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The formation of regional models of the system of continuing education as a prior direction of educational policy

The additional professional education A.P.E. as the space of social practices forming regional models of the system of continuing education is integrated into the system of social communications and social reproduction of Russian society.

Now Russian society actively tends to integrate into the global educational system that is linked with the minimization of economic and social costs, an increase in the quality of education and the use of the A.P.E. potential as a resource of the social development of society. In the long-term perspective, the social investments in the human capital will in many respects determine the development strategy of Russian society. The A.P.E. increases the prestige and mobility of educational systems. The majority of new professions fall under this system of education, and the reprofiling of educational programs in the structures of the A.P.E. is put into effect much faster, than in the higher school system. Given that availability of knowledge becomes a decisive factor in the economy, then the A.P.E. targeted at the training and retraining of specialists contributes to the «remodernization» of the Russian industrial base and to the decrease in its dependence on the raw-material sector and the imports of out-of-date technologies. In many respects the knowledge-based aspiration of Russian society to take advantage of the benefits of the economy is determined by the public support and reputation of the A.P.E.

If one can use such factors as the level of the development of production forces, living standards, the degree of political and civil freedoms as indicators of the social development of the regions of Russia then the A.P.E. acts as a field of education where social innovations are implemented in the increase in the quality of human potential in conformity with the social and cultural priorities proclaimed by society.

In the additional professional education, as a social space, the principle of the «equality in ignorance» is implemented. It means that nobody can claim completeness, universal professional and social competence, however prestigious his/her diploma is. The social competence is based on the «understanding of another person» and on the culture of a socially effective exploration of the world in the name of the preservation of one's own symbolic universalism and for the life of future generations. The focus on the extensive development of technology and the consumption of material resources are refuted by knowledge and an educational typical of a «raw-material power», and, unfortunately, does not fully exploit the professional and educational potential on the regional levels.

Russian society is getting out of «moribund education», although some attempts at system transformations are often made out of the educational context

and therefore they are socially inadequate and fraught with conflict. The additional professional education integrally influences the social development, determines the circle of «immediate problems and tasks», and the involvement in the Bologna process reveals its value as the objective weal in international contacts. The additional professional education is connected with the implementation of such terms and conditions of the integration into the global educational process, as the expansion of accessibility and transparency of the educational mechanisms, etc.

Russia's involvement in the Bologna process imposes on the educational system the commitments of openness, exchange of information, freedom of the exchange of «ideas and people». Naturally, the globalization of education is setting new problems of the unification, loss of cultural and educational identity, disappearance of fundamental educational programs under economic pressure.

In the process of the formation of effective regional models of continuing education, the A.P.E. system executes socially-protective and socially-stabilizing functions of the solution to the problems of professional socialization and adaptation of the strata of the population (forced migrants, immigrants, refugees, unemployed higher school graduates), who found themselves under the threat of marginalization, which is especially acute for the South of Russia. While covering the groups of the population, subject to the social risk in the southern regions of Russia, the A.P.E. injects into society certain stability, limits the influence of social anomie, restores confidence in education, gives impetus to continuing education. The strategy of the sustainable development of the Russian regions implies the use of the aggregate effect of all the spheres of social life and is linked with the minimization of social challenges, which are: mass migration, economic crises, demographic crises, political instability. The sustainable development is characterized by a deliberate limitation of the outside expansion and the inward development, by the interpretation of the social and personal potential. Different models of continuing education, integrated into the A.P.E. allowed millions of Russians, who lost their work or were forced to change professions, to keep the high creative impulse and to apply professional knowledge on the promising sites of social activity.

Nowadays Russian society is facing the problem of the transformation of basic education (the Unified State Examination, the two-level programs of higher professional training), and the mechanical transferences of the experience of institutional introductions into the A.P.E. could have had unpredictable consequences. Probably, the A.P.E. system is most distanced from the managerial experiments, and on its example

one can see a voluntary way of integration of the educational system with all costs. Unlike higher school it is not protected by the government support and has the incentive to innovation. Regional models of continuing education, functioning in the of A.P.E. format, are not threatened by the graduate overproduction as various programs of educational training are offered allowing a student to master a new profession, there are no professional or social habits of relying upon reputational capital. The additional professional education through the personalization of educational principles distances itself from the consequences of industrialism, training of narrow-field specialists, functional dependence and revives continuous education, which is understood as a social and professional competency. Even if professional knowledge can “grow obsolete”, the A.P.E. system possesses social confidence, readiness “to overcome” the turning points in one’s life, abrupt routes and micro-social collapses.

The A.P.E. validity, above all, does not consist in the gradual solution of the problems of global integration, but in the provision of the socially sustainable development of regional models which ensure social interaction between institutionalized and routine forms of sociology. It is unlikely that the A.P.E. graduates dream of a successful professional career abroad, as the majority of them have already passed the so-called mobile age (under 30 years). But what is typical, due to the implementation of continuing education is that people return to a socially active life and get rid of the so-called “compensation logic”. Being a democratic system in conditions of modern Russian society, the A.P.E. is executing not only the adaptive role, but also inspires social confidence and contributes to social innovation, which can not be produced by the social subjects, who were brought to life by “surviving logic”.

In the A.P.E. field there are reserves for an increase in the social efficiency of regional models of continuing education, including: (a) on-switching methods in a new technical system; (b) improvement of the modular educational programs; (c) searching for the ways of interaction with other educational practices; (d) borrowing of incremental social innovations.

The criteria for success are as follows: (a) psycho-pedagogical (motivation to the qualified protection in the new socio-economic conditions); (b) socio-economic (mobility, multiprofile nature); (c) scientific and technological (development and introduction of new technology).

That said, in our opinion, three fundamental theoretical and methodological principles there can be formulated.

First, modern society becomes reflexive, that is for its survival it is necessary to select optimum, goal-seeking ways of developing, proceeding not from some abstract principles for considerations of a customary order of things, but from professional knowledge, which is introduced in the social everyday life by means of continuous A.P.E.

Second, there is an awareness of “market rationality” and personalization and self-reliance. Norms of tolerance, mutual education in the process of the formation of models of continuing education act as a social alternative. Regional models of the A.P.E system of continuing education offers social confidence, recognition of other man’s dignity and trust in the «other», which requires the inclusion of specified long-term commitments towards society.

Third, social modernization may be sustainable in the case of coordinating institutional forms and structures of everyday life, globalization purposes and the development of human potential. The formation process of regional models of continuing education in the A.P.E. social practices is a resource for development as it insures the reproduction of the forms of sociability through educational activity and restores confidence in social institutions, lost as a result of the realization of the principles of market fundamentalism. Not extolling the role of the A.P.E., it is necessary to stress that because of the socio-cultural situation of the crisis of education, the displacements of social priorities, the A.P.E., as an innovative and social space, gives to the development of education and through the social structures of everyday life gives impetus to other spheres of public life in the regions of Russia.