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EDUCATION AS A KEY TREND OF ACTIVE LONGEVITY

У статті як основний принцип нової моделі старості, обґрунтовано позитивну зміну її якості, можливість індивідуально-особистісного розвитку людини похилого віку. Охарактеризовано сферу освіти літніх людей за кордоном, описано спектр дозволених заходів, що надає їм відчуття потрібності та включеності до соціуму. Виявлені фактори підвищення соціальної активності пенсіонерів, розглянуті можливості задоволення їхніх освітніх потреб з використанням різних форм підтримки і розвитку інтелектуальних здібностей і формування комунікативних компетенцій. Описані продуктивні форми включення літніх людей в освітній процес. Обґрунтована спрямованість системи освіти для людей похилого віку на реалізацію їх соціальної суб'єктності. Намічені шляхи перформатування роботи з особами «третього віку» за рахунок запровадження суб'єкт-суб'єктного підходу в реалізації стратегії активного старіння, виділені основні напрямки підвищення соціального статусу літніх людей.

Ключові слова: активне довголіття, освітні потреби літніх людей, соціальна активність осіб «третього віку», суб'єкт-суб'єктний підхід до реалізації стратегії активного старіння, форми включення літніх людей в освітній процес.

В статье в качестве основополагающего принципа новой модели старости обосновано позитивное изменение её качества, возможности индивидуального-личностного развития пожилого человека. Охарактеризована сфера образования пожилых людей за рубежом, описан спектр досуговых мероприятий, дающий им чувство востребованности и включенности в социум. Выявлены факторы повышения социальной активности пенсионеров, рассмотрены возможности удовлетворения их образовательных потребностей с использованием различных форм поддержания и развития интеллектуальных способностей и формирования коммуникативных компетенций. Описаны продуктивные формы включения пожилых людей в образовательный процесс. Обоснована направленность системы образования для пожилых людей на реализацию их социальной субъектности. Намечены пути реформатирования работы с лицами «третьего возраста» за счет внедрения субъект-субъектного подхода в реализации стратегии активного старения, выделены основные направления повышения социального статуса пожилых людей.

Ключевые слова: активное долголетие, образовательные потребности пожилых людей, социальная активность лиц «третьего возраста», субъект-субъектный подход в реализации стратегии активного старения, формы включения пожилых людей в образовательный процесс.

The article is devoted to the new model of old age. It is described a positive

change in older generation's quality. The possibility of individual and personal development of an elderly person is justified. The abroad experience of education of elderly people is described. Also the spectrums of leisure-time activities, giving them a sense of relevance and involvement in society, are defined. The factors of increasing the social activity of pensioners are revealed, the possibilities of satisfying their educational needs with the use of various forms of supporting and developing intellectual abilities and the formation of communicative competencies are considered. The productive forms of including older people in the educational process are described. The direction of the education system for the elderly is substantiated for the realization of their social subjectness. The ways of reformatting the work with people of the «third age» are outlined. The latter demand the introduction of the subject-subject approach in the implementation of the active aging strategy. The main directions of increasing the social status of the elderly are identified.

Keywords: active longevity; the educational needs of older people; the social activity of «third-age» people; the subject-subject approach in implementing the strategy of active aging; the ways of older people's including in the educational process.

In recent decades, the problems of population aging have risen to the level of one of the global problems for the human race to solve. The proportion of old people in the developed countries' population already makes up 20%, with the human aging process accelerating [1].

The topicality of the problem is increasing in view of the fact that elderly people need to be taken care of and provided for, with the number of the working citizens shrinking. This brings about a change in the society's demographic balance, and ultimately, a re-distribution of resources among the generations. The problematic nature of these processes stems from a multitude of still unsolved social, economic, cultural, and medical tasks for providing creating optimal conditions for the livelihood of the elderly.

Research done by gerontologists in the last decades, has resulted in re-considering the stereotypes about the inevitability and irreversibility of the failing health and functional incapacity of elderly people, as well cessation of their social contacts and activities. An analysis of the theories as to the role and status of the elderly in today's society brings one to the conclusion that they mainly focus on some distinct aspects of the old-age phenomenon [2; 3; 4; 5; 6]. The authors of the theories of aging (the Disconnection theory, ageism, the marginal theory, the Way of Life theory, the theory of the Social Status, the Age Stratification theory and others differ in their approaches to an evaluation of the elderly people place and role in society.

Today's perception of old age is not all negative. Increasingly, old age is viewed as a final stage of a person's life with its own specific characteristics. The crucial principle on which the new model of old age is built consists not only in increasing a person's longevity but also in making a positive change in the quality of his/her life. The model presupposes consider-

able possibilities of an elderly individual's personality development. These possibilities can be viewed as a potential that may be realized, given the appropriate conditions of the surrounding world.

Needless, to say, old people's social activity depends on numerous factors: their socio-economic situation, health condition, social conditions, professional level of social workers, as well as old people's social well-being and moods. Active participation in the life of society within distinct social groups ensures a person's satisfaction with life. However, it is not always the case that, upon retirement, an individual is capable of organizing his/her life and channel it towards a socially useful and significant goal, thus making it possible to lead an active way of life. What can substantially contribute to it, is a realization of an individual's social activity principle, consisting in providing old people with various options of active social activities.

A rich international experience has been accumulated of preserving the activities of the older generations. As a rule, the main tasks set for working with the elderly citizens and practiced in various countries are: first, creating possibilities for old people to spend time together; second, creating conditions for their mutual enrichment while sharing knowledge; third, creating an environment conducive to sharing experience and skills with the younger generation; fourth, enhancing mutual understanding.

Old people social behavior revitalization presupposes not only performance by old people of their habitual activities but also increasing their independence in solving their social and personal problems. This presupposes development of their ability to control their own life, to more actively participate in social life. Based on this, the main means of intensifying old-age pensioners' social behavior are considered to be:

first, employment which helps an elderly individual to improve his/her material status, to help his/her children and grandchildren; being employed also enables one to communicate with colleagues, is a stimulus for keeping fit physically, gives satisfaction from feeling needed and useful; second, club membership, which makes it possible for an elderly person to indulge in a hobby together with the think-alike individuals, to enjoy active leisure in the company of one's peers (healthy physical exercise, dancing, singing, etc.); to have regular meetings with the representatives of administration, medical specialists, psychologists, lawyers; to participate in joint meetings with the representatives of the younger generation; third, participation in social organizations (Veterans' Councils, the Pensioners' Party and others); fourth, participation in the voluntary movement, which helps to avoid loneliness and a feeling of uselessness. All those can find their manifestation in social or educational activities, indulging in active leisure, going in for sports, etc. [5].

An important factor in the maintaining old people's activity is satisfying their educational needs by using various forms of maintaining and developing their intellectual abilities and forming their communicative competencies.

In many countries, an entire educational system aimed at promoting old people's social activity has been devised. With the development of market relations and a growing demand for a product called "education", a great number of organizations, both state and privately funded ones, have emerged to provide educational services to the elderly. Interaction of self-organized educational initiatives is implemented as a steady transition of the educational participants from their role as learners to their raising to top administrative positions in the organization.

In the 1980s, a market for education options for the old people begins to grow, and, alongside with the traditional educational institutions, a number of commercial ones have emerged, offering their own educational services. These tendencies have been reflected in the theoretical works by such international scholars as C. Kade, G. Domen's, M. Koley. Evaluating their contribution to the development of the active aging concept, O. O. Danilchenko [7] pointed out that C. Kade succeeded in structuring the multitude of educational opportunities for the elderly by identifying the following educational fields: 1) the educational field "Biography" (searching for the meaning of life, biographic competence); 2) the educational field of "Everyday life" (overcoming everyday routine by autonomous living, practical competence); 3) educational field "Creativity / Creation" (self-expression, exchanging cultural content with

others, creative competence); 4) educational field "Productivity" (a social dimension, aim-orientation competence) [7].

Considering the objective of this research, it is also important to take into account the heuristic potential of G. Domen's [7] ideas who distinguishes between formal education (organized, structured, with a final examination); informal education (organized and structured but without a documented proof of examination results and graduation from an educational institution); non-formal education (open, not organized, unstructured). The author concludes by stating that the above structure is relatively open to various groups of people.

With reference to our analysis, it is also worthy of note that, along with organizations such as people's schools or shelters for the elderly, M. Koley also identifies several groups of providers, offering diverse options. Educational establishments, according to this author, also include institutions providing for additional education for old people, educational enterprises and firms, cultural centers, clubs and service centers for old-age pensioners, circles and other old people associations [7].

The above ideas of increasing the educational activities of the elderly have found their most prominent manifestation in the Western countries. For instance, in Germany and the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Norway), the educational sphere available to the elderly includes state, public, and private forms of education, varying both in structure and learning programs.

Along with the already existing educational centers for adults - state, cooperative and public institutions - some new forms of education organization have been introduced, among them those created at higher educational establishments. It should be stressed that these are not only represented by institutes or departments of professional development, but also such forms as centers for continuous / life-long education, public's universities, etc.

In Germany, educational organizations function in churches, political party offices, as well as in all sorts of old people's unions and associations. In Great Britain and Germany, a big role in spurring old citizens' social activity belongs to all kinds of socio-cultural institutions, such as clubs, whose main aim is to offer old people opportunities to usefully and pleasantly spend their free time, satisfy their various cultural and educational needs, clubs also encourage new interests and facilitate establishing new friendly contacts. Old people membership in such clubs is very substantial, and they make an inalienable part of active ageing [3, p.159].

In 1983, a "Third Age Society" was founded in Great Britain with the participation of 266

universities. Education they provide includes sports activities and active socially useful work. In the USA, the concept of educating the elderly received the name "Elderhostel". The concept has been implemented since 1975 in the form of a sabbatical, during which period a person gets a possibility to travel to new places, meet new people, acquire new knowledge.

In France, apart from actual teaching "third-age" individuals, research is being carried out into their education. In Japan, since the 60s of the 20th century, there are special classes for older people during which offer various programs, ranging from communal problems solving to educating women and young mothers during their maternity leave.

In Denmark and Sweden, education of the elderly is under the aegis of people's universities. In the Netherlands, a "Pension in Perspective" project is being realized, whose aim is to help old people to overcome personal crises, connected with reaching retirement age. In Italy, classes are organized by primary and secondary schools in order to bridge gaps in the education of old people. However, such classes are few and often fickle. Yet, there are old people's amateur choirs and drama groups [2].

In Poland, the first "third age" university was founded in 1975 by Halina Schwarts at the Medical Center for post-diploma education. Today, there are over 22 "third age" universities, which pursue the following goals: prophylactics of aging; constant self-development and self-education, preparation for retirement (dancing, energizing physical exercise, seminars on psychology and philosophy); preparation for social activities (participation in charity events) [11].

As our survey of the special literature shows, the prevailing forms of educating the elderly in the world today still continue to be international associations of "third age" universities. The forms of education in them are very diverse, e.g., creating groups and organizing seminars for people sharing the same interests, self-education and mutual aid groups; students themselves design programs of study, arrange interesting meetings, celebrate jubilees together and so on. Those unable to attend classes because of failing health, can use the services of a mutual aid group. Working within the framework of "entertaining learning" provided by a great number of public associations and people's universities, create prerequisites for a respective policy towards old people, helps them to destroy the psychological stereotypes of passively spending their "remaining days" and develop an active attitude to life [4, p.150].

People's universities are very common in Germany, in that country, additional education of the elderly is not viewed as complementary to their main education but as its natural con-

tinuation, a necessary condition for the development of every individual and society at large.

It should be noted that in other countries, working with older people is based on the principles of self-government and democracy. As G.A Ovchinnikov points out, "there are four educational goals that can be singled out in the work of German and Polish people's universities: old-age prophylactics; stimulating old people's desire to broaden and deepen their knowledge, preparing them for retirement and participating in social work in the future. University students are learning under the slogan: "Working for yourself, become useful to others", they take part in public acts of helping the disabled, in mutual aid groups" [9].

So, as we can see, public associations in Europe and North America offer old people a broad spectrum of diverse leisure activities, including health sanitation, entertainment, creative art, education, religion. Members of such associations strive to expand the boundaries of their everyday routine in order to experience freedom and self-confidence. That is the reason why priority is given not to production but to consumption of spiritual benefits – such as gaining an education, pursuing self-education, indulging in religious activities, enjoying leisure time, attending parties, organizing jubilee celebrations, participating in voluntary actions, all of which enable an elderly person to realize his/her altruistic incentives, on the one hand, and feel useful and part of society, on the other.

The positive international experience of "third-age" people's revitalization can be complemented by the Israeli practices of organizing old people's leisure, which include, among others, valeologic, patriotic, volunteering, artistic-aesthetic and educational dimensions, as well as giving old people socio-psychological support in the cultural milieu.

The manifold nature of the leisure programs and the variety of the elderly Izraelis' activities, which also include such non-traditional forms of spending leisure as holding sports Olympiads for old people (since 2005), implementation of the "The Elderly Make Movies" project, as well as projects aimed at reconsidering negatives stereotypes about old people – beauty contests, fashion shows, creating original samples of mass culture; conducting seminars on preparing old people for withdrawal from life, on "positive thinking" and emotional self-control, providing special university courses on assets management and inheritance law (free for old people), and of course, active voluntary work in the Izrali Defense Army, police, museums, zoo-parks, and the like [10].

In Russia, there exist three forms of old people's involvement into an education process: 1) getting an education in the capacity of a stu-

dent without age restrictions; 2) self-education directed at the development of spiritual culture and self-knowledge; 3) participation in special education programs for old people. Examples of the last one are: People's School of Higher Education in St. Petersburg, the People's Department at Novosibirsk state technical university, "Silver Age" university in St. Petersburg and others. In Samara, university education for old people has two stages; 1) "Transitional Age" (lectures on the psychology of the transitional age, psychology and pedagogy of family life, ecology, healthy living, and also solving legal problems) and 2) "Specialized Training" (free choice of further specialization: local history studies, psychological and pedagogical training for working with children, healthy living, computer literacy training, etc.).

The aims of the international "Broadening opportunities for old people's involvement in the social and political processes of the democratic development of Russia" project (with the participation of consultants from Germany and the Netherlands) are as follows: 1) actualization and utilization of old people's life experience and social activity in the development of a civil society in Russia; 2) overcoming old people's negative views and perceptions as to democratization of contemporary Russian society; 3) strengthening old people's independence and responsibility in their search for ways of solving problems, connected with an improvement of their life conditions, the life of their peers and that of the people of other generations; 4) establishing a dialogue between the old people and the power institutions and structures, the media, and other organizations, which can contribute to a development of democratic values in society [11].

Educational programs for the elderly can have very different forms and content, yet, their essential shared feature is a perception of old age as a stage in a person's evolution with its own resources, and also a perception of an elderly person as a subject of education. The choice of educational programs for the elderly must be based on the monitoring of old people's needs for educational services.

Boundless opportunities for a re-vitalization of the older people's social activities are provided by the Internet. Special sites for old people's communication, learning computer skills, etc., are very helpful: old people can open electronic accounts for business correspondence, look through everyday press (saving themselves the cost of newspaper subscriptions); process and print pictures; listen to music (no need to buy a tape-recorder or record player); watch movies online (no need for a DVD-player); watching various programs online (no need for a TV set), play various games in their free time

(instead of playing cards or dominoes in the yard); maintain cheap connection with relatives on Skype (instead of costly telephone calls).

Thus, the main forms of old people's participation in the spiritual life of society in other countries include: individual and collective creative work; participation in educational programs, club activities, meetings with the representatives of the younger generation; participation in public organizations and voluntary movements. All of these are effective forms of revitalizing old people's spiritual life, helping them to avoid loneliness.

As shown by our analysis of the experiences of working with older people in other countries, the main trend in this kind of activities seems to be realization of projects such as "Third Age University", whose main tasks are: 1) organization of various forms of education for the elderly (full-time, distance, etc.); 2) involving representatives of the older generation into an active life of society, into realization of social projects, requiring using their professional knowledge and life experience for the enlightenment of the general public and the education of youth; 3) organization of cultural and leisure activities of old people, aimed at satisfying a broad spectrum of the educational, cultural and cognitive needs of the population; 4) introducing old people to the basics of medical knowledge; 5) raising old-age pensioners' level of computer literacy, providing to them access to the Internet, etc.

In fact, "third age universities" provide an opportunity for old, as well as disabled people to get free access to a certain level of knowledge, acquire the corresponding skills and competencies, find self-confidence, necessary for a faster adaptation to the new conditions of life. Successful implementation of such projects confirms that old people can be full-fledged members of contemporary society. It is understandable that the elderly do have their specific problems, which necessitates creating conditions for an active and creative life for "third age" citizens.

All of the above, brings to the conclusion that, internationally, the "development approach" to the older generation has been firmly established, though it did not entirely ousted the "caring approach". The essence of the "development approach" consists in preventing and overcoming demographic changes, such as creating a potential for developments and transformations in society for all ages [6, p.154-155].

On the whole, our analysis of the international experience of working with elderly people makes it possible to draw the following conclusions:

1. The system of the "third age" individuals' education is well-developed and is aimed at a realization of an old person's social subjectum, which, on the whole, promotes active longevity.

The key resource for the elderly people preservation of their production activity is their human potential, embodied in their accumulated knowledge, skills, intellect and creativity.

2. Educational programs for the elderly have diverse forms and content. What is significant, however, is their perception of aging as a stage in a person's evolution with its own resources, as well as regarding an old person as a subject of education.

3. The main tendency in this process is realization of "Third Age University" types of projects, whose aim is creating conditions for changing old people's behavior stereotypes and attitudes, namely, their giving up an attitude of "passive acceptance" and developing a new model of behavior by getting involved into an educational process, into designing and implementing socially significant projects, thus, increasing their participation in social life.

4. An active role in old people's social activity belongs to the Internet. Thanks to special Internet sites, facilitating old people's communication and improvement of their computer literacy, the elderly people can get an electronic address, have access to everyday press, available in the electronic form, of processing and printing pictures, listening to music, watching films and programs online, as well as keeping in touch with their relatives due to programs like Skype.

5. The cornerstone of the established system of working with old-age people is the principle of their free choice of activities, coupled with a broad spectrum of social-cultural prac-

tices, which old people had assimilated before reaching their "third age". In old age, the scope of people's leisure activities expands at the expense of voluntary work, exploration of new areas of reality and gaining new professional knowledge.

6. At the basis of the Western model of socio-cultural re-vitalization of old people are, first, a possibility of a free choice of the preferred activities with a broad spectrum of available options, second, a possibility of realizing old people's individual abilities in all aspects of everyday life within the framework of subject-subject relations of equality and relativity of various subjects' positions in the institutions, engaged in working with old people.

7. It is necessary to more actively reform work with "third age" individuals by introducing the subject-subject approach in the realization of the active aging strategy, to more fully realize the diversified potential of socio-cultural activities in a re-vitalization of old people's spiritual life.

8. In conformity with the "development approach", the main guidelines for raising the old people's status should be: 1) improving the quality of old people's life, raising their material well-being; 2) developing a network of social services to answer old people's needs; 3) providing opportunities for social, political, intellectual and creative activities to the third-age persons with the aim of re-vitalizing their social behavior; 4) training professional personnel for working with the elderly.

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