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THE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRACTICES AND PROJECTS OF ORGANIZING NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN UKRAINE

The article presents the results of the researches of 24-authored Ukrainian projects of non-formal education, presented in the Catalog of Best Practices and Projects of the Organization of Non-formal Education (in Ukrainian higher educational institutions, in the process of professional training of future specialists in the social sphere). Content analysis of experience was implemented on two levels: external / organizational and internal / content. The external (organizational) analysis of non-formal education practices was carried out in the process of critically estimating the main activity-centered components of non-formal education as singled out and described by its agents and providers. The internal (content-related) analysis of non-formal education practices was performed by means of analyzing the essence and content of the projects in question based on the following criteria: theoretical approaches employed, underlying values, main processes, systematicity, fundraising, and implementation level. The following main modern trends in the development of the practice of non-formal education were established: 1) during organization of non-formal education, providers are guided by their own scientific or professional interests without analyzing the individual needs of the participants; 2) there are no current studies in pedagogical activity aimed at studying the participatory motives of various categories of participants in non-formal educational projects; 3) the specification of participants in non-formal learning allows organizers to specify the needs for which it is aimed; 4) the leading functions of non-formal education are educational, upbringing, psychological and enlightenment; 5) in non-formal education, the tendency towards the use of group forms and methods of teaching, as well as in the formal education system; 6) in the presented experience, there are no correlation of goals with the outlined authors' results of non-formal education; 7) the vast majority of non-formal education experience is realized without financial support, at the expense of initiative, goodwill and research or civic interests of the organizers; 8) today the most common theoretical foundations of the organization of non-formal education are activity, competence, and systems approaches.

Key words: non-formal education, non-formal learning, content analysis, practice of non-formal education, organization of non-formal education.

Introduction. The topicality of studying the contemporary experience of organizing non-formal education in Ukraine is determined by the need to systemize its practices and projects. This is necessary in order to single out the main tendencies of how non-formal education is currently developing in Ukraine; analyze its current state and underlying values as well as the theoretical approaches to its organization; develop methodological recommendations as to the application and propagation of the experience available.

Generally speaking, the active development of non-formal education in Ukraine first took place at the beginning of the XXI century as conditioned by a set of both social and educational changes. These changes included accessing and borrowing the effective educational forms of advanced nations, the increase in the activities of the Third Sector, the modification of goal-oriented (the development of public activities) and axiological (human rights as fundamental values) constituents of the country's educational policy, the search for

ways to include the discriminated and socially excluded layers of population into the process of decision making, and the orientation of the educational system to European standards.

Analysis of recent research and publications. In particular, the theoretical basis and essence of non-formal education as a component of the educational system and a special socio-educational phenomenon was designed in the studies of V. D. Davydova [1]. O. V. Zhikhorska determined the specificity of the integration of formal and non-formal education in the process of professional training [6]. V. S. Zayarna analyzed the modern Ukrainian scientists' work of the development of the field of non-formal education [5]. R. B. Presner described non-formal education as a special form of adult education within post-graduate studies [3] and Yu. I. Shustak characterized the legal framework for the formation of non-formal education [4].

At the same time, acquiring topicality in the field of theoretical studies, non-formal education has not yet been studied in terms of the dissemination of practices and projects and its implementation in Ukraine.

The purpose of our article is to analyze the individual experience of non-formal education in Ukraine in order to identify the main trends and patterns of its formation.

Results and Discussion. To be able to fulfill the above-mentioned aim, as well as to ascertain the validity of the information gleaned, in 2017 we managed to fully prepare and publish the Catalogue of Best Practices and Projects for Organizing Non-formal Education based on the experience acquired by higher educational institutions of Ukraine in the course of giving professional training to prospective social workers. The main goals of the publication consisted of propagating the idea of giving non-formal education to young people, sharing experience in the field of additional social education, and popularizing non-formal educational forms as a basis for developing civil society in Ukraine. Invitations to share corresponding experience were placed in publicly available web resources, the Facebook social networking service, and communicated through purposeful distribution to Ukrainian higher educational institutions.

As a result, there are 24 non-formal education projects featured in the Catalogue. The publication includes 37 auctorial projects from educationalists and practical workers coming from different regions of Ukraine (Berdychiv, Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, Konotop, Nizhyn, Sloviansk, Starobilsk, Kharkiv, Uman etc.).

The successive analysis of the experience was performed on two levels: external (organizational) and internal (content-related).

The external (organizational) analysis of non-formal education practices was carried out in the process of critically estimating the main activity-centered components of non-formal education as singled out and described by its agents and providers. In particular, viewing the process of organizing non-formal education as a specific kind of educational work, we distinguish in its structure such components as motivational, aim-oriented, organizational, operational, and result-related mentioned in the Catalogue.

Let us expound the results obtained.

The *motivational component* of the experience accumulated in the Catalogue consists of discussing corresponding educational projects in terms of the needs and interests of their participants. It must be admitted that in describing the available experience of non-formal education researchers tend to disregard the motivation of participants. In particular, the description of motivation is not infrequently either absent or formulated in too generalized a way as "conditioned by social needs." Such a situation can be accounted for by either of the two trends in modern non-formal education: 1) its agents and providers are guided by their own theoretical or professional interests, disregarding the individual needs of participants; 2) in current educational practice there is a shortage of studies aimed at reflecting the motives behind the participation of different categories of trainees in non-formal education projects.

We believe this tendency to be conditioned by the initial developmental stage at which both theory and practice of Ukrainian non-formal education currently find themselves. A top-priority challenge for organizers is the search for organizational forms of study, education, and development, i.e. issues related to answering the question of 'how?' It can be prognosticated that in the process of its further development the sector of non-formal education will inevitably become more stratified, following the individual interests of participants, and acquire a broader, all-embracing, and more easily accessible character. Besides, one can conclude that research on the leading motivation of non-formal education participants would be most timely and useful.

However, some project developers specified the motivational needs of participants, which included adaptation, communication, security, professional and creative needs. The projects normally include a target group of participants (people with special needs, students or specialists in certain fields etc.) rather than a broad public audience. Thus, the concretization of a target group of participants allows the organizers of non-formal education to specify the particular needs it serves to satisfy.

The *aim-oriented component* of the analyzed experience is available in all projects, the majority of authors characterizing it as the determinant one in terms of the content of non-formal education. The content analysis of the aims of non-formal education as specified by the authors allows the description of them by means of singling out the following generalized characteristics (in order of decreasing priority): competence formation, professional evolution, propagation of certain ideas – 16,67 % of projects; cultivation of cultural values, acquiring new experience, creating special conditions – 12,50 % of projects; personal development, correction of psychological states, activity development – 8,33 % of projects; gaining literacy, scholarly development – 4,17 % of projects (the total being 120,83 % as certain projects comprised several aims). Thus, at the present stage, the main function of non-formal education is the training function, with the educational, psychological, and awareness-raising functions following in its wake.

The *organizational component* of the projects and practices reflects either the stages or directions of putting non-formal education into practice or the forms of its organization. The main organizational stages as described by the authors of non-formal education projects include preparatory, practical, and resultant. The organizational directions of non-formal education vary depending on a level of implementation and a degree of experience systematicity. The most popular organizational forms of non-formal education are training courses as they allow individualizing the process of gaining experience in view of the availability of feedback. In some of the projects non-formal education is organized following the peer-to-peer pedagogical pattern, which is conducive to a comfortable psychological atmosphere resulting from the absence of hierarchy and authoritarianism.

The *operational component* reflects the methods of non-formal education employed in the projects. The majority of them are group work methods that, in our opinion, allow for the optimization of the resource-consuming mode of training. Despite that, the Catalogue includes 2 projects involving methods of individual work and 2 projects employing methods of community work. Thus, preserved is the tendency to use group work forms and methods of training, as is the case with formal education system. However, the majority of authors account for this tendency not in terms of the ergonomicity of resource consumption, but by the availability of a communicative educational surrounding, additionally favoring the socialization and integration of participants.

The *result-related component* of the experience is aimed at analyzing the authors' evaluation of the efficacy of a corresponding activity. It is worthwhile to mention the following tendency that was revealed in the course of the analysis: the available experience demonstrates a lack of connection between the aims and results of education as described by

the authors. In our opinion, it testifies to the fact that at its present stage of development non-formal education is viewed by its agents and providers as a process-directed rather than a goal-oriented activity, i.e. activity for the sake of activity. Other possible reasons for this tendency are a lack of corresponding experience among non-formal education agents and providers, the absence of approbated technologies of non-formal education as would guarantee expected results, and the project (prognostic) nature of each separate piece of experience. The revealed tendency is further confirmed by the absence of the authors' proposed criteria for evaluating the efficacy of non-formal education (except in case with 1 project). Thus, the process of introducing non-formal education in Ukraine can currently be called experimental in character and subject to approbation. The results of non-formal education are neither recognized nor certified which is a natural consequence of the absence of any criteria for their evaluation.

The internal (content-related) analysis of non-formal education practices was performed by means of analyzing the essence and content of the projects in question based on the following criteria: theoretical approaches employed, underlying values, main processes, systematicity, fund-raising, and implementation level.

In terms of the latter criterion, the Catalogue comprises projects with the following implementation levels: international – 1 (4,17 %), all-Ukrainian (country-wide) – 4 (16,67 %), regional – 1 (4,17 %), territorial (community-wide) – 7 (29,17 %), educational institution-wide – 10 (41,67 %), individual – 1 (4,17 %). The implementation level of a particular project is immediately linked to sources of fund-raising, as projects with higher levels of implementation are normally financed with grants. Educational institution-wide projects, instead, are carried out using the resources supplied by the institutions in question and do not involve additional financial sources. Thus, one can conclude that nearly half of the non-formal education projects figuring in the Catalogue (41,67 %) receive no financial support, subsisting on private initiative, good will, and the organizers' own professional, exploratory, or civic interests. In our opinion, this enables one to single out the following peculiarity of the present-day situation with non-formal education in Ukraine: the growing interest of non-formal education and social activity current among educational institutions causes, on the part of activists, an alternative search for corresponding educational forms to be introduced within the system of formal education. However, poor financing does not allow spreading the available positive experience.

A similar tendency has been revealed following the criterion of systematicity, for the majority of systematic and lasting projects are financed either by local communities or by grants. Alternatively, the projects carried out on the initiative of individual campaigners for educational changes receive no financial support.

It seems worthwhile to formulate the following conclusion: the introduction of appropriate fund-raising strategies and mechanisms in the field of non-formal education might allow an increase in the implementation level, as well as the systematicity of changes in the auctorial experience under consideration.

We also made an attempt to single out the theoretical approaches that the authors of the projects in question employed in order to substantiate the efficacy of pedagogical transformations. These conclusions were arrived at independently, though they are based on the categories that the authors' chose to use while describing their experience, as well as on the values and main processes specified by them as substantial for developing a certain non-formal education practice.

It has been ascertained that the most current and influential theoretical approaches needed to implement the practice of Ukrainian non-formal education are:

– activity-centered (characteristic of the educational forms aimed at learning through communication) – 8 projects out of 24, 33, 33 %;

- competence-centered (characteristic of educational and communicative projects in which the central process is that of learning, the result being either the acquisition by the participants of a certain competence or that of a new social experience) – 7 (29,17 % of the projects);
- system-centered (viewing project aims as resulting from the influence of a system of many educational processes; in the case of such projects, the means for achieving educational goals tend to integrate the efforts and resources of social partners) – 6 (25 % of the projects);
- human rights education (the projects aimed at raising the participants' awareness of human rights issues by appealing to their values and emotions) – 4 (16,67 %);
- gender-sensitive / complex gender (the projects consolidating gender equality and parity relations) – 2 (8,33 %);
- life-long learning (as reflected in the projects involving the interaction between different age groups of participants, aimed at PR-campaigns propagating socially significant education, increasing the competitive ability of young people applying for a job or pursuing a career etc.) – 2 (8,33 %);
- cross-cultural differences (the projects aimed at forming cross-cultural tolerance and interaction) – 1 (4,17 %);
- humanistic concept (the projects aimed at forming humanistic values in the participants) – 1 (4,17 %);
- andragogy (the projects aimed at giving training to adults) – 1 (4,17%);
- bilingualism (the projects involving purposeful organization of bilingual education) – 1 (4,17 %);
- peer-to-peer concept (learning through the organized interaction of peers) – 1 (4,17%).

Thus, the quantitative analysis of the projects' content testifies to the fact that the most widely spread theoretical approaches to the organization of non-formal education in modern Ukraine are activity-centered, competence-centered, and system-centered. Generally speaking, it is worth mentioning that these approaches are the most widely used ones in Ukrainian theoretical and practical pedagogy. Completely absent are totally new approaches involving the theories of nonviolent communication, anti-oppressive education, etc. We tend to view this tendency as suggestive of borrowing the experience of formal education and transferring it into the domain of non-formal education. This practice can, in our opinion, have negative consequences in view of the absence of the atmosphere of co-creativity and equality of those involved in the learning process since the authority of instructors is largely preserved. The lack of alternative pedagogical approaches employed in Ukrainian pedagogical theory and practice results from copying well-approbated experience rather than experimenting with a new one.

Of much interest, is the fact that the concept of human rights education is present in 16,67 % of the projects. This can reflect the general tendency of Ukrainian education being reformed in the direction of European integration for it is an obvious attempt to propagate all-European values. It also reveals the respect on the part of Ukrainian educationalists for European practice and experience as well as their attempts to disseminate them in our home country.

Other approaches and concepts found in one or two non-formal education projects only can be characterized as conditioned by the aims and values of a specific project. That is to say, they reflect the narrow content of the project exclusively and, consequently, cannot be expanded to cover all the available experience of non-formal education.

The underlying values that non-formal education is organized in accordance with reflect both the above-listed pedagogical approaches and deep educational results. They are limited to a particular project, reflect the scientific and professional interests of its designers and providers, and so their general theoretical analysis is of little interest.

Instead, the majority of processes employed in the course of organizing non-formal education testify to the theoretical and practical differentiation between the terms 'non-formal education' and 'non-formal learning' (though in English-language sources they are largely synonymic). In organizing non-formal education its agents and providers give preference to processes of communication, enlightenment, cognition, interaction, and education. Thus, presently non-formal education is not a tool for spreading knowledge. Instead, it can be described as an organizational condition for the formation of certain traits of personality in the process of communication and informing. In our opinion, this can testify to the current lack of readiness to recognize the educational results of non-formal learning in the case of either professional or general educational training of its participants. This tendency can be defined as depreciating the educational results achieved in the process of non-formal learning. This is caused by it still being viewed not as an independent alternative way of learning, but as a means of additional training for mastering certain social-psychological competences.

Conclusions. Thus, the main conclusions of the study are that today the process of the formation of non-formal education characterizes the dialectical law of the mutual transition of quantitative changes in qualitative. Namely, the gradual expansion of the experience of organizing non-formal education in the educational environment will gradually allow providers to detail the expected results, value and methodological principles, crystallize effective experience, expand the circle of participants and attract funding. **The prospects for further research** are the development of communication campaigns for various target groups on promoting non-formal education as an effective tool for social and pedagogical activities and informing the public about the goals, values and opportunities of non-formal learning.

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Аналіз практик і проєктів організації неформальної освіти в Україні.

У статті представлено результати дослідження 24 авторських українських проєктів неформальної освіти, представлених у Каталозі кращих практик і проєктів організації неформальної освіти (у навчальних закладах України; у процесі професійної підготовки майбутніх фахівців соціальної сфери). Контент-аналіз досвіду реалізовувався на двох рівнях: зовнішньому, організаційному та внутрішньому,

змістовому. Встановлено такі основні сучасні тенденції розвитку практики неформальної освіти: 1) при організації неформальної освіти провайдери керуються власними науковими або професійними інтересами без аналізу індивідуальних потреб учасників; 2) у педагогічній діяльності наразі відсутні дослідження, спрямовані на вивчення мотивів участі різних категорій учасників у неформальних освітніх проєктах; 3) специфікація учасників неформального навчання дозволяє конкретизувати організаторам потреби, на задоволення яких воно спрямоване; 4) провідними функціями неформальної освіти виступають навчальна, виховна, психологічна, просвітня; 5) у неформальній освіті зберігається тенденція до використання групових форм і методів навчання, як і у формальній системі освіти; 6) у представленому досвіді відсутній взаємозв'язок цілей із окресленими авторами результатами неформальної освіти; 7) переважна більшість досвіду неформальної освіти реалізується без фінансової підтримки, за рахунок ініціативи, доброї волі та власних дослідницьких або громадянських інтересів організаторів; 8) найбільш поширеними теоретичними засадами організації неформальної освіти сьогодні є діяльнісний, компетенційний, системний підходи.

Ключові слова: неформальна освіта, неформальне навчання, контент-аналіз, практика неформальної освіти, організація неформальної освіти.