but health-harmful packaging); the value is the desirable, trans-situational goal that serves as a guiding principle in one’s life which directs one in his/her decisions, choices, and behavior, as well as regulate and modify relationships between individuals, organizations and societies in social interaction (e.g. Truth or Profit); behavior is verbal and non-verbal behavior of the agent of responsibility based on his/her awareness of the possible positive or negative effects of one’s actions and responsibility to the society in the future (e.g. breach of the contract or other alternatives).

The essence of the social responsibility phenomenon is its duality and dialectical unity of contradictions. Currently, scientists distinguish two aspects of social responsibility, but because of the variability of approaches to the concept of “social responsibility” they do not adhere to a common terminology: voluntary–compulsory, personal–social, prospective–retrospective, and so on.

The voluntary aspect, in our opinion, demonstrates the agent’s will activity and one’s motivation for social interaction within the business context. The major modern concepts of the voluntary aspect of social responsibility are the following: the internal regulation of human behavior on stable rules of human coexistence, moral norms; personal inner sense of one’s obligations and self-evaluation of their performance; individual reactions (system of responses) to the demands of the society; voluntary obligation to follow the requirements of social norms.

Voluntary social responsibility as a social interaction is primarily the result of individual spiritual development and determines the hierarchy of the individual values, through which social relations between agents of mutual activity become reciprocal and systemic. From philosophic standpoint, the core individual values are Truth, Goodness, Beauty. We assume that future managers should be oriented on Goodness as a core individual value, rather than focus on the corporate responsibility to regulate managers’ social interactions, as future managers’ professional success, social involvement and achievement are products, at least in part, of managers’ professional self-concept. The orientation on the Goodness value will foster in students (future managers) such moral attributes as kindness, honesty, justice, tolerance, tactfulness, diligence, empathy, responsibility etc. Thus, future managers should be trained to solve problems, make decisions and act in difficult professional situations upon the following scheme: “context–norm/rule–the Goodness value–behavior/decision”. We consider it as an algorithm of their future activity in the

situations of social interaction. One of pedagogical conditions is to train students to act upon the aforementioned scheme.

Compulsory social responsibility indicates the penalties, sanctions, restrictions etc., that the society imposes on the individual for his/her negative behavior in the past, for example: external regulation of human behavior that is retrospective in nature; social accountability and sanctions for actions that conflict the public interest; societal evaluation of individual actions and societal response to them; the public reaction to the actions of man; societal responses to the demands of the individual.

The discipline of psychology offers psychological dimensions to measure the concept of “responsibility” through the concept of “self-efficacy” and “locus of control”.

Julian B. Rotter describes locus of control as the individual’s beliefs in forces to whom he/she accredits his or her performance accomplishments or failures: internal locus of control is the individual’s conviction that the event is contingent upon one’s own behavior or his/her own relatively permanent characteristics. It means that a person has control over his or her successes and failures, and therefore is able to exert influence on his/her choices and environment; and external locus of control, which is the conviction that a person’s decisions and actions are not entirely contingent upon his/her action, but under the control of powerful others or surrounding forces, such as luck, chance, fate (Oyserman, 2001).

Internal locus of control indicates that preparedness of future managers to control the situation and to make decisions is the basis for their professional self-concept. External locus of control indicates one’s passive attitude to life, assurance that control over life depends on external factors. Thus, one of pedagogical conditions of training students (future managers) for social responsibility as a social interaction is cultivating in them the internal locus of control, as a criterion of the attribute of social responsibility and a self-assessment criterion of their professional self-concept (Oyserman, 2001).

Bandura conceptualized “self-efficacy” as “people’s beliefs in their capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to exercise control over events in their lives”. According to Bandura, self-efficacy has impact on the four major psychological processes of the agent of responsibility: the cognitive (construction and rehearsal of the anticipatory scenarios); motivational (goal-setting, steadfastness, failure resilience), affective (control of emotional or physiological reactions), and selection processes (the ability to handle difficult situations and to choose alternatives). Self-efficacy is dynamic as it changes over time with new information and experience due to four environmental factors: the agent’s prior performance or his/her performance attainment; his/her observation of performance of others, social comparison and modeling others’ behavior; social persuasion – verbal persuasion from a trusted other, especially, following a performance accomplishment; and physiological arousal, one’s emotional state at the time of appraisal that affects one’s confidence in his or her abilities (Bandura, 1997).

The aforementioned factors are, theoretically, universal and can be applied to every training task, therefore, they can be practiced in training future managers for social interaction. One of pedagogical conditions of training students – future managers – for social responsibility as a social interaction is problem-based learning. Merrill points out five phases of learning process: 1. Learners engage in solving real-life problems; 2. Existing knowledge is activated as a foundation for new knowledge; 3. New knowledge is demonstrated to the learner; 4. New knowledge is applied by the learner; 5. New knowledge is integrated in the learner's world (Lenk, Maring, 1993; Schwartz, 1992).

According to Merrill (2009), universal methods of instruction are based on problem-centeredness, activation, demonstration, application, and integration. The “first principles of instruction” facilitate learning and serve as criteria to evaluate students' progress appropriate to each principle: 1. The problem-centered principle demonstrates the degree of student's self-efficacy and locus of control in solving the problem; 2. The activation principle indicates student's level of relevant prior knowledge or experience; 3. The demonstration principle points out student's ability to compare alternative representations of the problem; 4. The application principle shows student's ability to self-management in applying newly acquired knowledge or skill to solve problems; 5. The integration principle demonstrates student's knowledge and awareness of a problem, his/her ability to handle the probable problems (Lenk, Maring, 1993).

Conclusions

Training future managers for a social interaction as social responsibility should be grounded on the following pedagogical conditions:

1. Students should be trained to act in difficult professional situations upon the following algorithm: “context–norm/rule–the Goodness value–behavior/decision”.
2. Cultivating in students the internal locus of control as a criterion of the attribute of social responsibility will provide them with a self-assessment criterion of their professional self-concept.
3. Training students – future managers – for social responsibility as a social interaction is problem-based learning. The criteria of selection of a problem for training students (future managers) for social interactions should be based on four environmental sources of self-efficacy.

The mini-research develops questions for further research of educational issues, such as student and teacher interaction, student's responsibility as a prerequisite for student's high or low achievement and formation of his/her own professional self-concept.

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Abstract

The mini-research deals with the development of pedagogical conditions of training managers for social responsibility as one of managers' professional competence. The analysis of the scientific research in this field has shown that the term "social responsibility" is mostly conceptualized as an individual's sense of internal obligation to the society, but manager's social responsibility in business context is attributed by and to other people: company's owners, consumers, partners, personnel, the public authorities, other public institutions. The existing research has identified "social responsibility" as a specific type of social interaction, a manager's capacity to interact with other people and foresee the consequences of a social interaction, be liable for them.

Key words: pedagogical conditions, social responsibility, future managers, training

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