



Crucial Directions of the Development of Continuing Education in Russia. Aspects of Quality

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Abstract

The development of the lifelong education system is one of the most important areas of educational activity, which implies the continuity of processes in the systems of preschool, general secondary, primary, secondary, higher, postgraduate and additional professional education. The effectiveness and the possibility of educational activities are determined by the interconnections between the various stages of the innovation cycle, producers and consumers of services; firms, market, government and other social partners. Continuing education can be seen as part of a lifelong learning concept. Continuing education is not just a pedagogical system, characterized by certain structural features, functional relationships and teaching technologies, but also a specific component of the whole society. It becomes continuous, connected with life, and not just final, prescribed to a person during his studies at school, secondary school or university. The development of the lifelong education system allows creating all the necessary conditions to ensure the response of the education system to the dynamically changing needs of the individual, society, and the economy. In addition, many scientists note that the continuing education system plays an important role in the formation of personnel for the innovative development of Russian regions. The development of the lifelong education system is aimed at supporting the competent development of the individual, at implementing the concept of developing education. A competency-based approach to education creates all the necessary conditions for the diverse development of the individual, the formation of competencies and personal qualities that allow effective action in various life situations. The concept of lifelong education is based on the principles of continuity, flexibility, fast dynamics associated with changing needs in the labor market, for the implementation of education "not FOR life, but THROUGH life". The article is devoted to

the problem of implementation of continuing education in Russia and its impact on the quality of education in our country.

Keywords: *Continuing education, modernization, pedagogical culture, teaching and learning, educational strategy, innovations.*

1. Introduction

The most important task of the development of the Russian education in the context of development prospects is to create the system of continuing innovative education.

The term "continuing education" is a very multifaceted one. Firstly, continuing education means constant continuous improvement of the knowledge and skills of a person, which is connected with the need to be relevant in the modern environment (professional and social). Secondly, this term refers to the system of views on the educational process as a whole. This system considers educational activity as an integral and main component of a person's lifestyle at any age, and requires adding new steps to the educational ladder designed for all periods of a person's life. Thirdly, continuing education provides for a constant enrichment of a person's creative potential and for his (her) development as a creative person. Continuing education is a coherent process containing consecutive stages of specially organized educational activities that create favorable living conditions for the person. Currently, continuing education is also treated as a unified system of either state-run or civil society-run educational institutions, which ensures the unity of content and organization, as well as the continuity of all links within the education chain. The solution to the tasks of upbringing, education, and professional training of a person must, on the one hand, take into account current and future public needs and, on the other hand, satisfy the person's desire for self-education, as well as versatile and harmonious development throughout his (her) life.

2. Modern Russia Can Create the System of Continuing and Innovative Education

At the current historical moment, the Russian Federation faces the task, which the humanity has repeatedly tried to solve through its history, but today some countries are approaching it in a more practical way, for example, northern countries (Sweden, Norway, and Denmark). And at first glance, it seems that Russia should not undertake such a project, since it lacks much of what it takes,

starting with the world recognition - no Russian university is included even in top one hundred of the world's prestigious universities - and ending with financial concerns.

But ratings are one thing, and reality is something else entirely. And in reality, the country is in a historical situation where it is once again obliged to create the best education system in the world.

Moreover, it is important to understand that the main difficulties in creating this system are not of financial, but rather of pedagogical nature. In part, this is due to the fact that the financial problem is not the main problem in education, in part because the quantitative problem is not the main problem of development of the modern Russian education. Therefore, its development does not require a fundamentally different level of funding. This problem used to be major at the time of building Soviet education in the 30s and 70s, when achieving higher quantitative indicators required a rapid increase in expenditures.

Now, when the tasks of improving the quality of education come to the forefront, there is no need for a fundamentally different level of funding - in fact, for the most part, in terms of financing, it does not matter if the school consists of autonomous or organically united stages.

Russia has also organizational and pedagogical experience in implementing strategic projects for the development of education. Throughout the 30s and 70s of the XX century Russia was the world leader in education, it achieved an unprecedented historical breakthrough in education by realizing a grandiose project of creating a successful unified education system - first elementary, then seven or eight year long, and then secondary education. Our country has a historical experience of nation-wide reform and development of education.

However, the most important resource that Russia has today is considerable pedagogical potential. What is the pedagogical potential? Figuratively speaking, this is a fundamental basis, which can be vividly compared with agricultural soil. After all, if you have the best soil in the world, you can get the best harvest in the world. On the other hand, wrong use of such a potential can destroy this soil. But a good harvest is impossible without good soil.

The role of soil is played in education by pedagogical culture. Let us consider a simple example. Byzantium had a tremendous cultural potential, which allowed it to remain a great state with high cultural level until the last days of its existence, despite the utter poverty.

Russia has a tremendous pedagogical potential, which it inherited from the Soviet Union. It received an academic education - one based on classical culture. Simply put, our children read Pushkin in the first years, while the American children read comic books in senior years.

But in order to have this potential, we need to have classical content and methods

that allow students to master this culture. Such a system was created by the pre-revolutionary and Soviet schools. And now it is passed down from one generation of teachers to others. This continuing and transferable practice is the very real and invaluable pedagogical potential.

The most serious problems connected with the organization of the system of innovative continuing education are of purely pedagogical nature. For example, continuing education means universal higher education for the majority of the population. However, until recently, higher education was the lot of the elected minority. Higher education was given to those who could receive it. When today higher education was employed on a large scale, this has led to deterioration in its quality.

However, let us remember that in the XIX century, people who received secondary education were much fewer in percentage terms than those who receive higher education today. Now almost all people in the developed countries of the world receive secondary education. And they study together – both A-students and backbenchers. This means the school has learned to teach everyone! Accordingly, the logic of the mankind development, which dictates the need for a higher level of education for the majority of the population, will inevitably prompt the education to create technologies that will allow higher education for the majority of the population. And Russia, with its rich theoretical and, most importantly, practical pedagogical potential, can successfully solve this and any other pedagogical problem that will arise in the course of creating a new education system.

2.1. Is it Possible to Create Innovative Education when the Culture and Especially the Science are in Deep Crisis?

Therefore, the most relevant way to develop a modern system of Russian education is to organize the system of innovative continuing education that can be created not only by reforming the entire education and improving its quality by strengthening its classical academic characteristics, but also by preparing a brand new teacher. For this, higher education is not sufficient, many teachers must have academic degrees.

In this connection, the system of professional training of pedagogical personnel deserves a separate discussion. The key role of pedagogical education in the modernization of the entire vocational training institution is determined by its specific features. In particular, it is noted that the special role of the institution follows from at least three functions performed by it:

- firstly, pedagogical education is the only educational sphere that works for education itself, its self-renewal, by forming its strategic resource - personnel;

- secondly, like the whole institution of education, pedagogical education is the accumulator and translator of the sociocultural values of the society, the environment for the socialization of individuals;

- thirdly, in its environment, pedagogical education forms a person who will become responsible for the learning of these values by the younger generation (Zasyupkin, 2010).

Thus, the modernization of the institution of education itself must be based on preserving its fundamental nature and adequacy to the needs of the individual, society, state and time, at the same time anticipating unjustified, obviously premature and early decisions. Therefore, today the following issues are more and more pressing:

- What innovative tasks is the modern pedagogical education facing in the context of its modernization?

- How are they interconnected with the modernization of the institution of education in general and the society in general?

- What kind of person should be the teacher implementing all the proposed reforms?

Some of the answers are presented today in the legislative documents of recent years, in particular, in the Concept of Long-Term Social and Economic Development of the Russian Federation for the Period to 2020 (2008), the scientific report "Russian Education 2020: Education Model for a Knowledge-Based Economy" (2008) (Volkov, Remorenko, Kuzminov et al 2008), the Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" (2012), the Draft Concept for Supporting the Development of Teacher Education (2013), the Professional Standard "Teacher of Vocational Training, Vocational Education and Additional Vocational Education" (2017), and others. However, some problems remain unexplored and are widely discussed in public and professional circles.

2.2. Main Directions of Organizing the System of Innovative Continuing Education

How do we create a new effective education system? The only way is to tap into Russia's main national resources: intellectual, spiritual and pedagogical ones. Fortunately, the country has a tremendous intellectual potential, which, unfortunately, is more often than not used beyond the borders of our homeland. In Russia, its spiritual and pedagogical potential is also developing steadily. At the moment, the number one task is to stop the sluggish crisis of Russian science, including such a destructive phenomenon as the mass closure of dissertation committees.

In order to arrange such education, two directions must be followed. On the one

hand, we need to create the necessary conditions for all those who are able to work in the innovative development mode (they can be individual teachers, institutions, and entire systems, for example, municipal or regional ones) to have this opportunity. Such a system, by enabling the possibility for the emergence of talented teachers and scientists, as well as successfully operating institutions and systems, will make it possible not only to improve the quality of education, but also to work out many elements of the new education system. On the other hand, we need to create a state system of research centers focused on the creation and implementation of innovative education development projects and directly engaged in solving the problems of innovative education development.

Studying the specifics of the organization of lifelong pedagogical training must be based on the following ideas about the structure of lifelong professional pedagogical training: basic pedagogical education (secondary and higher vocational education) and professional pedagogical education throughout the whole duration of professional activity. At the same time, we should take into account the fact that in connection with the transition of the Russian universities to the Bologna two-tier education system "Bachelor - Master", for the purpose of convergence of the existing education systems in Europe today, cardinal changes were made to the Russian educational system and a number of adequate measures were taken to match the content and the learning process to the world educational standards.

Therefore, in the near future, systematic fundamental or applied research in the following priority areas will be of special significance:

- *Theoretical and methodological*, providing a scientific forecast, a strategy for the development of lifelong pedagogical training in historical, prognostic and comparative aspects; the emergence of new concepts and theories that integrate the disclosure of the essence of its phenomena and objects;
- *Socio-psychological and culturological*, investigating real problems, properties, dynamics of the development of social, personal, and culturological qualities of the modern teacher, problems of value-related and semantic content of the teachers' activities, ways of self-realization of the teacher and development of their creative potential;
- *Professional*, exploring the professional aspects of the teacher, their competence, the new professions of pedagogical work;
- *Pedagogical*, exploring innovative ways to improve the effectiveness, monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teacher education, the introduction and use of new systems, education techniques and management, training, retraining and advanced training of teaching staff;
- *Didactic and methodical*, investigating the problems of improving the content,

substantiating the laws and principles of organizing and conducting the process of pedagogical education in pedagogical educational institutions of various levels, their integration and standardization, introduction of modern forms, teaching methods, information and communication technologies.

In addition, the priority tasks of the national pedagogical education and its improvement can be as follows:

- development and implementation of a new professional standard for the teacher in order to create advanced educational programs that meet the requirements of the improved state policy and strategy for the development of education, the concept of the spiritual and moral development of the individual, and the upbringing of a creative, responsible and ambitious citizen of Russia;
- creation of fundamentally new systems of education management in general and institutions that train future teachers, in particular, on the basis of the modernization of the existing structure of education management;
- bringing the contents of educational programs, educational techniques and Internet resources, principles and methods, psychological and pedagogical mechanisms of teaching and quality assessment, in line with world trends and the demands of the global information community;
- studying of the problems of socio-cultural conditioning of the dynamics of content and forms of postgraduate pedagogical education as a necessary element of the lifelong pedagogical training systems (Onishchenko, 2018).

It is important to create an all-Russian center for strategic planning of innovative education. It should be established under the Presidential Council for Science and Education, because it takes strategic decisions in education. On the one hand, it will be an information platform, a forum for open discussion of strategies for the development of Russian learning and education, and on the other, it will be an analytical center for collecting and developing strategic ideas for the development of our education and their submission to the Council for approval. It will also be able to plan and order innovative developments at all levels. This center can become a real mechanism for accumulating the intellectual, spiritual and pedagogical potential of our country and an embodiment of developments and projects in our education.

But when selecting innovative development as the strategic direction of education, we are faced with the fact that even today we have such a variety of programs, textbooks and education systems that it will soon appear that children studying in two nearby schools are studying in different states. Therefore, when creating a system of innovative continuing education, it is important to remember that maintaining continuity is the basic principle of building a new education system, because education is a conservative institution. And this is a blessing that allows it to successfully form a person. Education for many years, decades and

centuries has been polishing a sensible practice, which is then passed on from generation to generation, allowing them to successfully form almost every child. Therefore, as we determine the concept and the socio-pedagogical conditions and legislative bases for the development of the innovative model of education, its leading principle should be priority development of the existing education and its maximum unification, except for the cases when it is really necessary to create new educational institutions or certain other components of education, either because they need to be created anew, or because the existing ones do not meet the requirements of the time.

As we can see, the innovative model of lifelong learning must be created as much as possible from the tested and reasonable elements of the already existing education, thus preserving a deep continuity.

3. Conclusion

How should we approach the creation of a new system? Apparently, the solution is as follows. First of all, we need to adopt unified state standards, unified state programs, and unified state textbooks. At the same time, unified state standards have already been created in Russia. We also have come to understand the need for a single textbook, at least a history textbook. But we must come to understand the need for unified state programs.

Otherwise, a paradoxical situation arises: if there is a single standard and a single textbook, then why should the teacher write their own program? If we have unified well-developed quality-oriented state standards, programs, and textbooks, there we have the necessary foundation, a sort of education canon, which every teacher should follow.

Strictly speaking, the development of standards, programs, textbooks, guidelines, etc. is outside the professional competence of the teacher. This is the task for the methodologists. The teacher's task is to scrupulously follow the requirements of the educational standard.

At the same time, these documents are the launching pad for the innovative activity of all subjects of education, regardless of who they are introduced by: a separate teacher or a regional education system. They must all have the right to creativity, and, if successful, they should receive an appropriate remuneration.

Teacher, school or even the region can and should start with their creativity from a level higher than the mandatory state requirements, their creativity shall start above the top of the state educational requirements. Accordingly, whatever the subject of education suggests, it must offer a higher level and quality of education than that prescribed in the requirements of state educational documents.

How can the state organize the control and evaluation of the quality of creative pedagogical activity of education subjects and, accordingly, evaluate their work? The most correct solution is as follows. If the program, textbook, or the available standards in general are changed by more than 10 percent, then these changes can be approved at the municipal level, if by more than 25 percent - at the regional level, more than 50 - at the federal level. For this, the relevant methodological services must have these powers and functions.

The level of creative work should be appropriate to the level of remuneration offered to teachers and scientists, as should be the level of funding for educational institutions and systems. The same transition should also lie at the heart of research and design organizations, specifically dealing with experimental and patent pedagogical activities.

On the basis of this approach to creative pedagogical activity, it will be possible to work out in practice different models of education, including higher education. And perhaps, most importantly, this approach will free our country from experimenting with its education system as a whole, and from the situation when one or another innovation coming from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation is immediately processed in all educational institutions of the country, although the pedagogical effect it is often questionable.

For example, which higher education model is better: a one-tier six-year-long model proposed by Viktor Sadovnichiy (rector of the MSU – Moscow State University of Lomonosov) at the last Congress of Rectors of Russian Universities, or the two-tier six-year-long model? This can be tested in practice in the operation of individual universities. In this case, we will have truly innovative educational projects, and we will immediately see what their innovation is. At the same time, this will not throw the entire education system into the experiment, including the higher education system.

Thus, when each of the interested parties has the right and the opportunity to implement innovative development of education like this, we, while maintaining a single educational space and its deep continuity with the previous education, will be able to bring it to a qualitatively new level of development in the natural functioning mode.

So, it is possible to draw a general conclusion that today the development of the lifetime pedagogical vocational training system should be aimed at realizing the idea of managing the continuous professional self-improvement of the teacher at all stages of their professional education. At the same time, the main attention should be paid not only to problems of organization of this educational sphere, but also to motivation and stimulation of teachers themselves for their constant self-development in the course of their professional activities.

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