

SOCIAL AND PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS OF ADULT LEARNING IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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Summary

The article is devoted to the problem of social and pedagogical aspects of adult learning in European countries in modern society. The most of European countries have a legislative and regulatory framework for the regulation of adult learning, which defines its goals, principles and mechanisms of state support, main actors, their rights and obligations, ways of coordinating the actions of different providers of educational services, principles and financing. Summarizing the above, it is necessary to conclude that in the UK and other European countries specialists receive professional training according to the standard of profession, that is, according to the set of professional and personal qualities and properties, which are very important in the organization of professional training. The author highlights the peculiarities of European adult learning. Thus, the main directions of adult learning development in the international environment are: experiments on nonlinear organization of the educational process, introduction of credit system and rating assessment, development and realization of individual educational programs, organization of interaction with the labor market, customers and consumers of professional personnel and creation the effective system of quality management of adult education.

Keywords: social, pedagogical aspects, adult learning, European countries, modern society.

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1. Introduction

In modern society, under the influence of dynamic globalization processes in the world, adult learning has a transnational character. Economic globalization, education, science, culture, information technologies development, dynamic changes in the labor market and its new requirements for specialists, the issue of education development during life becomes especially important, and its solution requires fundamental changes in the system of professional education for adults at all levels.

Lifelong learning is the basis for the comprehensive development of the individual, as well as the progressive component of the growth of its creative and professional potential. At the same time, lifelong learning is the integral part of the life activity of the individual and the condition of constant development of individual experience. The category of continuous education is highlighted as an important social and pedagogical principle, which reflects the modern tendency of formation of education as an integral system. This system is aimed at the development of the individual and contains the conditions of social development. Thus, it is about modern and innovative view on education and an approach to understanding its importance in the life of the individual.

Many EU documents determine that educational systems should be adapted to the new realities of the 21st century, and «lifelong learning should become the main political program of civil society, social unity and employment». Continuing education is intended to go beyond the limits adopted in developed countries, such as advanced training, retraining or career advancement. It should provide opportunities for all, while offering different goals: giving a second or third chance in life, satisfying the desire for knowledge and beauty, or improving and expanding the training directly related to the requirements of professional activity including practical training.

Research has shown that continuous education is a process of personal, social and professional development of a person during the life, which is realized in order to improve the quality of life of both individual and society in general. This idea involves formal, informal and informational training. It is implemented with the aim of achieving the development of all spheres of human life in different parts of life (*Dave, 1976*).

The issues of adult learning development, in particular the further (post-basic) education, the acquisition of additional skills and opportunities for competitiveness, have always been the focus of the United Kingdom authorities. Continuous education is designed to provide a sustainable economic growth and self-realization of personality. Thus, adult learning is considered as the last component of continuous education and covers all forms of educational influence on adults.

2. European experience of adult learning

Adult learning is being developed under the influence of the social and scientific and technical process, which gives the opportunity to increase the educational potential of each individual and creates an impetus for the formation of highly professional potential of public development.

Peculiarities of European adult learning are conditioned by modern trends in economic sphere of many countries of the world: expectations of society of qualitative changes in activity of educational establishments and employment centers; dynamic development of professional training systems of specialists and unemployed; level of production and social sphere development; requirements of labor market, employers, information technology and growing educational needs of unemployed.

It should be noted that the most of European countries have a legislative and regulatory framework for the regulation of adult education, which defines its goals, principles and mechanisms of state support, main actors, their rights and obligations, ways of coordinating the actions of different providers of educational services, principles and financing (*Awszeniuk, 2010*).

The UK adult learning system has the following components: formal and informal educational institutions; committees, councils and associations for adult learning; training system for teachers for adult learning.

It is interesting to note that the UK Government has a position of Minister of State for further education, skills and Lifelong Learning.

The main body responsible for planning, monitoring and implementation of government policy in the field of education in general and adult learning in particular is the Department for Education and skills, which is subordinate to the State Secrets of England in Education and skills. Officially, adult learning is subordinated to the Department for Business Innovation and skills, which, in addition to adult learning, secondary and higher education, covers a number

of sectors: innovation, science, business, legislation, economics, statistics, employment, trade and exports.

At the national level, the management of adult learning in the UK, together with the Department of Business Innovation and skills and the Department of Education and skills, are provided by:

- Learning and skills Council.
- higher Education funding Council for England.
- Adult Learning Inspector.
- National Institute of Adult and continuing Learning.
- Basic skills Agency.
- Sector skills Development Agency.

At the same time, the main monitoring body for quality and standards of the adult learning sector is the Adult Education Inspectorate, established in 2000. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in adult education costs in the UK. In general, this educational sector is financed from various public, private sources, voluntary contributions and private contributions.

Moreover, the activity of the British National Institute of Adult continuing Education (NIACE), established in 1921, is very important (*Hillage, 2000*). Its leading goal is to involve adult students in formal and informal education in England and Wales and to improve the opportunities for broad access to education for all adults. The Institute carries out work in different directions:

- implementation of the national education policy in the area of adult learning;
- provision of information services, consultations and professional advice to individuals and educational institutions and organizations;
- carrying out research work, holding scientific conferences and seminars; coordination of educational initiatives for adults;
- publication of periodicals, scientific and methodological literature on adult learning problems.

The Institute's programs are designed to attract different categories of adult population, especially those with low qualifications, unemployed, prisoners, emigrants, representatives of national minorities, physical persons, refugees, elderly people. The Institute's programs are aimed at:

1. Promoting motivation to receive professional training.
2. As well as support of educational providers in providing quality education services.
3. Intensification and expansion of their activities at regional, national and international level.
4. Cooperation with world educational organizations in all sectors of adult learning.

At the same time, informal and informational training is provided in libraries, galleries and museums, as well as public and volunteer organizations, such as universities of the third age, Women's Institute, art organizations and associations. Also, the mass media are making a significant contribution to support and develop adult learning. Thus, formal and informal education is the main functional components of the general system of adult learning in the UK. In particular, formal education is provided by higher educational institutions – universities, educational institutions of further education, polytechnics, colleges. While informal adult education is provided by educational associations, national education organizations (e.g. International Organization for adult education).

Also, it should be noted that the UK adult learning system has had a significant impact on adult learning development in many countries of the world and has led to the separation of pedagogical subdisciplines (adult learning, continuous education) in educational institutions in England and other countries (*Hryhorieva, 2006*).

The results of the analysis of scientific publications show the institutionalization of adult learning in the UK national education system. In particular, C. Kovalenko, considering the peculiarities of adult learning in the UK, determined that the recommended directions of professional training of specialists and unemployed population are the creation of the appropriate regulatory framework, development of educational programs and standards of basic education, oriented to the adult population. (*Kovalenko, 2005*).

At the same time, the researcher has based on the following main vectors of improvement of professional training of the adult population (*Kovalenko, 2005*):

- orientation to the real needs of customers (private persons and entrepreneurs);
- structural transparency and substantial flexibility;
- multichannel financing;
- democratization of the system.

T. Gryhorieva determined the main institutions providing adult learning in the United Kingdom: Evening institutions, Colleges of further education, Educational centers, The City Literary Institute, The Working Men's College, Community college (*Hryhorieva, 2006*).

The results of the analysis of scientific publications show that, the characteristic feature of the educational institutions for adult population is the introduction of humanitarian education. Among popular courses of study are studying of English language and literature, history, archeology and other disciplines. Also, the role of local authorities in financing adult education and responsibility for the quality of educational services is outlined. (*Hryhorieva, 2006*).

Thus, the theoretical analysis of the system of professional training of specialists in England defined the following principles of modern development of professional education of adults: interaction of informal and formal education; independence, decentralization, voluntary, accessibility of all forms of education; orientation of the content of training on formation of key and functional competences of citizens; dissemination of adult learning in the world educational space.

L. Lukyanova noted that in Poland in adult learning there is a significant transformation of traditional ways of transmitting ready knowledge, new technologies are created which enable to meet the needs of both individual and society in general. It is obvious that for work in an adult educational environment requires highly educated professionals who have appropriate professional and psychological training, based on the principles of andragogical principles. (*Lukyanova, 2014*).

3. The main types of adult learning

Summarizing the above, it is necessary to conclude that in the UK and other European countries specialists receive professional training according to the standard of profession, that is, according to the set of professional and personal qualities and properties, which are very important in the organization of professional training.

The theoretical analysis of resources allowed us to determine the types of adult learning:

- Comprehensive system of specialized state educational centers for adults (specialists and unemployed), which is oriented to the national ministries of labor and education (experience of Germany, Sweden and France) with the participation of other educational institutions.

- Training of adults in state and nonstate educational institutions of different level of professional preparation of the whole educational field of the country under strict regulation of placing of orders for training by labor departments (USA, Canada).
- Adult learning in the countries where there is a practice of long-term employment that seek employment in corporations, firms and other business entities having their own educational and production base (Japan, South Korea).

4. Conclusions

In view of the above it can be concluded that the main directions of adult learning development in the international environment are: experiments on nonlinear organization of the educational process, introduction of credit system and rating assessment, development and realization of individual educational programs, organization of interaction with the labor market, customers and consumers of professional personnel and creation of the effective system of quality management of adult education.

It should also be noted that the conceptual principles of systematization of the prospects of development of adult learning in European countries are the determinants of the educational policy of these countries as historical, political, national, socio-economic and cultural factors. Therefore, the effective system of adult learning should be considered as domestic and foreign experience in this field.

In this regard, the prospects for further research on this issue consist in a detailed analysis of the main characteristics of the adult learning in the national context.

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