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VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN THE USA

Abstract. *The article deals with the peculiarities of vocational training in the USA. A comparative analysis of American and Ukrainian vocational training systems is carried out. Possible ways of using progressive American experience specialists' training at vocational education institutions of Ukraine are proposed.*

Key words: *vocational education, training, two-year college, labor market.*

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викладач кафедри освіти дорослих

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ПРОФЕСІЙНА ОСВІТА В США

Анотація. *У статті розглядаються особливості професійної освіти США. Здійснено порівняльний аналіз систем підготовки фахівців в Україні та США. Запропоновано можливі шляхи впровадження прогресивного американського досвіду підготовки висококваліфікованих фахівців у закладах професійно-технічної освіти України.*

Ключові слова: *професійна освіта, підготовка, дворічні коледжі, ринок праці.*

The current stage of social development is characterized by rapid changes, dynamic globalization processes, intensive growth of high-tech industries and ICT. An information society is being built up, which eventually transforms into a knowledge-based society. The new conditions impose new demands for the quality of skilled workers' training and require innovative methods, forms, types of education to meet modern requirements.

Scientific literature analysis shows that in recent decades Ukrainian scientists actively carried out a comparative study of education development in most developed countries – Great Britain, Canada, China, Germany, Scandinavia, the USA, France, etc. Common problems of vocational training and education, reforms of adult education, integration and globalization processes in lifelong learning are investigated by N. Abashkina, N. Avsheniuk, T. Desiatov, V. Zhukovskyi, N. Zhuravska, T. Koshmanova, V. Kudin, M. Leshchenko, L. Lukiaanova, A. Matvienko, N. Mukan,

N Mykytenko, L. Pukhovska, S. Romanova, A. Sbruyeva et al. The works by Ch. Bennett, L. Goncharov, L. A. Kremin, C. J. Lucas, Z. Malkova, L. Pivneva, A. Romanovskiy, J. L. Rury are devoted to the problem of the origin and development of the education system in the United States.

However, despite considerable scientific interest in foreign psychological and pedagogical works, the analysis shows that the problems of skilled workers' training considering globalization and integration processes, systemic changes in the labor market and emergence of new technologies are not covered. The issues relating to training at American two-year community colleges remain unrevealed. As a result there are contradictions between social and educational significance of the use of foreign, particularly American, pedagogical experience, for the development, modernization of vocational education in Ukraine and its insufficient study; theoretical recognition of the importance of American standards and lack of practical oriented recommendations for their use in Ukrainian education.

All this leads to a thorough study of the theory and practice of vocational education in the USA, which should be considered according to the national characteristics and in order to find the best and most effective ways for improving the national system of workers and specialists' training.

Vocational education in the USA is of great interest because of its long-standing traditions of multi-functionality, multi-profile, multi-level, decentralization and regionalization of specialists' training. The American system of vocational education has traditionally been focused on the practical needs of the labor market, the constant adaptation of curricula to the demands of production, which requires a proactive character of the content of the professional-theoretical and vocational training of production staff.

Vocational education in the United States has valuable achievements and traditions, on which the modern system of highly qualified working staff training was formed. One of the strongest features of the American system of vocational education is its great variety – from small colleges, designed for several hundred students to large state universities with tens of thousands of students; from two-year colleges with local programs of vocational education – to private universities with a wide range of scientific research. The particular choice of the institution is largely determined by students' plans for future careers, their financial capacity and location of facilities.

The forms of training organization also vary – there are colleges, high schools, counseling centers, public and private educational institutions, distance learning, etc. All the activities of professional schools are aimed at the comprehensive development of the individual in order to prepare a person for a socially useful work.

The main element of American vocational education system is a two-year junior (or community) college. Such colleges are absolutely unique American invention as it is a regional multi-profile institution integrated into the system of higher education that

simultaneously prepares specialists for industry, agriculture, services, education and health care. Its specialization depends only on the local labor market needs. Today in the United States, there are 1158 community colleges where 11.6 million students study. Most colleges are located in the state of California – 136 (including 24 private ones), and the lowest number of community colleges is in the states of Delaware (3) and Rhode Island (2). The advantages of studying at community colleges are time saving (in 2 years, students receive a diploma of higher education) and finance saving (tuition at community colleges is significantly less). Besides, there are two-year colleges in most American cities, hence young people are able to get an education and a degree anywhere.

The features of structuring and the content of training programs are based on the level of mastering the theoretical material and the necessary practical skills, rather than on a fixed formal term of study. This enables to adjust the directions of studying based on students' individual abilities and corresponds to the needs of the society, i.e. the period of study is determined by the level of student's readiness to perform professional duties.

Training is aimed at the practical application of developed skills and, as a rule, does not take into account the theory or traditional academic skills. A lot of time is devoted to practical education, thus providing a link between education and the world of work. This is mainly done either at the level of the high school or in the higher educational institutions.

From the very beginning of the American education system was subordinated to the needs of the economy, was closely linked with the needs of production and agriculture, and all these significantly distinguished it from the schools in Europe of that period with their religious nature of education and upbringing [1].

The analysis of historical and pedagogical priorities of vocational education reforming in the United States suggests that one of its main features is the flexibility and ability to respond quickly to the needs of society and the economy, provided by the appropriate legal framework, scientific and methodological developments, a necessary material and financial base [4, p. 152-153].

In the 21st century new realities that need to be taken into account in pedagogical practice appeared. Worldwide globalization gradually penetrates into all the spheres of public life, and, in particular, into the sphere of education. This concerns the goals, the content, means and forms of education, different types of educational institutions. Education is seen as a factor of production affecting productivity, as well as the ability to raise capital, to develop competition and create new working places. In order to reduce public spending on education, market mechanisms and values that clearly outweigh market economic goals in staff training are introduced [2; 3]. Progress in science and technology has led to the fact that, along with specialization, automation, computerization and intellectualization of labor, there are requirements for a person;

indeed to fulfill successfully the labor functions a person needs organizational skills, discipline, constant readiness for active actions, emotionally vulnerability, well-developed imagination, creativity, creative thinking, good memory, as well as a system of special knowledge, skills and abilities.

The educational level improving is not just a way to increase personal welfare which is a very important motive for workers. Moreover, a high educational level becomes a necessity to occupy vacancies. According to American companies, today, 3.9% of jobs need employees with a bachelor's degree, 16.8% of employees have this degree, and 9.5% got an education at a two-year college. However, when it comes to newly created jobs, 40% of them need workers with an education level higher than high school [5].

From the point of view of the employment growth, the jobs related to the STEM sphere (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) are promising. They are considered in the United States as an economic basis for the future prosperity of the state and provide wage employment above average (now the hourly wage in this area exceeds the national average by 58%). It is clear that these professions require a high level of education – preferably a bachelor's or master's degree.

There is similar understanding of basic principles of technical education by educators of both countries, the content of which includes general educational, general professional and professionally oriented (theoretical and practical) components. Analysis of the curriculum of American two-year colleges and Ukrainian vocational and technical colleges has shown that programs of general education inherent serious attitude towards science knowledge, while much attention is given to the historical and cultural aspects, as it helps to understand the present better. Programs of general education of American two-year colleges consist of the same number of general and humanities subjects; cultural, ethical, psychological components are compulsory, since the informatization of society requires individuals with broad humanities worldview, who can think and act based not only on their own interests, the interests of people, their social group, but also on the interests of all mankind. In addition, unlike at Ukrainian vocational schools, courses are based on an interdisciplinary basis.

On the one hand, the American education system includes poor theoretical training of future professionals, fragmentation of knowledge, excessive adherence to the requirements of the local labor market, fashion themes capturing etc. On the other hand, professionally oriented education in the American two-year college is more practice oriented, due to electronic educational resources that reflect the real conditions of production, as well as practical training at enterprises of the industry.

To conclude, the comparative analysis of the process of specialists' training in the United States and Ukraine gives reason to claim that both countries are considering improving their education systems as an essential condition for social and economic progress. The efforts of teachers in both countries are aimed at education, science and

industry integration, development of the creative nature of vocational education; improvement of vocational education quality and efficiency, providing of wide and open access to vocational training, vocational education management improvement, educational institutions cooperation with labor market and other social partners, improvement of educational programs, curricula and training areas in accordance with the requirements of the economy and labor market.

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САМООБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНАЯ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ УЧИТЕЛЯ КАК СИСТЕМООБРАЗУЮЩИЙ ФАКТОР НЕПРЕРЫВНОГО ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОГО ПРОСТРАНСТВА

Аннотация. Проанализирована роль самообразования в профессиональном развитии учителя и пути ее оптимизации в системе последипломного педагогического образования.

Ключевые слова: самообразование, самовоспитание, профессиональное образование учителя, индивидуально-ориентированное обучение.