The influence of performance quality evaluation in general education schools on the recognition of the educational values

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Abstract
One of the main conditions for quality assurance in education is the recognition and internalisation of shared values. Education based on shared values creates the preconditions for achieving educational goals and contributing to the creation of social and economic well-being of society. Lithuanian education documents establish important values on which the education process should be based. However, in practice, general education schools in Lithuania face difficulties in implementing the provisions. To promote continuous quality management in general education schools in Lithuania, since 2007, the processes for evaluating the performance quality have been introduced: self-evaluation and external evaluation. These processes are based on collegial interaction and should contribute to positive, value-based changes in the quality of education. The study’s purpose was to reveal the attitude of educators to the influence of evaluation processes on the recognition of educational values in practice. The system of educational values and their evaluation were analysed based on the normative documents content analysis and the attitude of educators to educational values and their practical implementation, analysed by the questionnaire method. Studies showed that evaluation contributes to the recognition of educational values in practice, but the reliability factors of evaluation have little influence on this.

Keywords
Educational values, quality of education, evaluation process, general education, performance quality

Introduction
In the age of rapid technological and economic changes, the convergence of culture and politics, global human social development, and the desire for social progress, the greatest value is the person.

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The educational system and general education school have a great influence on personality. And the values that underpin education become especially important in this process. Values shape our lives, influence our actions, and express our core beliefs within and beyond national boundaries and cultural contexts. Values continue to play an important role in education. Professional training of teachers requires more than performing a contract. It is personal and professional values that underlie pedagogy. Secondary school teachers are expected to serve as role models and display positive qualities and attitudes towards the changing learning environment. Professional practice is currently defined by competence models that correspond to values and attitudes as rules of ‘correct behaviour or process’ with little understanding of human motivation or behaviour. Teachers play a key role in modelling values in an ever-changing global world, where socio-political unrest, moral relativism, and ethnic and cultural diversity are changing the former national characteristics.

The specific values discussed in pedagogical theories coincided with the goals that are usually pursued. These were things like utility, culture, information, preparation for social efficiency, mental discipline or power, etc. The aspect of these goals that made them valuable was addressed in the authors’ analysis of the nature of interest, and there was no difference between talking about art as an interest or concern and considering it as a value. However, it so happens that the discussion of values usually focuses on the consideration of the various purposes that specific subjects of the curriculum serve. This was part of an attempt to justify these subjects by pointing out the considerable contribution to life that has been made by studying them. Thus, a detailed discussion of educational values provided an opportunity to revise the previous discussion of goals and interests, on the one hand, and the curriculum, on the other hand, linking them to each other.

The influence of values on the moral maturity of a person was emphasised by many scientists (Campbell & Christopher, 1996; Krebs & Denton, 2005; Covey, 2014). Values determine relationships with other people, oneself, and the environment and influence the formation of personality, which is a long, continuous process. ‘Our social reality is based on our values – everyone constructs a social reality. It is constructed in its own way and is greatly influenced by human-recognised values. The designed human reality becomes their reality, their being and determines their behaviour’ (Bruzgelevičienė, 2016). An important challenge in the education system is a common understanding of values, their recognition, internationalisation and application in practice. According to B. Bitinas (2013), a person gets to know different values, but their life is based on a value system that is acceptable to them.

Values that are agreed upon and accepted in the education system, their formation in the educational process is a fundamental prerequisite for ensuring the quality of education. Values of Lithuanian education that are relevant for this period are named and defined in the State Education Strategy for the years of 2013–2022 (2014). Therefore, for a successful education based on agreed values, these values must first be recognised and personally acceptable to educators. The problem is in the recognition of educational values and their manifestation in the practice of general education schools in Lithuania.

Values are an indispensable and permanent element of culture, although dynamically changing throughout history. Both the theory of education (the theory of education and upbringing) and educational practice are permeated with values. The Lithuanian National Education Strategy for the period from 2013 to 2022 (2014) defined 16 values that were considered the most important at this stage and which education at all levels should be based on. These are primarily values focused on non-material reality and going beyond the world of the individual, beyond focusing on oneself, strictly connected with the humanistic vision of a human being, an intellectual with broad thought horizons, a creative individual, one for whom interpersonal relationships are not based on personal criteria. profit and loss, but they are based on kindness, cooperation and mutual assistance;
Moreover, it is characterised by a striving not to satisfy one’s own, mainly material and sensual needs, but to care for oneself and others, for relationships of friendship and love, and definitely more in terms of the quality of existence than of possession.

The value principle of humanism is fundamental in Lithuanian education documents. When the independence of Lithuania was restored in 1989, it was announced that: ‘The entire education system from bottom to top – vertically, as well as through all types and educational institutions horizontally – should be imbued with the spirit of humanism’ (National school. The concept of…, 1989). Humanism always played an important role in the life of both an individual and society as a whole and occupied an important place in the system of universal human values. The ideas of humanism determined the attitude of a person to various phenomena associated with his existence. They motivated his activity, direct and justify it. Therefore, the problem of the content of the ideas of humanism was not of a purely academic nature (National school. The concept of…, 1989). Practice showed that humanistic principles and ideals had stood the test of time, had proven their value and universality. However, their frequent declaration sometimes led to a distortion in the minds of people of humanistic ideas, their devaluation.

Arguing about humanism as spiritual education, it is necessary, first of all, to understand the essence of this concept. The term ‘humanism’ came from the Latin ‘humanitas’, used in the 1st century BC by the famous Roman philosopher and orator Cicero (106–43 BC). For him, humanitas is the upbringing and education of a person, contributing to his elevation (Poole, 2019). Humanism was usually identified with humanity, philanthropy. An analysis of philosophical and fictional literature led to the conclusion that foreign and domestic thinkers gave different interpretations of humanism. In different historical situations, this concept is filled with specific content arising from the existing socio-cultural conditions. Hence, it could be concluded that humanism as a spiritual phenomenon is a historically conditioned system of ideas. Humanism in the broad sense of the word was usually defined as a system of views that recognised the value of a person as an individual, his right to freedom, happiness, development and manifestation of his abilities, considers the good of a person as a criterion for assessing social institutions, and the principles of justice, equality, humanity as the desired norm of relations between people (Poole, 2019). The principle of humanism presupposed an attitude towards a person as a supreme value, respect for the dignity of each person, their right to life, free development, the realisation of their abilities and striving for happiness, recognition of all fundamental human rights, affirms the welfare of the individual as the highest criterion for evaluating any social activity. So, the study aim was to reveal the attitude of educators to the influence of the processes of assessing school performance on the recognition and acceptance of educational values in practice.

Materials and methods

For a theoretical study of the problem, an analysis of scientific literature and documents were chosen; for an empirical study, a quantitative research method (a questionnaire) was chosen. The survey aim was to find out the attitude of teachers to the influence of the processes of assessing school performance on the recognition and acceptance of educational values in practice so that in the future it will be possible to build a new methodology for teaching children in general education schools. Analysis of scientific literature and documents allows us to state that there is no single approach to creating a model of competencies in modern psychological and pedagogical research. Analysis of the scientific literature in the study performs the following functions: identifies the achievements of science, its achievements and shortcomings; helps to identify the main trends in the views of experts on the problem because of what has already been done in science; allows to
determine the relevance, the level of elaboration of the problem studied by the researcher; provides material for the choice of aspects and directions of research of its purpose and tasks, and also theoretical constructions; ensures the reliability of the conclusions and results of the search for the applicant, the connection of his concept with the general development of the theory (Cano, 2020). The evaluation process, based on the constructivist interaction of the participants, promoted the recognition of the values declared by the state in the practice of educators. The purpose of testing the hypothesis was to find out to what extent the evaluation process led to the recognition in practice of each value identified in the State Education Strategy for the years of 2013–2022 (2014) in the practice of educators.

The questionnaire consisted of six question blocks with three or five levels of the Likert scale, three multiple-choice questions, and three open-ended questions. The reliability (or validity) of the questionnaire blocks was determined using the Social Science Statistics Package (SPSS 23) for Windows computer program by measuring the Cronbach-alpha criterion. For all six sets of questions, the Cronbach-alpha value ranged from 0.863 to 0.976, which indicates the questioned validity. The value of the Cronbach-alpha block was analysed in this article (‘Recognising Value Principles’) was 0.955.

The research sample was formed by a combination of targeted and random selection principles. The choice of schools was made on a purposeful basis; all schools were included in which, during the period from 2007 to 2018, the processes of external evaluation of school performance were carried out. According to the data of the Lithuanian Education Management Information System (2020), as of 1 September 2020, there were 716 such schools, with 25,598 pedagogical staff employed. The questionnaire was provided to all educators working in schools. The sample was calculated using Paniott’s formula for 394 respondents. 668 respondents took part in the survey, which indicates the fulfilment of the sample requirements. This study followed the principles of anonymity and confidentiality (Piper & Simens, 2005).

The largest proportion of respondents were educators working in towns – 371 (55.5%) respondents; school educators in district centres made up 116 (17.4%) respondents; 91 (13.6%) respondents work in schools in cities and 90 (13.5%) respondents work in rural schools. 277 (41.5%) respondents work in gymnasiums, 183 (27.4%) in basic schools, 158 (23.7%) in progymnasiums, 24 (3.6%) in primary schools, 3 (0.4%) in vocational schools and adult learning centres, and 23 (3.4%) educators of other types of schools. Distribution of respondents by age groups: 40 (6%) respondents aged from 23 to 35 years of age; 145 (21.7%) respondents aged from 36 to 45; the largest share is 280 (41.9%) respondents aged from 46 to 55 years of age; 192 (28.7%) respondents aged from 56 to 65 years of age and 11 (1.6%) over 66 years old. The largest share of respondents is 453 (67.8%) are teachers; 109 (16.3%) deputy directors or heads of departments, 69 (10.3%) is school leaders (principals), 29 (4.3%) child support specialists, and 8 (1.2%) – another pedagogical staff. The majority of respondents is 576 (86.2%), they did not and never have the experience of working as an external evaluator, 76 (11.4%) are certified, practicing external evaluators, 16 (2.4%) in the past participated in external evaluation processes.

The data were summarised and presented graphically (Vogt, 2005). The results were analysed using statistical, comparative and content analysis methods. Statistical analyses were performed using the IBM SPSS Statistics 23.

Results and discussion

In modern society, when values are changing rapidly, their importance, acceptability and obligation for all people are often questioned (Bauman, 2007) (Figure 1).
Human is a social being, they live, work, study in a society where there is a hierarchical system. The structure of the socio-ecological model of a hierarchical society (Figure 1) assumes that the success of values implementation at the political level will depend on their recognition and understanding at the individual (intrapersonal) level of the educator. The values and moral attitudes formed on their basis lead to the best achievements of a person, to their systemic thinking (Yahyazadeh-Jeloudar & Lotfi-Goodarzi, 2012; Nylen et al., 2019; Hadjar & Scharf, 2019). The ministers of education of the European Union, modern economists also saw the importance of fundamental values, human moral education and noted that in current schools, it is worth not only focusing on knowledge but also developing social skills, citizenship, freedom, tolerance, and non-discrimination, take care of human emotions and moral behaviour (Committee for Development Policy, 2004).

Researchers noted that in the learning process, the recognition of certain values and their recognition is important and encourages to live and act accordingly (Barkauskaitė & Gribniak, 2007; Lee & Raschke, 2018; Araki, 2020), affecting personal and social progress (Martılaşauskinė & Aramavičiūtė, 2009; Pokrovskai et al., 2020); the values that a person is guided by affecting the development of their personality, relationships with other people. Correct and harmonious communication is important for a person as a social being, that is while communicating with others, a person learns to overcome prejudices and freely create themselves, make decisions and choose between good and evil, and also take responsibility for their actions when they make a choice. Communication or, in other words, dialogue is also one of the prerequisites for the success of modern evaluation based on constructivist interaction (Chrobak et al., 2020).

Evaluation is one of the quality assurances tools. Quality evaluation of general education school activities is transforming not only in Lithuania (Maiorov, 2018; Cho et al., 2018; Wearmouth & Goodwyn, 2019; Pignato et al., 2019), but also around the world, moving from compliance measurements to data-based reflective interaction between evaluators and valuees. It may seem that
the ideas of freedom, school independence and evaluation are incompatible, but according to a study by Urbanović and Navickaitė (2016), the opposite is true. This is also supported by a study in the Netherlands (Neeleman, 2019), which showed that quality and autonomy issues are associated with the increasing responsibility of mainstream schools and their leaders. However, more than a decade of practice and research results show that assessment does not always lead to positive changes and is an incentive to study the quality of the assessment processes themselves.

As shown in Figure 2, participation in evaluation processes usually encourages, or at least partially encourages, the recognition of educational values in practice. Participation in evaluation processes most influenced the recognition of such principles as ‘Cooperation’ (58%), ‘Responsibility for one’s own actions’ (55%), and ‘Creativity and ingenuity’ (49%). Next, the respondents ranked the values that most affected the quality of academic achievement in mainstream schools in the following order: ‘Efficient activities to achieve goals’ (46%), ‘Collaboration and constant exchange of views between different groups of society and contribution to common goals’ (43%), ‘Self-expression’ (42%), ‘Taking care of oneself, the environment, the community and the state’ (41%), and ‘Tolerance and dialogue’ (40%). Slightly less, according to the survey, respondents give these elements: ‘Democracy and equal opportunities’ (34%), ‘Creating your own success and the success of society by generating ideas and implementing them’ (33%), ‘Humanism’ (32%), ‘Contextual
openness to innovation and world best practices’ (32%), ‘Freedom and ethics realization’ (29%). The least influenced the recognition of the principles such as ‘National identity’ (24%), ‘Continuity of traditions based on knowledge of history’ (24%) and ‘Openness to cultural diversity’ (27%).

Based on the theoretical Concepts of Good School (2015), governmentality, M. Foucault (1998) and leadership (Harris, 2010), factors that influence the quality of the assessment process were identified: ‘The competence of evaluators’, ‘Objectivity of evaluation results’, ‘Carrying out the process (implementation) of the evaluation’ and ‘Implementation of recommendations’. Objectivity is an important criterion for a good assessment tool. This is an honest opinion based on facts, evidence, and without any extraneous considerations, the personal opinion of the appraiser can also be accepted. An instrument is objective if it gives the same score, even if different points are given for the item. Implementation of recommendations is the degree to which an assessment tool can be successfully used by an educator. The competence of the evaluation also ensures the reliability of the information and procedures for the reliability of the research results. To reveal the relationship between the recognition of the value principle and the evaluation process, factors and correlations between the variables (Spearman’s correlation coefficient, rho) were calculated and are presented in Table 1.

Evaluating statistically significant results ($p<0.05$), it could be seen that the correlations between the identified factors affecting the quality of the evaluation process, such as ‘Competence of evaluators’, ‘Objectivity of evaluation results’, ‘Carrying out the process (implementation) of the evaluation’, ‘Implementation of recommendations’ and value principles varies in the range from $\rho = 0.117$ to $\rho = 0.359$, that was, correlations were weak or very weak. Based on the results of the study, it was important to note that following the average evaluations of the headmaster, teachers and parents, it is important for children to be taught all values in mainstream schools.

The value principle of humanism is fundamental in the Lithuanian educational documents. During the restoration of Lithuania’s independence in 1989, it was announced that: ‘The entire education system from bottom to top – vertically, as well as through all types and institutions of education horizontally, should be permeated with the spirit of humanism’ (National school. The concept of…, 1989). Later, this position was enshrined in the Concept of a Good School (2015): ‘A good school is a school that is based on the fundamental humanistic values, the desire for comprehension, discoveries, and personal development’.

Therefore, this article discussed the recognition of humanism principles. To analyse the principle of humanism in practice, various groups of respondents used the Kruskal–Wallis criterion. The results showed that participation in evaluation processes to recognise the principle of humanism in practice had the greatest impact on school leaders (principals) and the average score was 405.26, and the least for the child support specialists – 303.26 ($H = 15.817; df = 4; p = 0.003$). The differences were statistically significant ($p = 0.003$). When analysing whether the age of the respondents affects the recognition of the principle of humanism, no significant differences were observed ($H = 7.669; df = 4; p = 0.104$). The differences were not statistically significant ($p = 0.104$). The evaluation had the greatest impact on the recognition of humanism principle for educators who believe that the educator has enough freedom in their work, the average rating was 398.68, the least was for educators who believed that their work is strictly regulated, the average rating was 278.74 ($H = 30.265; df = 2; p = 0.000$). The differences were statistically significant ($p = 0.000$). It was noted that the greatest influence on the recognition of humanism principle and participation in the evaluation processes was for educators of schools in cities, with an average rating of 359.91; the least was for educators of schools in regional centres with an average rating of 292.58 ($H = 17.987; df = 4; p = 0.001$). Differences were statistically significant ($p = 0.001$).
To test the hypothesis, a survey of respondents was conducted. The survey showed that the participation of respondents in the evaluation processes at least partially contributes to the recognition of educational values in practice. However, the relationship between the factors of the

| The value principle | The competence of evaluators | Objectivity of evaluation results | Carrying out the process (implementation) of the evaluation | Implementation of recommendations |
|---------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Humanism            | 0.154**                      | 0.181**                          | 0.297**                                                  | 0.251**                          |
| Democracy and equal opportunities | 0.191**                      | 0.225**                          | 0.314**                                                  | 0.215**                          |
| Freedom and ethics realisation | 0.117**                      | 0.122**                          | 0.270**                                                  | 0.182**                          |
| Tolerance and dialogue | 0.204**                      | 0.220**                          | 0.278**                                                  | 0.248**                          |
| National identity   | 0.071                         | 0.088*                           | 0.247**                                                  | 0.176**                          |
| Continuity of traditions based on knowledge of history | 0.046                         | 0.075                            | 0.236**                                                  | 0.176**                          |
| Openness to cultural diversity | 0.066                         | 0.080*                           | 0.253**                                                  | 0.211**                          |
| Collaboration and constant exchange of views between different groups of society and contribution to common goals | 0.264**                      | 0.294**                          | 0.308**                                                  | 0.317**                          |
| Creativity, ingenuity | 0.218**                      | 0.270**                          | 0.273**                                                  | 0.278**                          |
| Self-expression | 0.176**                      | 0.215**                          | 0.279**                                                  | 0.295**                          |
| Creating your own success and the success of society by generating ideas and implementing them | 0.151**                      | 0.186**                          | 0.262**                                                  | 0.261**                          |
| Contextual openness to innovation and world best practices | 0.177**                      | 0.201**                          | 0.296**                                                  | 0.276**                          |
| Responsibility for your actions | 0.229**                      | 0.292**                          | 0.283**                                                  | 0.287**                          |
| Taking care of oneself, the environment, the community and the state | 0.179**                      | 0.226**                          | 0.324**                                                  | 0.295**                          |
| Efficient activities to achieve goals | 0.268**                      | 0.308**                          | 0.359**                                                  | 0.346**                          |

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01.
evaluation process and the recognition of value principles was weak. It can be argued that the hypothesis of the study was partially confirmed.

Conclusions
Participation in evaluation processes usually encourages, or at least partially contributes to, the recognition and acceptance of educational values in practice. The study demonstrated that the recognition of the value principle of humanism, which underlies the Lithuanian educational documents in the evaluation processes, was most dependent on the working situation of the respondents, their sense of freedom and the location of the school. This was best recognised by school leaders (principals) and educators, who believed they had enough freedom in their work, as well as by educators in urban schools. Participation in evaluation processes usually encouraged, or at least partially contributed to the recognition and acceptance of educational values in practice. Participation in evaluation processes had contributed most to the recognition of the principles of ‘Collaboration’, ‘Responsibility for actions’ and ‘Creativity and inventiveness’. Least of all was the recognition of the principles of ‘National identity’, ‘Continuity of traditions based on knowledge of history’ and ‘Openness to cultural diversity’.

The author performed a factor analysis to determine how the educational values load on the educational reliability factors. The interrelation between the factors of reliability of the evaluation and the recognition of values in the evaluation process was weak. For example, the factors ‘Competence of evaluators’, ‘Objectivity of evaluation results’, ‘Conduct of the process (implementation) of the evaluation’, ‘Implementation of recommendations’ and principles of meaning differ in the range from 0.117 to 0.359. This leads to the assumption that the recognition of value principles is influenced not by the evaluation process itself, but by the preparation of the respondents for it. The evaluation had a moderate impact on the recognition of the fundamental principle of humanism in the Lithuanian education system. Based on the results of the study, it was important to note that, following the average evaluations of the headmaster, teachers, and parents, it is important for children to be taught all values in mainstream schools. Therewith, participation in the evaluation processes prompted school leaders (principals) and teachers, who believed that they had sufficient freedom in their work, to recognise the principle of humanity in their practice. This study proved that the principles of humanity in the learning process are essential for the development of educational values through practical experience. Proceeding from the research carried out, it is possible to build a new methodology for teaching children in general education schools or to amend the existing methods.

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