
CONTINUING EDUCATION AS A GLOBAL TREND AND MODERN UKRAINIAN REALITY



Nellia Nychkalo, Dr. Sc., Prof.

Academician-Secretary,

Department of Professional and Adult Education,

National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine,

Kyiv, Ukraine

napn24@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5989-5684>

Larysa Lukianova, Dr. Sc., Prof.

Director, Ivan Ziaziun Institute of Pedagogical and Adult Education,

National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine,

Kyiv, Ukraine

larysa.lukianova@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0982-6162>

To cite this article:

Nychkalo, N. & Lukianova, L. (2019). Continuing education as a global trend and modern Ukrainian reality.

Education: Modern Discourses, 2, 108-114.

<https://doi.org/10.32405/2617-3107-2019-1-13>

Abstract. *The article reveals the role of modern education as one of the most important socio-economic development components, and a means for solving a set of global problems, in particular ensuring further mankind's existence. In this context, the authors emphasize that under the conditions of world systems' globalization and internationalization, continuing or lifelong education is currently becoming one of the most actively discussed topics in society. The paper aims at the determination of the role of education in social development, as well as to find a correlation between continuing education effectiveness and personal development.*

It is proved that as a leading factor of sustainable social development, life-long education is a universal civilization resource raising the possibility of each individual's potential development creating a synergistic effect of a positive influence on social changes. It contributes to raising the level of social understanding, interaction and cooperation, as well as a social tension reduction. Besides, continuing education facilitates innovation development, positively affects labour efficiency increasing its productivity, and encourages the use of new equipment together with innovative technology development.

The results of the international expert surveys on the positive impact of various forms of adult education and training on labour productivity and the employment of different population segments are presented.

The participation of Ukraine's population in formal and non-formal education, as well as other indicators illustrating the level of life-long education development in our country are also covered. The conclusion is made on the necessity of introducing some measures in Ukraine aimed at the effective functioning of the continuing education system.

Key words: *adult education; continuing education; development; life-long education; society; forms of adult education and training.*

INTRODUCTION. PROBLEM STATEMENT

One of the most defining attributes of modern society is the intensification of the interdependence and interaction of all its subjects with the simultaneous change of paradigms inherent in the previous development stages. First, it is connected with the substantial broadening of the “ensuring human existence safety” concept, which requires the revision of educational aims.

The prominent American futurist O. Toffler in his book “The Shock of the Future” notes that social changes occur so rapidly and radically that it shocks an individual who loses the understanding of the meaning of life, basic values, and outlook (Toffler, 2001)

In this regard, as it is emphasized by M. Shved, all over the world there are changes in the social awareness of the role and significance of education in human life. It is expected education to be an active tool in solving problems of different levels – strengthening peace, ensuring economic stability, confronting the devaluation of values as well as the formation of the whole society and personal culture (Shved, 2014: p. 463-471).

Human development is accompanied by social changes determining personality transformation processes and requiring certain changes in the educational sphere.

In particular, there arises a need for constant skill improvement, and a change in a social and professional status throughout life as well as a professional career. It means that information, knowledge, and the motivation for their constant upgrading together with skills required for this purpose are becoming a decisive factor in the civilization’s development and efficiency serving as a guarantee of any activity competitiveness. From Boris Gershunskyi’s perspective, only a country supporting the priority development of its education system will be able to occupy a rightful place in the world community and to be competitive (Gershunskyi, 2008: p. 59).

Close attention to the continuing lifelong education phenomenon is based on a certain contradiction, when, on the one hand, in today’s conditions, it is taking place a rapid development of new technology and practices with the simultaneous extremely rapid technological obsolescence; on the other hand, there is an increasingly large role of the personality in society and production, the development of their needs, and the humanization and democratization of society. A person who was considered to be educated only yesterday, according to modern criteria, is a bearer of outdated information poorly adapted to existence conditions, and tomorrow they will be completely unable to lead a full life due to functional illiteracy. All these factors result in the fact that the previous “final” education type has outlived its usefulness, and is not able to solve a number of increased socio-economic and other tasks among which the central ones are the creation of objective conditions for the individual’s maximum development ; cultivation in the new generation of subjective willingness and constant need for self-perfection; realization of self-development by means of creating the objective possibilities for constant updating of the educational process structure and contents; ensuring every person’s social security. All of the above indicates the establishment of the humanitarian education paradigm oriented to the formation of the individual in culture and culture in the individual as well as spirituality development. The paper is aimed at the determination of the role of education in social development, as well as to find a correlation between continuing education effectiveness and personal development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The scientific literature analysis on a given problem allows us to outline a set of factors that reveal the role of education as its ability to respond to the challenges of the civilization’s development, in particular, safeguarding a peaceful world. Firstly, it is in the realm of education that it is possible to form a conscious awareness of the postulate of the individual being the highest value, and their natural abilities should be unlocked in full to ensure personal development.

Secondly, it is through education that the ability to a) adapt to an intensively changing globalized world in a situation where changes in ideas, knowledge and technology take place much faster than the alternation of generations, b) take responsibility for the consequences of one's actions.

These issues have been raised in the papers of V. Andrushchenko, I. Bekh, B. Gershunskyi, V. Kremen, S. Krymskyi, V. Ohneviuk, V. Lutai, V. Shynkarukat, etc. The mutual influence of modern society and the individual's education is covered in the scientific findings of D. Bell, Z. Bzhezytskyi, E. Tofler, A. Davydov, M. Bulatov and others.

The problem of lifelong education has always been in the scope of the home (S. Babushko, N. Bidiuk, O. Zhyzhko, N. Nychkalo, O. Ohienko, V. Kremen, N. Paziura, S. Pryima, S. Sysoieva, L. Tymchuk, etc.) and foreign (P. Alheit, A. Hartung, E. Gruber, A. Darynskyi, M. Diurko, A. Korrea, L. Kokhanova, J. Kidd, J. Knoll, P. Langran, Z. Nold, C. Hawl, P. Faultish, P. Schukl, W. Elliot, R. Oaks, W. Hilton, etc.) researchers' scientific interests.

At the same time, the problem of the impact of lifelong education and training on social development, despite its urgency, is not sufficiently studied.

METHODOLOGY

The research is a qualitative one. The works of the home and foreign scholars were analysed from the standpoint of the ideas of continuing education, its theoretical background and current state of play. The reports of the international organisations (UNESCO, OECD, etc.) and the Ukrainian Government (Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine) – were studied to obtain both statistics and key trends of development of the studied phenomenon. The method of generalisation has provided an opportunity to present the holistic picture of the continuing education.

MAIN RESULTS

The 21st century society is quite rightly considered to be “the knowledge society”. In the heart of such a society, there is education and science, a high level of human capital development. Knowledge is becoming the main productive force of contemporary society where personality formation is done based on modern educational opportunities. As V. Kremen stresses, knowledge production, exploitation and use are becoming the most important human activity product in this society (Kremen, 2009: pp. 5-13, p. 9).

Consequently, the knowledge society is its special development level in which: a) knowledge affects an individual's material and the spiritual life becoming the main source of its further development; b) it is formed a need and ability to continuously acquire knowledge as a factor in understanding the development problems of society and their technological solution.

When in the early stages of philosophical knowledge development (Socrates, Protagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Dante, Machiavelli, Goethe, Бґірк, etc.) education was regarded as a way for a person to enter a complex social world, in the twenty-first century, through the internalization of cultural and social values, education is becoming a way of an individual's entry into one's “ego” identity (Oharenko, 2005: p. 9).

Nowadays, an educated individual is referred to as a person prepared for the dynamic realities of life, who is capable of orienting him-or herself in complex contemporary culture problems as well as of understanding his or her position in society, rather than a person who possesses knowledge and an established worldview. In this context, the role of education is primarily to create the conditions for the formation of a free personality capable of adequately perceiving reality, critical thinking, constructive communication, and taking effective actions in changing conditions. That is, an educated person must be ready for challenges due to the modern information civilization's dynamism.

At the same time, in the current circumstances, the importance of lifelong education is determined not only by the dynamics of the social, scientific and technological progress, changes in work essence and nature, an increase in free time but also by the possibilities of its rational use.

According to economists, extremely important indicators that can adequately determine the internal efficiency of an education system are its development indicators. It is the capacity of social systems, including the education one, of adaptation to rapidly changing external conditions through transformations in such a system itself illustrating its functioning and the ability to meet the increased needs of society. A proven fact is that the education development level, the state of human capital, and population qualifications form a country's socio-economic potential. World practice shows that more than 50% of GDP growth per capita is determined by an increase in labour productivity, education, qualifications and citizens' professional skills.

It should be noted that continuing or lifelong education is becoming one of the widely debated topics in international discussions on adult education. According to the German researcher H. Kuwan, this can be explained by the desire to create educational opportunities for everyone to increase involvement and to improve the links between various educational levels (Kuwan, 2005: p. 37).

In this context, it should be mentioned A. Levchenko's opinion on the actualization of the issue of staffing support of innovative integrated structures with specialists possessing the appropriate qualification level. In its turn, it puts forward specific requirements for the formation of innovation and professional development skills, an integral part of which is the provision of "lifelong education" (Levchenko, 2017: pp. 186-192). Under such conditions, the terms and extent of continuing professional development are determined by the need to flexibly respond to changes and innovations requiring incentives for all categories of workers to get involved in continuing education, self-study, and sharing experience.

At the same time, the results of international expert surveys show a positive impact of different adult education and training forms on labour productivity and employment. In this context, education is perceived as a set of actions aimed at changing human behaviour purposes and models by communicating new knowledge, developing new abilities and skills throughout life.

Thus, in the 2016 UNESCO report, "Third Global Report on Adult Learning and Education", all the countries participating in the survey acknowledge the fact that there is a positive impact of different adult education and training forms on labour productivity and employment. So, 49% of countries point out the importance of professional education and training, 45% emphasize the importance of non-formal education in the workplace, 43% of countries state the relevance of higher professional education and corporate training, 41% advocate for the efficiency of self-education, 38% of participants note the impact of the modern forms of a professional development organization such as distance education and e-learning (Third Global Report, 2016: p. 95).

Knowledge itself is constantly multiplied, and, naturally, an individual is forced to spend more time on its acquisition. However, nowadays, education, in general, and, in particular, adult education increasingly cease to be considered equivalent to formal education. Any activity today is interpreted as educational if it is intended to change the purpose and patterns of an individual's behaviour by transferring new knowledge, developing new skills and abilities. The institutionalization of various forms, including those that did not exist earlier, has taken place. Thus, according to the UNESCO Institute, in developed countries, the number of adult participants in educational programs beyond formal education far exceeds the number of studying children and adolescents. Departures from fundamental (primary, secondary, higher) education to continuing one lasting throughout all periods of adult life are a distinctive feature of virtually all countries in the world.

Therefore, we are interested in the tendencies of the adult population's participation specifically in non-formal education which has long occupied leading positions in lifelong educational systems.

According to the report “Education at a Glance 2016”, the non-formal education participation level among OECD member states’ citizens aged 25-64 ranges from 17% in Russia and Turkey to 64% in New Zealand. This tendency can be considered rather new, this indicator is higher than in Denmark, Sweden, and Finland that are traditionally ranked first. It should be emphasized that the aggregated figure among the 30 countries participating in the survey can also be considered relatively high as it approaches 50% (Education at a Glance 2016 (OECD) (p. 378)). An important indicator is also the average number of hours spent on non-formal education. Therefore, in the OECD countries this figure is more than 120 hours per year. However, it varies greatly (from 72 hours in the Czech Republic to 248 hours in Korea) (Education at a Glance, 2016).

As for Ukraine, socio-economic changes that took place in the society in the late 20th – early 21st centuries accompanied by technological and socio-cultural transformations at both global and local levels have become the leading determinants significantly influencing the role of adult education in the modern Ukrainian society and outlining the vector for its further development.

Ensuring accessibility and continuity of lifelong education has been recognized as one of the state educational policy priorities outlined by the “National Strategy for the Development of Education in Ukraine for the period till 2021” which has intensified the processes of creating the Ukrainian model of adult education (National Strategy for the Development of Education in Ukraine for the period till 2021). In the National Report “The Objectives of Sustainable Development: Ukraine”, promulgated by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine in 2017, it is noted that the introduction of the continuing education concept requires the population’s increased participation in educational programs (especially for citizens who are entering or have already crossed the social risk zone).

At present, the participation level of people under the age of 70 in formal and non-formal education and training forms is about 9% (National Report, 2017: p. 36), and therefore, it is much lower than it is the case in developed countries of the world.

It should be emphasized that education requires serious funding for its development. The analysis of Ukraine’s development indicators in the field of education has shown that domestic investment in education is lagging behind most other countries. Ukraine is traditionally proud of the high level of its citizens’ education and personnel’s professional’s training. At the same time, the production exploits labour potential created mostly in Soviet times, since the average age of workers in the field of material production in our country is 55 years among whom the share of highly skilled workers does not exceed 10%. While in the US and Germany, this figure stands at 43% and 56% respectively (Malakhovskiy, Nabulsi, Savitska, 2017).

Therefore, the efficiency of modern production requires significant modernization of personnel training. On the other hand, workers’ professional skills are upgraded on average once in 13-15 years (in developed countries – every 3-5 years). And, according to scientists, if these trends are maintained, in the national labor market the need for qualified personnel will be met in the near future only by 35-40% (Malakhovskiy, Nabulsi & Savitska, 2017). Consequently, we may conclude that Ukraine does not fully use its innovative potential. In the country there is a loss and impairment of human capital due to migration processes, some population groups lack certain skills and competencies required in the conditions of the innovative development of the economy, the inefficiency and unsystematic character of employees’ continuing professional development.

In this context, it is advisable to present scientists’ opinion that at the current stage of human capital development in Ukraine, the main paradox is the excessive quantitative development of labour supply with secondary and higher education with the simultaneous inadequacy of the structure and quality of these resources in relation to the needs of the market and public sectors (Levchenko, 2017) The consequence of this is human capital impairment in the conditions of the excessive highly skilled labour availability which generally exacerbates the inequality problem caused by educated unemployment.

Besides, according to the global competitiveness index, such indicators as the assessment of professional training enrolment rates and the availability of specialized training services at the local level, Ukraine received 3.7 and 4.2 points respectively (the assessment scale ranged from 0 to 7 points) (The Global Competitiveness Report 2016 – 2017). The maximum points – 5.5 were given to Norway, Sweden, and Singapore. In Finland, the Netherlands, Japan, Belgium, Denmark, Austria and Germany, this figure ranged from 5.4 to 5.2 points

According to the other indicator (the availability of specialized educational services), Ukraine received 4.3 points at the local level. The lowest indicators were peculiar to Slovakia (4.1 points), Turkey (4.0 points) and Greece (3.8 points). Such countries as Belgium (6.2 points), the Netherlands (6.1 points), Singapore, Finland, the United Kingdom (6.0 points), Austria, and Denmark (5.9 points) (The Global Competitiveness Report, 2016-2017) were ranked first among other countries according to the given indicator.

Therefore, in Ukraine, the necessity of adults' mass professional retraining, including multi-skilled specialists for the implementation of socio-economic reforms, as well as for the purpose of civil society development brings about the creation of a flexible system of continuing adult education that is capable of responding to the current challenges of the whole society and the demands of specific population segments. Under such conditions, an individual's personal development, as scientists claim, is both an important progress indicator, and the main prerequisite for the further development of society (Gershunskyi, 2008: p. 59).

Such development results can be presented at three levels: individual, business and societal. At the individual level, there is a set of positive changes, including increased employment opportunities, career progress, swapping jobs or changing occupation as well as salary growth. It is also worth adding satisfaction with work results, health improvement, the feeling of comfort and harmony, etc. At the second level, there are increased labour productivity, greater workers' adaptability to innovation, improved social and psychological environment in an organization, etc. At the societal level, it is economic growth, increased economic activity of the population, a trend toward increased retirement age, and so on.

CONCLUSIONS

Increasing life-long education system effectiveness in Ukraine requires the implementation of a set of measures. The key aspects are the following: finalization of the project and enactment of the Law of Ukraine "On Adult Education"; updating the Law of Ukraine "On Employees' Professional Development" in accordance with the needs of the modern labour market; social dialogue development between central and local authorities, employers, professional unions, institutions of vocational education; introduction of modern multi-channel financing models for personnel's professional development; promotion of the implementation of modern forms and methods for organizing personnel's professional development, primarily distance education and e-learning, dual and combined education systems; creation of mechanisms for recognizing the results of non-formal and informal education; provision of personnel's professional training the quantitative and qualitative indicators of which will meet the current and future requirements of the labour market.

REFERENCES

- Education at a Glance 2016: OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing. (2016). Paris. Retrieved 2019 from <http://dx.doi.org/10.187/eag-2016-en>
- Gershunskyi, B. (2008). *Filosofiya obrazovaniya dlya XXI veka (v poiskah praktikoorientirov. obrazovatelnykh kontseptsiy)* [The philosophy of education for the 21st century (in search of practical guidelines educational concepts)]. Moskva: Interdialekt.

-
- Kremen, V. (2009). *Filosofia liudynotsentryzmu u svitli natsionalnoi idei* [Philosophy of human-centrism in the light of the national idea]. *Vyshcha osvita Ukrainy*, 1, 5–13.
- Kuwan, H. (2005). *Berichtssystem Weiterbildung IX: Bericht*. Berlin: BMBF.
- Levchenko, O. (ed.). (2016). *Innovatsiinyi vymir rozvytku vyshchoi osvity Ukrainy: suchasnyi stan ta perspektyvy: monohrafiia* [Innovative dimension of higher education development in Ukraine: current state and prospects]. Kirovohrad: Ekskliuzyv-System.
- Levchenko, O., Tkachuk, O. & Tsarenko, I. (2017). *Innovatsiino-intehrovani struktury v suchasni ekonomitsi: yikh klasyfikatsiia* [Innovation-integrated structures in the modern economy: their classification]. *Efektivna ekonomika*, 10. Retrieved 2019 from: <http://www.economy.nayka.com.ua/?op=1&z=5791>.
- Malakhovskiy, Y., Nabulsi, H. & Savitska, I. (2017). *Features of financing of the innovative-oriented structures using mechanisms of the public-private partnership*. Baltija: Publishing.
- Natsionalna dopovid «Tsili staloho rozvytku: Ukraina» [Sustainable Development Goals: Ukraine National Report]. (2017). Kyiv: Ministerstvo ekonomichnoho rozvytku i torhivli Ukrainy.
- Natsionalna stratehiia rozvytku osvity v Ukraini na period do 2021 roku [National Strategy for the Development of Education in Ukraine until 2021]. (2013). Retrieved 2019 from: <http://www.president.gov.ua/documents/15828.html>
- Oharenko, V. (2005). *Derzhavne rehuliuвання diialnosti vyshchych navchalnykh zakladiv na rynku osvitnikh posluh: monohrafiia* [State regulation of higher education institutions in the market of educational services]. Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo NADU.
- Shved, M. (2014). *Vplyv osvity i kultury na rozvytok suspilstva* [The influence of education and culture on the development of society]. *Prace Naukowe Akademii i im. Jana Długosza w Czestochowie Rocznik Polsko-Ukraiński*, XVI, 463–471.
- The Global Competitiveness Report 2016–2017. (2016). Retrieved 2019 from www.weforum.org/gcr
- Third Global Report on Adult Learning and Education. (2016). Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. Retrieved 2019 from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002459/245913e.pdf>
- Toffler, E. (2001). *Shok budushcheho* [The shock of the future]. Moskva: OOO Izdatelstvo AST.