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NON-FORMAL ADULT EDUCATION AS A REALISATION OF HUMANISTIC APPROACH IN EDUCATION

Nowadays there is a renewed interest in non-formal education (NFE). The original version of non-formal education emerged in 1968 [1]. It arose in the context of the widespread feeling that education was failing, not just in developing countries but also in so-called Western societies as well. In 1967 at the international conference in Williamsburg, USA, there was concern about the growing «world educational crisis»: unsuitable curricula, that educational growth and economic growth were not necessarily in step, and that jobs did not emerge directly as a result of educational inputs. Many countries were finding it difficult (politically or economically) to pay for the expansion of formal education. The conclusion at the conference was that formal educational systems had adapted too slowly to the socio-economic changes around them. It was recognised that formal educational systems alone cannot respond to the challenges of modern society and therefore welcomes its reinforcement by non-formal educational practices.

The problem of non-fomal education have been analysed and researched by many scientists such as M. Ahmed, M. Blazey, P. Coombs, G. Darkenwald, R. Fischer, P. Fordham, M. Kamil, S. Kerka, T.Kowalski, H. Lipman, S. Merriam, A. Rogers, P. Edelson and others.

Saying about the history of the term «non-formal education», it appeared in 1968 when Philip Coombs included a chapter entitled «Non-Formal Education: to catch up, keep up and get ahead» in his seminal book «The World Educational Crisis: a systems approach». Since then discussions and debates around the term

and NFE activities started and continued through the 1970s and early 1980s and ended in 1986 to be revived again in the 90s. Throughout the world, the NFE practice was increasing and widening in scope, often with donor support. It was mainly influenced with Lifelong Learning discourse which reintegrated the whole field of education [10].

According to A. Rogers, P. Coombs and M. Ahmed were the first to define non-formal education as «any organized educational activity outside the established formal system» [10]. So The NFE activities preceded the term coining in the late 1960s; the term just gave a label for already existing activities.

At around the same time there were moves in UNESCO toward lifelong education and notions of «the learning society». Lifelong learning was to be the «master concept» that should shape educational systems [11]. It was from this point of departure that planners and economists in the World Bank began to make a distinction between informal, non-formal and formal education [4]. What emerged was an influential tripartite categorization of learning systems. It's the best known statement comes from the work of :

Formal education: the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded «education system», running from primary school through the university and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialised programmes and institutions for full-time technical and professional training.

Non-formal education: any organised educational activity outside the established formal system-whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity – that is intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives.

Informal education: the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment – from family and neighbours, from work and play, from the market place, the library and the mass media.

The distinction made is largely administrative [2].

By many non-formal education was seen as the «ideal» form of education, as the panacea for all the ills of education in societies, far better in all respects than formal education. By others however, it came to be seen as a sub-system of education, certainly not superior and by some as considerably inferior to formal schooling. It could even be described as a temporary «necessary evil» in situations of crisis until formal schooling could be restored.

The definitional problem of NFE has been a source of running controversy over the last 30 years. There are several definitions for NFE that sometimes overlap or contradict with each other. These differences stem from the area of focus each thought to emphasize in the definition. Some researches attribute the challenge of defining NFE to lack of academic work and the huge variety of forms and ways of non-formal education practice. A. Rogers classified different definitions into the following categories:

- a system: a collection of organizations and programs different from the formal education system;
- a process: with different teaching-learning relationships than those in formal education, a less hierarchical format;
- a concept, a subject worthy of study and writing about;
- a practice, a professional activity undertaken by people separate from formal education professionals;
- a set of educational activities distinguished from formal education by having different goals or purposes or even separated from formal schooling by being socially purposeful, usually seen as a part of the radical social transformation movement [10].

But, as A.Rogers notes, that definition is very imprecise, and every country interpret nonformal education in their own way. For some, it meant every educational programme provided by the Ministry of Education apart from the schools and colleges (e.g. adult literacy classes). For others, it meant educational programmes like schooling provided by non-governmental agencies (NGOs). For yet others, it comprised all the educational and training activities of other

Ministries (Women's Affairs, Health, Labour and Employment, Youth and Sports and Culture etc etc). Others again included within non-formal education the individualised learning programmes for different and specific learning groups – women's discussion groups, for example, programmes which approximate closely to social work and specialist counselling, whether provided by the state, NGOs, commercial agencies or other civil society bodies (religious organisations, trade unions, new social movements etc). Some took it to mean every educational activity apart from schools and colleges, including radio and television programmes, the print media (newspapers and magazines etc) [10].

In spite of the different definitions, NFE programs have a number of criteria that are shared across most definitions:

- learner centered as learners play an active role in their learning and program is customized to their circumstances;
- flexible curriculum that can be changed. Degree of flexibility would differ from one program to the other;
- human relationships are more informal depending more on reciprocal learning;
- focus on practical skills and knowledge;
- target disadvantaged groups as youth, women, poor, and marginalized groups;
- creative use of educational resources;
- community participation;
- decentralized and more flexible organization and management.

If we say about the roots and origination of the non-formal education, it must be considered that its development was significantly influenced by philosophical and pedagogical ideas of John Dewey, progressive and humanistic education that is particularly associated with psychologists Abraham Maslow, and Carl Rogers, as well as founder of andragogy and adult education Malcolm Knowles.

John Dewey was an [American psychologist](#), [educational reformer](#) and a

leading proponent of the American school of pragmatism and progressive education, whose ideas have been influential in education and social reforms. J. Dewey approached education as part of a broader project that encompassed an exploration of the nature of experience, of knowledge, of society, and of ethics. As such, he offers us «the ideal bridge from theories of knowledge, to democratic theory and onwards to education theory» [7].

J. Dewey continually argues that education and learning are social and interactive processes, and thus the school itself is a social institution through which social reform can and should take place. In addition, he believed that students thrive in an environment where they are allowed to experience and interact with the curriculum, and all students should have the opportunity to take part in their own learning. Dewey made a strong case for the importance of education not only as a place to gain content knowledge, but also as a place to learn how to live. In his eyes, the purpose of education should be rather the realization of one's full potential and the ability to use those skills for the greater good. He noted that «to prepare him for the future life means to give him command of himself; it means so to train him that he will have the full and ready use of all his capacities» [6].

J. Dewey's significance for non-formal education lies in a number of areas. First, his belief that education must engage with and enlarge experience has continued to be a significant strand in informal education practice. Second, and linked to this, Dewey's exploration of thinking and reflection – and the associated role of educators – has continued to be an inspiration. Third, his concern with interaction and environments for learning provide a continuing framework for practice. Last, his passion for democracy, for educating so that all may share in a common life, provides a strong rationale for practice in the associational settings in which informal educators work. So J. Dewey's influence can be seen in many of the writers that have influenced the development of non-formal education over the same period; for example, Coyle, Kolb, Lindeman and Rogers drew extensively on his work.

One of the sources of non-formal education was humanistic education and,

which is derived from humanistic psychology and the theory of personality A. Maslow and C. Rogers.

Carl Rogers was an influential American psychologist and among the founders of the humanistic approach to psychology and education. The person-centered approach, his own unique approach to understanding personality and human relationships, found wide application in various domains such as psychotherapy and education. C. Rogers has been called the Father of Humanistic Psychology and devoted much of his effort toward applying the results of his psychology research to person-centered teaching where empathy, caring about students, and genuineness on the part of the learning facilitator, were found to be the key traits of the most effective teachers. In the 1970's the term «Humanistic Education» became less popular and later due to a successful effort by Aspy, Lyon, Rogers, and others this term has been replaced and re-labeled «Person-centered teaching». C. Rogers sought to emphasize the individual's role in education instead of a one-size-fit-all approach. Humanists also believe that it is necessary to study the person as a whole, especially as an individual grows and develops over the lifespan. It follows that the study of the self, motivation, and goals are areas of particular interest.

A. [Maslow](#) urged people to acknowledge their basic needs before addressing higher needs and ultimately self-actualization. He wanted to know what constituted positive mental health. He developed the basic principles of humanistic psychology :

1. Someone's present functioning is their most significant aspect. As a result humanists emphasize the here and now instead of examining the past or attempting to predict the future.

2. To be mentally healthy, individuals must take personal responsibility for their actions, regardless of whether the actions are positive or negative.

3. Each person, simply by being, is inherently worthy. While any given action may be negative, these actions do not cancel out the value of a person.

4. The ultimate goal of living is to attain personal growth and understanding.

Only through constant self-improvement and self-understanding can an individual ever be truly happy [7].

An American scientist, a founder of adult education M. Knowles developed Adult Learning principles which are adopted heavily in non-formal education programs, namely:

- adults are internally motivated and self-directed;
- adults bring life experiences and knowledge to learning experiences;
- adults are goal oriented;
- adults are relevancy oriented;
- adults are practical;
- adult learners like to be respected [8].

As our research has proved the non-formal education is based on five central principles of humanistic education:

1) *Students' learning should be self-directed.* Students should be able to choose what they want to learn. Humanistic teachers believe that students will be motivated to learn a subject if it's something they need and want to know.

2) *Schools should produce students who want and know how to learn.* The goal of education should be to foster students' desire to learn and teach them how to learn. Students should be self-motivated in their studies and desire to learn on their own.

3) *The only form of meaningful evaluation is self-evaluation.* Grading encourages students to work for a grade and not for personal satisfaction. In addition, humanistic educators are opposed to objective tests because they test a student's ability to memorize and do not provide sufficient educational feedback to the teacher and student.

4) *Both feelings and knowledge are important to the learning process.* Unlike traditional educators, humanistic teachers do not separate the cognitive and affective domains.

5) *Students learn best in a non-threatening environment.* Humanistic educators insist that schools need to provide students with a non-threatening

environment so that they will feel secure to learn. Once students feel secure, learning becomes easier and more meaningful [6].

Researcher P. Fordham suggests that four characteristics can be associated with non-formal education that provide realization of humanistic approach, they are: relevance to the needs of disadvantaged groups; concern with specific categories of person; a focus on clearly defined purposes; flexibility in organization and methods [4].

Despite the variety of forms and defines the non-formal education is the educational system which includes all necessary pedagogical attributes: goals, objectives, content, learning technologies and methods. There is possible to reveal the common features that can be attributed to the non-formal education programs:

1. Non-formal education is democratic in its nature, as is intended to ensure access to education for everyone.

2. Non-formal education is aimed to complete realization of personal creative potential. Structures of informal education are aimed primarily at meeting the urgent learners' needs in education. In addition, they are able to specify and develop those needs. The objective of non-formal education is not limited by transforming certain scope of knowledge.

3. The main functions of non-formal education are: cognitive (meeting the growing cognitive needs, comprehensive general cultural development of the individual, the satisfaction of intellectual and aesthetic needs), adaptive (assistance in human adaptation to the social, cultural, economic and other environmental changes); compensative (compensation of former formal education failures and corrections of educational disadvantages), the developmental (development of educational motives, self-learning skills and abilities, cognition of self-capabilities).

4. Objectives and content of non-formal learning are based on the combining principles of the personal educational needs satisfaction and the taking into account the interests and needs of different social classes and groups; the humane and humanistic principle and the principle of socialization that provide achieving social

education completely corresponding to society's educational needs. Also the non-formal learning is based on principles of self-education, self-direction, self-sufficiency.

5. Non-formal education structures are characterized by a high degree of flexibility and diversity of forms, by the ability to cover all socio-professional and age learners groups. Flexibility is manifested in a large selection of programs, periods and places of learning, orientation to the specific needs and interests of every student.

6. The specific role of the teacher who serves as the organizer of a self-activity of participants in the educational process.

7. Non-formal educational structures do not issue diplomas, certificates or any other kind of documents.

There have been distinguished three key providers of educational services in the field of non-formal education:

- state and governmental structures aimed at staff professional development and improving (field and sector structures);

- any business structures that operate in the field of the employees' professional development, and also provide educational or personal professional services on a commercial basis (language, driving courses, sport or dancing schools etc);

- NGOs or community organizations providing educational services to the members or working for grant support (of international organizations or local authorities). The specific activities of NGOs in the field of non-formal education is that they mostly provide democratic values and social projects in the community.

So non-formal education, reflecting ideas of the progressive education, provides focus on students and their needs, the importance of their experience learning, equivalent role of student and teacher in the learning process where the teacher is a guide, instructor, the source knowledge and not an information transmitter [8]. In many theoretical and practical researchs on the non-formal education it is considered as a really democratic, humane and universal education

providing opportunities to get education for everyone regardless of age and gender, social status and place of living. A great variety and flexibility of forms and methods of training can cover almost all the age limits from children to older people and can be used both inside and outside of the traditional education. Non-formal education, carried out by the different actors of the educational space, aimed at a human adaptation to a rapidly changing social, economic, technological, political environment, his/her integration into the society, the increased participation in social processes, constant updating of knowledge, skills and abilities regardless of the individual age.

Every component of non-formal learning is well-developed in the education system of Ukraine. In contemporary Ukraine the ideas of non-formal education is not cardinal new considering a long history of cultural and social education traditions beginning with private tutors and teachers-craftsmen. Though modern social and economic situation requires qualificational and institutional recognizing skills and knowlage acquired by different, including non-formal education, ways. Although there are prerequisites for the realization of non-formal education ideas in Ukraine: cultural, historical, social, economic, technological, psychological, pedagogical, at the same time the difficulties for the recognition of non-formal education at the legislative, institutional and professional level, the lack of a coherent educational strategy exist in Ukraine.

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НЕФОРМАЛЬНОЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ ВЗРОСЛЫХ КАК РЕАЛИЗАЦИЯ ГУМАНИСТИЧЕСКОГО ПОДХОДА В ОБРАЗОВАНИИ

***Аннотация.** В статье раскрывается понятие неформального образования, в основе которого лежит гуманистический подход и личностно-ориентированная педагогика. Неформальное образование рассматривается как вид непрерывного образования и образовательный*

процесс, организованный вне рамок традиционной образовательной системы и нацеленный на удовлетворение познавательных потребностей различных возрастных категорий населения. Анализируются философско-педагогические идеи Дж.Дьюи, гуманистическая психология А. Маслоу та К. Роджерса, повлиявшие на становление и развитие неформального образования взрослых, так же, как андрагогические принципы М. Ноулза. Приводятся основные характеристики, а также функции неформального образования. Выделены ключевые провайдеры образовательных услуг в сфере неформального образования.

Ключевые слова: *неформальное образование, гуманистическая психология, система, функции, характеристики, провайдеры неформального образования.*

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Summary. *The author reveals the concept of non-formal education, which is based on a humanistic approach and a personal-oriented pedagogy. Non-formal education is considered as a form of lifelong education and the educational process organized outside the traditional education system and aimed at meeting the cognitive needs of different age groups. Non-formal education, carried out by the different actors of the educational space, aimed at a human adaptation to a rapidly changing social, economic, technological, political environment, his/her integration into the society, the increased participation in social processes, constant updating of knowledge, skills and abilities regardless of the individual*

age. It is proved that the system of non-formal education has all the necessary pedagogical attributes: the goals, objectives, content, learning technologies. The basic characteristics and also the functions of non-formal education, such as cognitive, practical and psychological are presented. There have been identified three key providers of the educational services in the field of non-formal education: state structure and business engaged in advanced training of employees, and community organizations. The author describes the prerequisites for the realization of the non-formal education ideas in Ukraine (cultural, historical, social, economic, technological, psychological, pedagogical). At the same time it is stated the existing difficulties for the recognition of non-formal education at the legislative, institutional and professional level, the lack of a coherent educational strategy in Ukraine.

Key words: *non-formal education, humanistic psychology, system, functions, characteristics, non-formal education providers.*

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