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PROFESSIONALISATION AS A MODERN GLOBAL TENDENCY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER PEDAGOGICAL EDUCATION IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES AND UKRAINE

ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the professionalisation of higher pedagogical education as a modern global tendency that places new demands on the quality of education, direction and level of training. It has been noted that the modernization of European education appeared legitimate, since geographical and socio-economic transformations have led to the increase of European citizens' mobility. The need for the European labor market's correspondence with international standards of qualification, recognition of diplomas and standardization of education has been thoroughly justified. It has been stressed that the main purpose of the Bologna reforms is to harmonize European educational architecture through the elaboration of common descriptors and quality standards. It has been noted that the increasing demands of the labor market, rapid technological change, globalization, the rise of academic and labor mobility require the use of the competency approach to the formation of wouldbe teachers to improve their professional level, which is a prerequisite and a priority in modernization of higher pedagogical education in Ukraine. The thesis that defines professionalisation as a modern global tendency in the development of higher education has been confirmed. The role of the Bologna agreement in the development of higher education in the EU and Ukraine in the context of implementing a two-stage education, since it deals with a flexible choice of higher educational qualifications and complete upgrade of training programs, as well as strengthening its professional component, has been stressed. The attention has been drawn to the fact that the predominance of bachelor and specialist levels in Ukrainian higher education prevents the effective operation of the master's degree education.

Key words: professionalisation, globalisation, the Bologna reforms, two cycle system of higher education, mobility, multistage education, "bachelor" level, "specialist" level, "master" level.

INTRODUCTION

With the increase of education role in society and the intensification of economic and cultural globalization, modernization of European education appeared legitimate, since the geographical and socio-economic transformations have led to the increase of European citizens' mobility. Simultaneously, large-scale social change and modernization of education place new demands to the quality of training and professionalism of would-be specialists. In this context, special attention of the Ukrainational scientists is given to adaptation of the national higher education to the European one in the context of the Bologna Declaration.

THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the article is to determine the main idea of professionalisation as a modern global tendency in the development of higher education in foreign countries and Ukraine, to define the possibility of using foreign experience in the national system of higher pedagogical education.



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS

The problems of professionalisation of higher pedagogical education were in the field of domestic and foreign researchers (N. Avshenyuk, W. Kremen, B. Luhovyi, N. Nychkalo, K. Pawlowskyi, A. Pometun, L. Pukhovska, Q. Slepkan, A. Zinovatna, I. Zyazyun). In the foreign pedagogics problems of professionalisation of higher education are studied in the works of K. Anderk, S. Birdea, R. Hayherti, V. Houston, A. Hutorskoy, M. Leiter, J. Raven, M. Trow, R. White, I. Zimnyaya, etc. Crucial documents regulating the field of Ukrainian higher education include the National Doctrine of Education in Ukraine, the Program of Educational Development in Ukraine during the 2006–2010, Orders of the President of Ukraine dated July 4, 2005 № 1013 “On urgent measures to ensure the functioning and development of education in Ukraine”.

RESULTS

Global trends such as internationalisation and transnationalization of education, universities’ focus on research, students’ mobility, the formation of a unified global information systems impose new requirements to the quality of education, directions and levels of training. Creation of a single European Higher Education under the title Bologna process (the BP) is also a manifestation of globalization.

The modernization of European education was quite natural, since the geographical (the elimination of customs borders) and socio-economic (a single currency – the euro) transformations led to increased mobility of European citizens. The need of the European labor market for clear qualifications understood at the international level raised the issue of diplomas’ correspondence and standardization of educational services (Десятов, 2008). Therefore, the main purpose of the Bologna reforms is proclaimed as harmonisation of educational architecture of European countries through the establishment of the general European standards, transparency of qualifications and the desire to unite the scattered potentials in a single economic mechanism. The BP has also a clearly defined market aspect, namely the increase of competitiveness of European education.

The difference between European education and U.S. education is that Europe’s higher education is defined by public good, that is the good of a non-market type, whereas the U.S. educational services acquired the status of the product (Слепкань, 2005). Accordingly, funding for education, providing quality education, the attitude of teachers and students to studying in the American and European systems of education are significantly different. The strengthening of the competitiveness of European education with U.S. higher education requires not formal steps such as the restructuring of higher education or an increase in funding, but enriching educational philosophy and a new culture of education management and research resources. In Europe and Ukraine higher education has become affordable and widespread, it has changed its direction from elite classical education model to a professionally-oriented one. The transition to mass higher education in Europe needs a significant modernization of its structure, whereas the American system of higher education was originally organized and structured to be designed for mass (Trow, 2001).

Today, the U.S. university system is practically the same as before. In the country, according to the researcher of American higher education O. M. Zinovatna, reforms such as the BP in Europe are not implemented, there are no debates about the need for a radical overhaul of the higher educational system. Adjustments to specialists’ training are made only in case of some problems occurrence. And these problems are considered to be tactical, not strategic, and are perceived by an academic community as usual, constant, corresponding to the usual dynamics of university degree programs. This dynamics has always prevailed over statistics and traditions. In the U.S., the Bologna reforms are seen as



a European model of professionalisation, which aims at implementing a broad cooperation among departments, educational institutions and states (Зіноватна, 2009). Analyzing teacher education in Europe, L. Pukhovska also notes that in the last decade models of teacher education in Europe have undergone significant changes under the influence of professionalisation (Пуховська, 2001). This thesis is confirmed by a home researcher K. Korsak who defines professionalisation as a modern global trend in higher education. To ensure the integration of the national education system into the European processes it is important to understand their nature and trends and identify an opportunity to join them taking into consideration their interests. Thus, a comparative analysis of master level education in the EU and Ukraine, as a country participating in the BP, primarily requires an examination of general European context.

Key areas of the BP or the basis reforms triangle are considered to be the acceptance of two cycle (three-level) higher education system, the introduction of the European system of credits (ECTS) and quality assurance. Three-level educational system provides consistently obtained BA, MA and PhD degrees.

It is necessary to pay attention to bachelor and master levels, i.e. two-stage or two-level higher education, since PhD is a scientific qualification.

To identify the problems and conditions of the modernization of level education it is necessary to focus more on major policy documents and studies of the state of level education in Europe within the BP. Thus, in the proceedings of the seminar on the issues of bachelor's degree (Bologna Process, 2003) it is stated that the structure of "Bachelor / Master" has become the standard, its adoption will contribute to the recognition of European degrees worldwide. Bachelor's degree is called original, it has a dual purpose – to prepare students for further study in master's degree and give them sufficient competence for employment. Training programs for Euro-bachelors provide three or four years of studying depending on the specialty. It is clear that in some areas, especially in medicine and technology, a bachelor's degree may not be an independent qualification to acquire professional competence, and therefore long-term integrated training programs for master's degree can be kept. There should be a mechanism of succession between bachelor and master programs, but they should stay independent levels.

In 2002, a study of master degrees in the European area of higher education under the auspices of the European University Association (hereinafter AEUA) has been conducted. The results of scientific observations revealed substantial structural diversity of the second cycle of higher education in Europe. A common feature of the master's degree level of education was that the master's degree is awarded as a result of full-time five years' study with the mastery of 300 credits. Actually master's programs (the MP) had 90–120 ECTS. Of course, these similarities were not enough to talk about European standards of level education. Thus, this study reveals the need to create a pan-European concept of master's degree level education. Main features of Euro-Master were specified in conclusions and recommendations of the Conference on the Master's degrees issues (Bologna Process, 2003). MD is defined as the qualification of the second cycle of higher education. Introduction to MP should be based on the bachelor's degree. In turn, all graduate degrees should give access to doctoral training. Master programs must have different orientation and be multiprofiled to meet the individual and academic needs and requirements of the labor market. For transparency of qualifications the orientation and profile of a specific master's program is noted in the Diploma Supplement. Unlike bachelor's degree education, master's degree education encourages introduction of joint master's programs between universities as a manifestation of cooperation within Europe. In Ukraine, the issue of joint master's programs requires adaptation of existing legislation on education.



Despite knowing that a two-level system will improve transparency and comparability of educational systems in different countries, the Bologna reforms have caused debate over a number of issues that were not urgent before signing the agreement.

First, it is the lack of mechanisms regulating differences between a bachelor and master degrees in Bologna Declaration and the same degrees in English-speaking countries. Formally the structure of degrees is very similar, but in the context of the BP, especially in its focus on knowledge-based society, Euro-Bachelor and Euro-Master have to acquire a new format. For example, in the U.S. consistency of levels is not always observed. It is possible to study for a Ph.D. after acquiring a bachelor's degree, skipping a master's level, whereas in Europe it is presupposed to obtain consistent diplomas.

Second, the debate about employment of bachelors does not stop. They must meet the specific requirements of the job market, obtaining professional skills, required of the whole working population in Europe, for three or four years. The quality of training received in such a short time is doubtful, especially in countries with traditionally long training programs. According to the experience of the countries, the first level higher education with a bachelor's degree diploma is not perceived by every society. The award of a bachelor's degree is considered to be a higher education in Eastern European countries, although the majority of bachelors continue their education for master's degree. For example, in Poland, 90% of students study five years and obtain a master's degree diploma (Stockholm Conclusions, 2002). Consequently, students still tend to the classic long education.

Third, general European two-level higher education is based on the principles of continuity, flexibility and mobility, which still lack a clear definition. In general, universities have become more flexible to deal with the changing demands of the labor market and the expectations of the student contingent that is becoming more diverse. Continuity as a link between levels of higher education should contribute to the development of both horizontal and vertical mobility, that makes possible the transition from one educational level to the next (higher one), or change the education direction within one level. After receiving a bachelor's degree, a student can specialize in the field selected in the first cycle, or acquire training in a new field and get a master's degree or a job. Thus, it is possible to return to study at any time if there is a need to improve their knowledge or change profession. Mobility of students is also understood as the ability to change the university and study the Bachelor program at one university, and the Master's program – at another one. It is the vertical or inter-cycle mobility is expected in Europe. The principle of mobility should also be realized by so-called joint degree programs, including master's level, between universities in different countries. Unlike student exchange program where students of one institution study at another one over some period of time, joint educational programs are developed and/or agreed by several educational institutions. Considerable part of the training program takes place in a different educational establishment (a participating establishment). What concerns training and examinations, which are taken, they are entirely and automatically recognized in both establishments. The teaching staff of all participating institutions is also involved in the collaboration, teaching at other institutions, participating in the examination committees, etc. Upon completion of the joint educational program the student receives a diploma of each participating establishment or a joint document on education (mostly a diploma or certificate).

As a result of the scientific sources studying we have found out the features of professionalisation in its European manifestation. Europe is moving towards massiveness, flexibility and affordability of higher education. The question is: What peculiarities does the global trend of professionalisation have in its local manifestation in Ukraine? How are



European tendencies tangent to the local socio-cultural realities? Indeed, in contrast to Europe, where the Bologna reforms were internal necessity, Ukraine's accession to the European Higher Education Area (2005) and related reforms was purely a political decision to accelerate the process of European integration.

It should be noted that in Ukraine the practice of level education has historical roots, not less than master's degree education in the USA. Thus, graduates of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (from 1701) and Lviv National University (1661) received a licentiate degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree and doctorate degree.

In independent Ukraine the Law "On Education" (1991) and the Regulations on Educational Qualification levels (1998) reformed level education by introducing educational qualification levels for bachelor's and master's degrees. The introduction of new levels formed a four-level education system (junior specialist, bachelor, specialist, master). Junior Specialist's and Bachelor's Diplomas are unofficially considered incomplete higher education. The most common educational qualification level of higher education is a specialist level. Master's degree education attracts a small number of students, mostly for teaching careers.

On the other hand, in public consciousness level system of higher education is not fully established yet. Thus, parents understand that their children enter "the university" and not a "bachelor's degree level" and the competitive selection for master's degree education causes sudden outrage and protests among students. In the domestic labor market bachelor's degree is considered to be the result of uncompleted higher education, which does not give sufficient qualifications and, hence, the right to hold some post. Moreover, in the society there is no differentiated approach to different levels of education morally and financially. Mechanism of the demand of highly professional employees does not work: a person who received a master's degree is not offered officially legalized preferences such as some initial positions, higher salaries, etc. Partly, the nature of this attitude can be found in national legislation, that should be considered separately.

According to Article 6 of the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education", the structure of higher education includes education (incomplete higher education, higher education, full higher education) and educational qualifications (junior specialist, bachelor, specialist and master) levels. The juxtaposition of basic and higher education indicates the "inferiority" of the first, that suggests that only a specialist is a "real" higher education. In accordance with the provisions of educational and qualifications levels (level education) "Bachelor" is basic, that is incomplete higher education, and presupposes continuing education for a specialist or master's degree. The independence of the bachelor program is quite relative and there is no flexible change of specialisation within the field of knowledge. Employment of bachelors is the most critical issue. Needs of labor market in bachelors have not been formed yet. Usually specialists with higher education without specifying the degree are required. Expressions like "bachelors are needed" or "masters are needed" are not used. There is a danger that while adapting to the requirements of the Bologna, bachelor's degree may become a purely professional or reduced program of training.

Specialist's level implies gaining complete higher education on the basis of a bachelor qualification. This is the level of a specialist who acquired special skills and knowledge and can solve complex professional tasks. Educational and vocational training program for specialists consists of special disciplines and different types of practical training. Training a specialist is not much conceptually different from bachelors' programs and is an additional year of education, which emphasizes practical activities. Flexibility between a bachelor's degree qualification and a specialist's degree qualification is not observed, further education is only possible within the specialization chosen while studying for a bachelor's degree.



Master's level presupposes obtaining complete higher education on the basis of a bachelor's or specialist's degree. Educational and professional master's degree program provides psychological, pedagogical, scientific and practical training, that is the initial qualification for scientific and pedagogical activities. In some universities of Ukraine (Kyiv National Economic University, Kyiv–Mohyla Academy, etc.) master's degree education program successfully functions as a separate unit within the structure of the university. However, most universities have only recently introduced master's degree education. So, master's degree models in the specialties of higher education have not been clearly developed yet and most often they have practically no differences from the model of a specialist.

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the analysis it can be asserted that this situation resembles the initial stage of master's degree education in the United States when a master's degree diploma allowed only to start a scientific career at the university, but for future career development it was necessary to get a degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The same situation is in Ukraine where a domestic research degree of the Candidate of Sciences is more appropriate for teaching career.

Thus, completing the analysis of the phenomenon of domestic level education, we can state that the predominance of bachelor and specialist levels in Ukrainian higher education prevents the effective operation of the master's education. In accordance with the Bologna requirements, higher education must be multistage, but its first level must be complete and contain no additional definitions such as basic or complete education. It is clear that such initiative requires legislative changes.

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