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## THE ECONOMIC ASPECT OF EDUCATION: CONTEMPORARY DIMENSION

*The article studies the economic aspects of higher education, analyzes the popularity of economic education and the common trend to satisfy the aspiration of people to economic behavior. The paper discovers the problem of entrepreneurial skills formation among students.*

**Keywords:** economic education; formation of economic ethos; economic thinking; entrepreneurial skills; meeting the needs of an individual.

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## ЕКОНОМІЧНИЙ АСПЕКТ ОСВІТИ В СУЧАСНОМУ ВИМІРІ

*У статті досліджено економічні аспекти вищої освіти, зроблено аналіз популярності економічної освіти та тенденцій задоволення прагнень людини до економічної поведінки. Розкрито проблему формування підприємницьких навичок у студентів.*

**Ключові слова:** економічна освіта, формування економічного етносу, економічне мислення, підприємницькі навички, задоволення потреб особистості.

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## ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКИЙ АСПЕКТ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ ИЗМЕРЕНИИ

*В статье исследованы экономические аспекты высшего образования, сделан анализ популярности экономического образования и тенденций удовлетворения стремлений человека к экономическому поведению. Раскрыта проблема формирования предпринимательских навыков у студентов.*

**Ключевые слова:** образование, формирование экономического этноса, экономическое мышление, предпринимательские навыки, удовлетворение потребностей личности.

**Statement of a problem.** Modern society is characterized by globalization and integration of not only political, economic and international relationships, but also educational, cultural, spiritual and interpersonal relationships. Information, films, television, the Internet, tourism, knowledge of foreign languages allow people from different parts of the world learn about life of other people, their problems and achievements. In Ukraine information and communication technologies (ICT) are spread intensively practically in all the spheres of human activity – from scientific research, education, production management to everyday life. Under these conditions human values are being transformed into a new aspect – the economic one. Life realia are directly interlinked with the necessity for development, practical introduction and usage of new paradigm of economic education.

At all times economics was the form of human being. Nowadays, it is also the epicentre of modern being. As it is known, economics is the sphere of social life in which goods are being created, distributed and consumed, these are goods and services necessary for people's life. This is the objective reality which does not depend upon any subjective marks. This is the practical economics where certain processes or

economic phenomena exist which can be revealed or studied by means of empirical methods (from Greek "empeiria" – experience). There is a certain interconnection between economic phenomena which is subordinated to certain objective laws.

On the other hand, economics is the science which studies the processes of creating, distributing and consuming goods. One of the most famous economic scientists gave such a definition of economics: "economics deals with the investigation of the normal life activity of people's society: it studies those spheres of individual and social actions which are tightly linked with creating and using the material bases of wellbeing" (Marshall, 1993). In this aspect economics is the product of mental work which depends upon personal, individual features of a person, for this reason it possesses the subjective character. It is theoretical economics and the object of its study is practical economics. The task of economics as actually of any other science is to "collect facts, systematize, treat and make necessary conclusions" (Marshall, 1993). Economists study how people exist in everyday life, develop, what they think about and how they live. But the objects of this research "chiefly are that stimulant motives which mostly and firmly influence the behavior of people in the economic sphere of their life" (Marshall, 1993).

**The objectives of our research** are to study the economic aspects of higher education and to analyze the popularity of economic education.

**The key results of the research.** For our analysis of the state and prospects of economic education in Ukraine the analysis of the past and the objective assessment of the present are very significant points. As it is known that during the Soviet period engineering specialities had the highest ranking in higher educational establishments among applicants (because of the demand at the labour market), as large plants, factories and industrial giants worked. At that period the majority of young people wanted to become physicists, mathematicians, engineers, chemists. The occupation of a teacher and a journalist were less popular, and the position of an economist or a lawyer was the least popular. Of course, the occupation of an economist had its ranking, but it was not as high as it is now in Ukrainian society. But after large state enterprises ceased to exist, the market economy started developing, the values of entrepreneurship freedom, individual independence and entrepreneurial initiative were commenced. Nowadays, we observe the unprecedented level of popularity of higher economic education in Ukraine.

Higher education in Ukraine as well as in the whole world becomes more popular and needed. People try to get higher education. Nowadays, in Ukraine the significant amount of 846 higher educational establishments participates somehow in economic education, as they have licences and experts. Nowadays, every educational establishment, even those more into humanities or technical ones, teaches several economic specialities. During the Soviet period in Ukraine only several higher educational establishments had the right to train economists. In 2011, 75,5 thousand students studied economic specialities at 661 higher educational establishments of state and municipal forms of property (501 of them of I–II and 345 of them of III–IV levels of accreditation), and among them 20 thousand students financed by the state. That means almost 80% of those students paid for their tuition on their own. There is a demand for these specialities among consumers, although it is not a secret that today people with higher education and manager diplomas cannot find jobs accord-

ing to their speciality and occupy ordinary job places at the offices of firms, tourist firms etc. There is such a reality: demand for economic education in the society is not diminished, higher educational establishments must choose – either qualitative study, or additional financing. Of course, under the conditions of insufficient financing they start training those specialists that are in demand. As it is known, these are mainly economists and lawyers. The well-known in the economic circles thesis by Samuelson "Economics" should help the producers of educational services to find the answer to this question: whom and for whom to train economists?

Besides, this trend is also under the impact of such an interesting phenomenon as the borrowing of foreign words into the professional education, for instance "manager" which is a misleading word for many people. Thus, young people often do not understand the speciality "manager". There has been formed the opinion in the society that manager is the prestigious occupation; this is surely a leader, whom the majority of graduates are eager to become. But leaders are not in such a great demand, that means a graduate is a leader according to his/her diploma, but he/she can't find a job. This is the reason for frustration; one should train for a new profession or occupy the demanded at the market job places: a shop assistant – sale manager, a head of a storehouse – logistics manager, a secretary – office-manager, an organizer – catering manager, a coordinator – ads manager, a guide – tourism manager etc. Probably the profession of a cleaner will be soon called "a cleaning manager". Thus, our people gradually get adjusted to new names of traditional occupations.

According to the scientific research, only 20% of the occupied population in the whole world today works according to their basic professional education, and 42% of the graduates of higher educational establishments have to change their profession during the first two years after graduation (Slobodchikova, 2011). The same situation is also observed in Ukraine. The popularity of higher education remains on the high level.

Probably this phenomenon may be explained by means of more profound and not sufficiently studied and explained aspiration of a person. Probably besides the main dimensions of social being – informational, ecological, technological, technical and biological ones etc. – we are the witnesses of increasing development of the economic ethos which becomes typical for the whole world (Kremen, 2010).

The foreign experience proves the significance of economic education for young people and grown-ups under the modern conditions. What do we understand under the notion "economic"? In our opinion, among the publications of modern economists the profound research by Polanyi (2010), one of the most prominent economist-sociologist is worth special attention. In his opinion, the content of the notion "economic" includes two meanings: "substantial" and "formal". The substantial meaning of "economic" is based on the fact that a person depends upon the nature and other people. This dependence is characterized with the interdependence of a person with the natural and social environment which provides the means for satisfying material needs. All the life long a person makes efforts and tries to satisfy the needs, first of all, material ones. For this purpose he/she tries "to earn livelihood" in order to raise the level of well-being. For this reason we try to get different goods and services.

The formal meaning of the term "economic" is based on the logical type of the link between aims and means which is observed in such notions as "economical", "to

economize". It means the specific situation of a choice among several different means of using the resources as they are limited. Any decision of a person is a choice in the result of which one thing or variant is chosen, and the other ones are declined. Nowadays, it is topical for every person as the modern person acts in a special economic aura at which he/she is oriented and dependent (Kremen, 2011). But comparing the notions of "substantial" and "formal" one has to agree with the conclusion that the object should be considered under the terms of substantial definition (Polanyi, 2010; Timoshenkov, 2005). Such an approach is absolutely grounded in the case of distributing such statements as – the main function of universities is training high-qualified specialists oriented at the sphere of science and knowledge – it is not correct. The main point is meeting the needs of a personality (Polanyi, 2010). The principal changes in the role of education in the life of society are caused by the start of postindustrial development of the most developed Western countries at the beginning of the 1960s.

It is accepted to mark the substantial notion of activity as the specific form of existence of a person and society which consists in the active attitude to the outer world and its purposeful transformation, as well as transforming the person himself and his relationship with other people. The most distinctive feature of people's activity is the awareness including first of all, the prior definition of the aim of this activity, the choice of ways and methods of its possible achievement, determination of the desired result, as well as the expedient form and type of carrying out the very process. Human activity is always specific. This is caused by the specifically defined aim and the methods for its achievement.

For our analysis it is important to study the contents of such a type of activity as "economic activity". "The economic activity is the most significant form of a conscious and purposeful labour activity of people in the process of which they mostly enter into active relations with nature and economic relations and relationships among themselves in order to produce economic goods in different spheres of social reproduction (intermediate production, exchange, division, consumption), as well as to form personality. Economic activity is the process, therefore it has the aim (producing goods), means (means of production) and the result (economic goods in the form of useful goods and services for society) (The Economic Encyclopedia by Mochernyy et al., 2000).

According to the modern conceptions on the role and meaning of economic education, Becker (2003), the Nobel prize winner in economics (1992), in his work "The Human Behavior. The Economic Approach" states that today economists learn, investigate and describe not only economic processes, but also social problems which do not keep within limits of traditional object of economics. They consider non-market phenomena which firstly seemed to be remote from traditional economic science. These are the phenomena of education, creating a family, respectability, political activity, criminality, forming skills and passions. And the economic factor largely defines human behavior in these spheres of life. Economists show that people act rationally not only when they buy goods, but also when they study, get married, bear children, keep in fashion, go to church and when they commit crimes and use drugs. That is why the economic approach provides the most favourable background for comprehension of people's behavior (Becker, 2003).

In his Nobel lecture "The Economic View of Life" (Becker, 2003) he points out that today economists in their research analyze social problems by means of economic approach. As it is known, Marxist approach is based on the fact that human behavior is defined exclusively with two approaches (moments) – selfishness and craving for profit.

The method suggested by Becker (2003) comes out of the fact that human behavior is based not only on selfishness, but on a wider range of values and advantages.

According to this approach, people maximize the things which they perceive as wealth irrespective if they are egoists or altruists, sadists or masochists. They always try to foresee the most exact unknown results of their actions. However, the roots of foresight may be in the past, because the past leaves its significant mark on the outlook and values of a person.

Economic approach is the theory of rational choice, which is based on the theory of individual decisions. For this approach a person needs economic knowledge, entrepreneurial skills. Under the modern market conditions it is one of the motives of great demand for economic knowledge.

National and foreign experience of teaching states that it is necessary for our graduates and graduates of technical universities to be oriented not only at the world of technologies and machines, but also to be able to "work with the future", transform and construct the reality. One should agree with opinion of many scientists and practitioners that the modern technical education directs students chiefly towards the world of machines and technologies beyond social context – towards the "world without people". One should emphasize that the mission of education is the personal development of each person, the improvement of skills, obtaining independence and perpetual striving for happy life. Besides, education has the mission of training those citizens that build the country and society.

Economic thinking became dominant in the people's life and economics as the system of social relationships became the epicenter of modern being. In the sphere of education Europe has defined the trend of distributing the basic knowledge of business and entrepreneurship. They should be accessible at all educational levels beginning from the early age. Any student who graduated from a European university – either a musician, or a teacher, or an engineer etc. should join the sphere of entrepreneurial culture. A modern specialist must be not only a professionally skilled one, but also possess the skills of entrepreneurship that will provide the ability to solve future problems.

This is a new and very important aspect of educational services – forming the entrepreneurial behavior of students in the process of studies. The matter is about the knowledge and the ability to apply it. In our opinion every student at each educational establishment should have the opportunity to obtain knowledge in economics. Under the modern conditions economic education has to be the same obligatory as learning English and computer science.

The European Charter which Ukraine joined in 2008 pointed out: "Europe will raise the entrepreneurial spirit and cultivate new skills from earlier age. The basic knowledge of business and entrepreneurship should be taught at all educational levels. Certain business modules should become the main constituent of the system of education at the level of secondary school as well as at colleges and universities" (The European Charter, 2000).

This is a new ideology of innovative economics which European Parliament declared to be an obligation. Education is for entrepreneurship, for the development of economics and that is especially topical for Ukraine today. Our "first assignment is the participation in the economic raise: by means of the quality of training the specialists, science and innovations" and "the university economic education has to be the first to awake" (The Third Ukrainian Congress of Educators, 2011). This is a very large problem for Ukraine which requires not "repairing but reconstruction". The appearance of great amount of entrepreneurs depends upon its solving. They will become the representatives of the middle class that is one of the key problems in gaining stability of Ukrainian economy.

This problem is very topical for providing professional training in the sphere of light industry. Light industry of Ukraine is a multisectoral complex that consists of 17 branches: cotton, wool, silk, flax, sewing, knitting, textile, fur, footwear, leather etc. Over 10000 enterprises work in this sphere with the status of legal entity as well as many entrepreneurs without this status. These are mainly small entities that need economic knowledge and entrepreneurial skills. This specific branch of economy needs trained specialists, technologists, designers, chemists with economic thinking and knowledge of business.

**Conclusions.** For this reason, formulating general conclusions of our research on economic aspect of education in the modern dimension we may point out that solving the problems which arise for a person and society are within the economic dimension; and that is the result of logical development of mankind. Nowadays, economic thought and economic activity are present in all the spheres of life – production, exchange, distribution and consumption.

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