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COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATION IN USA IN THE CONTEXT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Formulation and justification of the relevance of the problem. Education plays a key role in determining how to spend adult life. A higher level of education means higher earnings, better health, and a longer life. Lack of skills that are valued in global and local economies constrains economic growth, jobs, and income. Good, demand-driven vocational education and training is potentially one of the most important tools for developing young people's skills.

Vocational education and training provides youths with practice-oriented knowledge and skills required in specific occupations. Investing in a strong, public vocational education and training sector must be crucial. Vocational education and training is important as it enriches a person for life and it provides the competences which are necessary in a democratic society. Societal and economic development depends on the strength of vocational education and training as it provides access to skills and entry routes into the labor market.

Ukraine is providing a challenging education reform both on higher and secondary levels. Young people in Ukraine make up nearly half of unemployed in the country. Ukrainian system of vocational education and training lags behind many systems with different economic development albeit it has a considerable potential for increasing its competitiveness.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Vocational education and training is frequently perceived as the solution to improving the opportunities of youths who lack the resources, skills or motivation to continue with higher education.

Moreover, many scientists (A.Adam, K. Bertschy, A. Cattaneo, S. Martin, J. Middleton, G. Quintini, S. Wolter, A. Ziderman etc) argue that vocational education and training provides useful skills to prepare for youths' entry into the labor force and improve their chances of a successful professional career. In particular, by aligning the initial education more closely to particular vocations and tasks demanded in the labor market, the problem of mismatch, often seen as a main source of the high degree of unemployment in developing countries, may be reduced as some researchers (R.Almeida, J.Behrman, L.Dearden, S.McIntosh, M.Myck, D.Robalino, A.Vignoles etc) investigated. However, the relevance of vocational education and training varies significantly across clusters of countries around the world. As opposed to general education, vocational education and training is only a prominent part of secondary education in a number of countries. Vocational education and training around the world can be classified into three distinct systems: school-based, a dual apprenticeship system combining school training with a firm-based approach, and informal-based [5, p. 111–137.; 7, p. 249–274.; 8, p. 4].

The purpose of the article. The purpose of our research is to study and analyse vocational education and training system of USA as one of the most successful vocational education and training systems that benefits greatly the biggest economy in the world and to give recommendations of implementation of positive US experience into Ukrainian system of vocational education and training.

Problem analysis. National youth vocational

education and training policies and programs in the United States are overseen at the federal level by the Departments of Education and Labor. Each of the two Departments has a unique set of policies and program delivery systems. The role of vocational education is part of US education reform. The current focus on standards-based reform in American education has elevated academic achievement to a primary goal that is causing policy makers, educators and community leaders to rethink and perhaps discard many long standing components of high school education, such as a singular focus on vocational education [11].

US government supplies vocational education and training through the educational system and can be justified as a means to improve the skills needed by youth in the labor market or as motivation to continue with higher education.

Vocational education and training is an essential tool in its attempts to prepare young people for work in the modern economy and also in its bid to ensure that US remains competitive and innovative in the face of increasing global competition and shifting demographics. Many of the basic features of the US approach to vocational education are strong. Extensive decentralization gives rise to diverse and flexible forms of provision meeting the needs of many groups of learners, to a rich field of policy development and innovation, involving state governments and many non-government organizations.

US government supplies vocational education and training through the educational system and can be justified as a means to improve the skills needed by youth in the labor market or as motivation to continue with higher education. Vocational education and training in the United States is a highly fragmented and complex system which one can divide into four main areas where it takes place: high schools; two-year colleges; on-the-job training; apprenticeship. In all of these areas one can find different forms of vocational education regarding the learning situation, specialization and organization [9, p.27-35].

P.Ryan reviews studies which compare the two traditional dichotomies between vocational and general education and within the vocational category between apprenticeship and full time schooling. He concludes that routes of progression from vocational to tertiary education should be strengthened, and vocational education broadened. In relation to the second comparison, he concludes that apprenticeship does not have great advantages over full-time vocational education, and may even lead to lower pay. However, it is clearly superior to the alternative of direct entry into the labor market, and appears to improve employment chances of young people also in relation to full-time vocational education [4, p. 15].

J.H.Bishop and F. Mane argue that giving students the option of choosing school based

vocational education will increase participation rates in education, and improve staying-on rates into college education. It will improve success in the labour market, increase probability of finding a job in the occupation of choice, and increase earnings [4, p.16].

J.Münch argues that employee training is an amorphous function. It is conducted and managed and accounted for in many different ways, by many different kinds of organizations. Because this kind of vocational education is done in a highly informal way it is very difficult to classify certain characteristics. By organizing work according to scientific management approach, inspired by industrial needs of efficiency and the idea of analyzing work into its simplest elements, industry did not need a broadly skilled labor force, but workers trained in one specific function. Furthermore, the costs for on-the-job training were much lower than the investment in an apprenticeship program. Therefore, on-the-job training developed out of the industrial organization of mass production and became the most important kind of initial vocational education for the non college-bound young people [10].

Work-based learning as part of vocational education programs can be found in high school and two-year college courses, even though work-based learning is generally less important than classroom teaching and there are no comprehensive concepts of alternating learning. By contrast, on-the-job training contains no classroom teaching. The apprenticeship system is the approach in which the concept of alternating learning is best established. However, this system remains the smallest form of training in the US [9, p. 27-35].

In 1983 the National Commission on Excellence in Education published its report «A Nation at Risk», which had a profound influence on the general public regarding education reform, «Our Nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged pre eminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world (...) We report to the American people that while we can take justifiable pride in what our schools and colleges have historically accomplished and contributed to the United States and the well-being of its people, the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people. What was unimaginable a generation ago has begun to occur – others are matching and surpassing our educational attainments» [3].

Skilled personnel are needed to provide maximum Economic Security in U.S.A. In U.S.A. one of the basic objectives of vocational technical education is to develop saleable skills in the youths in order to make them useful to the society and also become labour assets in the industries [2, p. 22]. Manpower plans in vocational-technical education that are not based on a careful study of the education,

training experiences of industry's present technical manpower, but relies on the application of borrowed ratios or growth rates are likely to mislead rather than guide the development of programs of technical education.

The first two-year institution in the United States was Joliet Junior College, opened in 1901 in Illinois (AACC Website). In the 100 years since, the growth in community colleges has been dramatic, more rapid even than four-year institutions. Rosenbaum notes that between 1960 and 1990, four-year college enrollment doubled; for two-year institutions, enrollment increased five-fold (Rosenbaum 1999 citing NCES data). The dramatic growth in the 1960s was due in part to a newly created national network of two-year institutions. By the late 1990s, there were 1,166 public and private community colleges (about 1,600 counting separate multiple campus colleges) (AACC Website). Over 100 million students have attended community college since 1901, for everything from workforce retraining to English language acquisition to advanced mathematics for university-level credit. Currently, over half of the undergraduates enrolled in the U.S. attend community colleges [6, p.5-6].

Community college students represent a wide diversity of backgrounds. Students in two-year institutions are likely to be older, more ethnically and racially diverse and less affluent than their four-year counterparts. The American Association for Community Colleges (AACC), in conjunction with other surveys, provide this profile of community college students:

- 58 percent are women;
- 30 percent are racial minority (other surveys cite percentages as high as 60);
- 32 percent are 30 years or older (36 percent are traditional age: 18 to 22);
- 64 percent attend part-time;
- 65 percent depend on their parents financially (95 percent of four-year students do);
- half are the first in their families to attend college; and
- depending on the survey, 12 to 28 percent already have a postsecondary degree [6, p.5-6].

Community colleges are the least expensive higher education option, which explains in part why such a wide range of students takes advantage of them. The average tuition for community colleges nationally is around \$1,500, considerably less than the four-year institutions (AACC Website). The two-year institutions also have a different faculty profile. Doctorates are not required for faculty at most two-year colleges, and there is a higher percentage of part-time and adjunct faculty. Approximately two-thirds of public community college faculty are on part-time appointments; all faculty members are paid less than their four-year counterparts (AACC Website). The two-year colleges also have a distinct mission in higher education, which helps account for

the diverse population [6, p.5-6].

One of the most significant trends in community college attendance is that community colleges serve as the point of entry for students who wouldn't otherwise participate in postsecondary education. Low-income students, students of color, recent immigrants, and students who are the first in their families to attend college are often overrepresented in two-year institutions. Because many of these students don't feel as though they have access to four-year institutions, the community colleges are the only way for many of these students to improve their opportunities [1, p.96-121]. According to the Census Bureau, about 85 percent of the growth in the population of 18-24 year olds will come from minority and immigrant families over the next decade. Over 40 percent will come from low-income families [6, p.5-6]. Given these trends, community colleges are likely to play a growing role in the higher education system.

Community colleges are defined by their commitment to being open access institutions. Generally, if a student can benefit from education, she is welcome. This philosophy has ensured that community colleges continue to get students from all backgrounds. Community colleges have become comprehensive institutions, providing a wide range of academic, training, and service functions [1, p.96-121]. Because these institutions were created to serve the public so directly, they are often changing to respond to the needs of the community. «Starting primarily as junior colleges with an emphasis on academics, the [community] colleges are now complex institutions taking on a broad array of educational, social, and economic functions» [6, p.5-6]. Some critics contend that community colleges need to narrow their focus in order to provide better service in fewer areas. Proponents argue that the mission dictates the need to continue to offer a wide, and often growing, set of services and programs.

Conclusions and prospects for further researches of direction. Vocational education and training in the United States is a highly fragmented and complex system. Vocational education and training is frequently perceived as the solution to improve the opportunities of youths who lack the resources, skills or motivation to continue with higher education, and in particular in countries such as the US this has triggered attempts to build up larger and more effective apprenticeship systems.

In the early 1990s there was a shift in the attention of the education reform movement in the USA. Because of the economic situation the focus was directed towards vocational training and the connection between education and economic competitiveness. Employers needed a skilled workforce for their restructuring processes. The School-to-Work Opportunities Act 1994 opened a great chance for the US to have many different regional and local models of vocational training.

Any study on comparative education cannot be complete without cross references and pin-pointing of lessons worth learning. On the basis of the lesson learned from the development of vocational education and training in the USA the following improvements are desired in Ukraine:

1. The philosophy and objective of vocational education and training should be revisited to ensure that prevailing needs are served. In these days of prolonged economic depression, vocational education and training should aim at returning the country to a sound economic footing rather than self-reliance. A nation first has to survive well in this competitive world before aiming at self-reliance.

2. The current approaches to curriculum development in vocational education and training at the secondary school level needs to be re-examined and harmonized.

3. The improvement of vocational education and training in Ukraine can only be sustained through active research and development activities.

Prospects for further research. Among the promising areas of further research the development of vocational education and training in developed countries, trends in the development of vocational education and training in the US, implementation of organizational and pedagogical partnership mechanisms of vocational institutions into US high school body deserve special attention.

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АНАЛІЗ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ПІДГОТОВКИ СОЦІАЛЬНИХ ПЕДАГОГІВ ЩОДО СОЦІАЛІЗАЦІЇ МОЛОДІ В УМОВАХ ІНФОРМАЦІЙНОГО СУСПІЛЬСТВА

Постановка та обґрунтування актуальності проблеми. У процесі становлення інформаційного суспільства відбуваються глибокі трансформаційні процеси, що призводять до виникнення конфліктів на релігійній, гендерній, національній основі. У результаті цього змінюються чинники і механізми процесу соціалізації. Загострення соціальної, економічної, політичної ситуації в Україні та світі веде до розгортання деструктивних процесів у суспільстві, а саме – втрати провідної ролі інституту сім'ї у соціалізаційному процесі, соціальної дезадаптації значної частини населення, деформації у соціальних та суспільних взаєминах, військові конфлікти, виникнення нової соціальної категорії вимушених переселенців та ін. Соціальна педагогіка, яка досліджує процес соціального виховання людини у суспільстві, покликана гармонізувати негативні суспільні тенденції, сприяти консолідації громадян, забезпечувати соціально-педагогічну підтримку населенню.

Виходячи із актуальності соціально-педагогічної діяльності у сучасному суспільстві, впливає необхідність у підготовці висококваліфікованих, конкурентоспроможних, ефективних кадрів – соціальних педагогів та соціальних працівників. Професійне становлення фахівців соціальної сфери має урахувати

останні тенденції інформаційного суспільства, удосконалювати професійну освіту, вносячи нові дисципліни та курси у навчальні плани відповідно до суспільних змін. Ми вважаємо, що соціалізація молоді – майбутнього будь-якої держави, провідної сили суспільства є пріоритетним питанням соціальної дійсності. Підготовка соціальних педагогів до соціалізації молоді в умовах інформаційного суспільства є важливим аспектом професійної компетентності фахівців соціально-педагогічної сфери.

Аналіз останніх досліджень і публікацій. Проблеми професійної підготовки студентів вищих навчальних закладів досліджували А.Алексюк, О.Гаврилюк, І.Дичківська, Г.Ковальчук, А.Кузьмінський, М.Фіцула та ін.

Питання підготовки і професійного становлення соціальних педагогів та соціальних працівників розглянуто в працях українських та зарубіжних учених – С.Архипової, В.Бочарової, Т.Василькової, Ю.Василькової, Л.Гусякової, І.Козубовської, Г.Майбороди, В.Масленникової, Р.Овчарової, В.Сластьоніна, С.Тетерського, С.Чистякової, Н.Шмельової тощо. Професійна підготовка фахівців соціально-педагогічної сфери відображена у теорії соціальної педагогіки: М.Галагузова, І.Зверева, А.Капська, І.Ліпський, Л.Міщик, А.Мудрик, А.Рижанова, В.Поліщук, В.Сидоров, Є.Холостова, Л.Штефан та ін.