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Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSAL COMPETENCES OF THE
ADULT POPULATION THROUGH EDUCATION**

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the change of the social background of adult learning practices with a special emphasis on the main directions and contents of the innovation processes of adult learning result assessment. We consider universal competences as an essential educational result as well as an effective tool of educational results harmonization and a means providing the continuity of the major and supplementary professional training levels. Universal competences reflect the expectations of the modern society pertaining to the social and personal viewing of an adult as a socially mature subject ready for self-realization and self-development. The research studies social conditions causing adults to enroll in supplementary educational programs and analyses modern requirements for the organization of continuing learning with a particular focus on the socializing meaning of adult education. The paper also presents a differentiation of the socialization tasks set before today's adults. The paper contains results obtained through surveying three Russian educational institutions, the survey based upon a factor analysis method implying a search for a few internal unobservable characteristics (factors) defined by the value of observable parameters. The survey results allowed to find education-related distinctions in the significant socialization factors for individuals aiming at the formation of universal competences of adaptive nature and for individuals aspiring for training the universal competences indispensable for self-realization. The result analysis brought us to the conclusion that the formation of adults' universal competences can be successfully navigated through education with reference to the socialization tasks that are keynote for a particular individual.

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1. Introduction

Socialization of the adult is usually associated with the implementation of professional functions. But if in traditional societies the labor stage of socialization was aimed at self-improvement and characterized by stability, since the majority of vital choices were already made by the individual, today it is no more a mode of improvement of achieved and is becoming more and more variable. This is due to the fact that the realities of the post-industrial society have significantly changed the vision of the role of the man in social and economic processes.

In the XIX and XX centuries, the criterion of maturity and professionalism was mastering certain knowledge and skills, responsible execution of a clearly defined range of duties (Education is for change. Change is for education, 2014). Today, the effectiveness of both social and production processes is increasingly dependent on creativity, employees' initiatives, their ability to seek new approaches to solving traditional and new problems. That is why modern education of adults is not only the sphere of competence growth, but also the space of the formation of the universal competencies, the transformation of life-purpose orientations, the formation of motivation for continuous education and self-education.

At the same time, many specialists today do not have the proper motivation to improve their universal competences in accordance with new social and economic needs, they are not ready to change their professional position and oriented toward traditional approaches to the organization of labor, they formally refer to the development of skills, which make it difficult their socialization in constantly changing social conditions. Workers who have a long-established style of professional activity are the most vulnerable in this situation. The introduction of innovations for many of them is accompanied by the emergence of subjective barriers and difficulties that prevent the full realization of creative potential and reduce the quality of the results of their professional activity (Maron, Monakhova, Sherayzina, Fedotova & Trashenkova, 2016).

The popularization of longitudinal educational strategies and ideas of continuing vocational education, reflected in the concept of lifelong learning, can significantly change the situation. Education allows the adult not only to adapt to changing economic conditions and the labor market, but also solves the problems of cultural development and self-improvement. The person when involved in various educational practices, carries out prolonged support of his or her social and professional activity, integrates into a new dynamic social environment, and increases the resources of self-realization.

With reference to the above mentioned, the comprehension of top strategies (for the modern adult) to solve the problems of socialization through participation in educational practices is becoming relevant. The research presented in this article is aimed at analyzing the possibilities of meeting the social needs of adults by means of education.

2. Problem Statement

Modern researches clearly adhere to the position that the man is a social being. As a part of society, we acquire experience of interaction that becomes a part of our personality. Integration of each individual into society is inevitable, since in this process socially important qualities, knowledge and skills are formed (Hutmacher, 1996). In this case, the impact of society on a person can be spontaneous and can be carried out under conditions of targeted influence. The study of mechanisms, technologies, regularities and

conditions of the latter constitutes the pedagogical aspect of the study of the process of socialization of the individual.

Today the notion of “socialization” gets a new interpretation as a process of internalization of objective social impacts and exteriorization of the person's personal powers (Bitinas, 1999). Thus, the emphasis from the priority of adaptational processes shifts to a balance of adaptation and autonomy. In this sense, Mudrik's treatment of socialization as the development and self-change of the man in the process of mastering culture that occurs in the interaction of the man with spontaneous, relatively directed and purposefully created living conditions, when the man's role is active, is of special interest (Mudrik, 2004).

Our research is based on the position of the continuity of human socialization throughout the life and the postulate of split growth, which is especially evident when the person grows up. So, macro- and microfactors of socialization can determine in some cases the tendency to infantilization of the person, and in others – the tendency to accelerate the formation of signs of social maturity. From this point of view in andragogy the opinion of Craig is becoming more and more confirmed: precise identification of the boundaries of adulthood is problematic, since the main feature of the development of the adult is the minimal dependence on the chronological age, the socialization of the adult is much more determined by his or her life circumstances and corresponding goals, attitudes, experiences (Craig & Dunn, 2009).

Despite the fact that the process of socialization of the adult is primarily related to professional activity, continuing education is becoming an essential part of it. Why? In the conditions of modern society the dynamism of the sociocultural environment has so complicated the task of timely adaptation to changes that the development of personal potential, human cognitive abilities has become the centre of the strategy of the formation of social behaviour (Carroll, 1993). The modern socio-cultural situation brings new demands for adult, able-bodied persons: to be ready for professional mobility, to be able to make an educational choice and be responsible for its consequences, to be able to improve and renew, to learn and to be able to abandon the old, to continuously strive for effective integration into society.

Thus, in our study we define the essence of socialization of adults by means of education as a process of understanding the current life situation by the individual and forecasting its development, defining the leading socializing task, updating existing resources and attracting new ones, in particular through inclusion in educational practices (Podolskiy & Popov, 2016). Depending on the life situation, additional vocational education for the adult can be both a means of adaptation and a means of autonomization; and in many respects determine the revision of previous experience, or even the abandonment of it. We propose to combine two components of adult socialization content: personality-oriented and socially-oriented (Frank, 2011). At the same time, the first component of education will consist in the aspiration of the adult learner to express thoughts, views, judgments, rights, claims; to satisfy interests, needs, and to master new values. The adaptive component will be expressed in the development of social and professional mobility of the individual, the formation of social identity and the adequacy of adults, and the promotion of social progress.

3. Research Questions

The phenomenon we are studying – the solution of the problems of socialization of the adult by means of education – is largely determined due to the influence of a variety of hidden factors, which are

difficult to directly fix and to quantitatively measure because of their character which is related to the deep mental processes, needs and values of the trainees, their cognitive activity, etc.

4. Purpose of the Study

In connection with this, our research was based on the methodology of factor analysis, which supposes the identification of internal, not directly visible characteristics (factors), the number of which is small and which are determined by the value of the observed parameters.

5. Research Methods

The study was conducted in three Russian educational organizations: Yaroslavl State Pedagogical University named after K.D. Ushinsky and its branches, in Kostroma State University and the Center for Advanced Training of Pedagogical Workers of the Educational System in Vologda. It was a field research, 520 students of the adult education programs of the above mentioned organizations took part in it.

At the first stage of the research we divided the participants into two groups, based on the results of the interview: students oriented toward obtaining continuing vocational education in order to adapt to a new life and professional situation, and students focused on self-actualization and self-development.

In this regard the question "For what purpose do you plan to train?" was included in the interview. The answers of the respondents showed that the needs of adaptation to the changed conditions of professional activity prevail among adult learners (this group of needs was noted by 53% of respondents). At the same time, both the need for updating and developing professional competences, as well as the need to develop a new type of professional activity, which is in demand in modern conditions, are relevant. This means that vocational work is not only a value-motivational core of educational interest, but it also largely determines the leading type of adult education.

A number of respondents expressed the need for education as a means of self-realization: career growth, personal development, expansion of the sphere of social interaction, leisure structuring (45% of respondents noted this group of needs). We attributed these needs to the group of problems of autonomization, because they clearly express the focus on the externalization of personal forces.

It is also interesting that a part of the respondents (2%) do not have any awareness of the need in training, as a rule they are people who are included in the educational practices by the manager's authoritarian decision; they perceive training as "useless occupation". We attributed these respondents to the group which priorities are the tasks of adaptation, since submission to the manager's decision, which contradict their own needs, can be considered as an adaptation to the existing conditions.

The first group (the priority task – adaptation) includes 287 people. The age of respondents is from 25 to 65, the ratio of men and women is 1:5, they all have higher education and work experience from 3 to 47 years.

The second group (the priority task – self-development) includes 233 people. The age of the members of this group is also from 25 to 65, they all have higher education and work experience from 3 to 45 years, the ratio of men and women is the same as in the first group.

In accordance with the purpose of the research the social needs of the adult were chosen for the analysis, that is, the needs that are important for solving the problems of socialization.

The test "Assessment of satisfaction of needs by the method of paired comparisons" was used as a methodical tool (Skvortsov, 1986). The theoretical basis of the test was Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Instead of the physiological needs underlying the hierarchy of needs, Skvortsov (1986) introduced the need in material security of life. It should be specially noted that the test reveals relative satisfaction, that is, satisfaction of the need in comparison with other needs. In accordance with the purpose of the research, instead of the original construct "I want ..." the construct "Education helps me ..." was used.

6. Findings

The results of the conducted research allow us to state differences in the significant factors of socialization by means of education for people oriented toward solving the problems of adaptation (group 1) and those who are aimed at solving the problems of autonomization in the process of socialization (group 2).

Table 01. Factor analysis of satisfaction of needs by means of education

Statements	Factor weights	
	Group 1	Group 2
Win recognition and respect.	0,32	0,73
Have companionship with people.	0,43	0,69
Make provision for the future.	0,62	0,56
Makeliving.	0,74	0,59
Have a good company.	0,30	0,65
Addtothestrength.	0,69	0,61
Develop strengths and abilities.	0,54	0,67
Have material comfort.	0,61	0,44
Raise the level of skill and competence.	0,65	0,71
Keepoutoftrouble.	0,71	0,49
Strive for a new and unexplored.	0,13	0,64
Have a position of influence.	0,41	0,32
Buygoodthings.	0,32	- 0,19
Deal with the matter in earnest.	- 0,24	0,12
Beunderstoodbyothers.	0,27	0,41

As can be seen from Table 01, respondents did not actually express dissatisfaction with the implementation of their needs by means of education, the exception is two parameters. First, it is the dissatisfaction of the need to buy good things, which is most likely due to the awareness of the costs of education. These data confirm the results of our earlier research (Tarkhanova, 2012) on factors that significantly impede the efforts of fulfilled specialists to update their knowledge and develop competence. So, the main deterrent for the adult is the lack of time - this is the main barrier on the way to additional education, which our students named. Often, the reason for the refusal of training is the costs associated with the process of vocational education.

The analysis of factor weights showed that in the first group of respondents, the most significant factor (12.5%) is associated with the possibility to strengthen their professional and financial position and can be interpreted as "Education allows me to improve material well-being". While the most significant factor for the second group (11.3%) is related to social and interpersonal interaction and can be interpreted as "Education allows to improve my system of social relations".

The self-expression factor, which can be interpreted as "Education allows me to develop and perfect" is the second according to the importance in the first (9.2%) and in the second group (8.7%). Apparently, this coincidence is due to the fact that representatives of both the first and the second group feel the increase in knowledge and the development of competences during the learning process, and they are satisfied with self-realization in the process of educational practices regardless of the priority of the tasks of socialization.

The third place in the group of adults solving problems of adaptation took the safety factor (4.2%), this factor can be interpreted as "Education protects me from negative changes". Indeed, both at the initial interview stage and in the learning process, adults often ask questions about the legitimacy of the received education document, the opportunities for using the acquired knowledge and skills when passing certification, alternative employment options. In the group of students aiming for autonomization, the third place is the factor of material needs (5.3%), which can be interpreted as "Education allows me to improve material well-being". This shows that material stability and financial well-being are an important component of the autonomization of the individual, which give greater freedom for self-realization.

The obtained data confirm the conclusions of Marchenko that education for adults is by the nature of motivation an actor and acts in the form of satisfaction their own educational needs (Marchenko, 2008), as well as the conclusions of Savostova (2010) about the significant influence of education of adults on their labor socialization. At the same time, the results obtained by us contradict the point of view expressed by Ilakavichus (2014) that the cultural needs and needs in self-fulfillment are satisfied by adults mainly through informal education. All of our respondents were trained in continuing vocational programs that suppose releasing a document on additional vocational education, that is, they were included in formal educational practices, which did not prevent them from appreciating the level of realization of their needs in communication, development and self-fulfillment.

7. Conclusion

The analysis of the results of the study allows us to draw the following conclusions:

The labor stage of socialization of the adult has ceased to be characterized by the stability and completeness of vital choices. Modern men not only exteriorize the accumulated experience, values, attitudes, but also internalize the sense component of new activities and relationships, independently choosing objects for identification. In connection with this important means of socialization of the person in this period are all types of education – both informal and formal (advanced training and vocational retraining).

Agree with Erikson that the education is both a driving force and a means of socialization for the adult (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Römer, 1993). Educational practices, even at the labor stage of socialization, can become the leading and determining beginning of the person's the formation of the universal competencies, the main instrument of the cultural continuity of generations.

The analysis of the results of the research allows us to say that influence through training on the satisfaction of the social needs of the adult is advisable to implement on the basis of taking into account the leading for this particular personality type of tasks of socialization. Depending on the situation in life, education for the adult can be a means of adaptation, that is, an adaptation to changed circumstances, and a means of autonomization, that is, to a large extent it determines the revision of personal views or even the abandonment of previous experience.

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