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SCHOOL ECONOMICS EDUCATION FOR THE 21st CENTURY: NEW CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

ШКОЛЬНОЕ ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКОЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ ДЛЯ 21-го ВЕКА: НОВЫЕ ВЫЗОВЫ И СТРАТЕГИИ

Abstract:

The article is devoted to the analysis of the problem of improving school economics education in the context of the challenges of the society and the economy based on knowledge,

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information, and innovation for the 21st century. The problem of development of the economic culture of the individual and the cultural approach to its development in the changing school economic education is actualized in the article. Theoretical prerequisites for the development of the cultural approach to improving school economic education, which is based on the idea of developing and synthesizing divergent economic thinking and experience in economic activity to solve vital problems, are analyzed. The research materials have been successfully tested and implemented in the experience of in-service education of school teachers at the Mikhail Fedorenko Academy in the regions of the Russian Federation and in the Moscow State Pedagogical University.

Keywords: globalization, economics, school economic education, economic culture, cultural approach, divergent economic thinking, experience of economic activity

Аннотация:

Статья посвящена проблеме совершенствования школьного экономического образования в контексте вызовов общества и экономики, основанных на знаниях, информации и инновациях, для 21-го века. Актуализируется проблема формирования экономической культуры личности и культурологического подхода к ее развитию в изменяющемся школьном экономическом образовании. Анализируются теоретические предпосылки разработки культурологического подхода к совершенствованию школьного экономического образования, основу которого составляет идея развития и синтеза дивергентного экономического мышления и опыта экономической деятельности по решению жизненно важных задач. Материалы исследования успешно апробированы в опыте работы с педагогическими работниками регионов Российской Федерации в Академии Михаила Федоренко и в Московском педагогическом государственном университете.

Ключевые слова: глобализация, экономика, школьное экономическое образование, экономическая культура, культурологический подход, дивергентное экономическое мышление, опыт экономической деятельности

Introduction

The first quarter of the 21st century is characterized by the intensification of the processes of global shifts and systemic changes in the society at the stage of its post-industrial development. Civilization is facing the greatest paradigm change in a rather inconsistent situation of cultural, social, and economic instability, turbulence, and uncertainty.

The dynamics of the recent shifts and systemic changes of traditional fundamental paradigms, concepts, social institutions, and values, that has previously ensured the integrity of the socio-cultural space of human life, has been increasing. On the other hand, over the past decades, globalization, as a multidimensional phenomenon, has acquired the character of the main factor of development of the post-industrial society based on knowledge, information, and innovations. Profound value changes determine the change from “an economic production orientation” to a “total well-being orientation” (C.Brevoord).

According to Alvin Toffler (1928-2016) humanity is moving to a new technological revolution, leading to the creation of an informational or post-industrial society:

“To begin with, many of today's changes are not independent of one another. Nor are they random. For example, the crack-up of the nuclear family, the global energy crisis, the spread of cults and cable television, the rise of flextime and new fringe-benefit packages, the emergence of separatist movements, may all seem like isolated events. Yet precisely the reverse is true. These and many other seemingly unrelated events or trends are inter-connected. They are, in fact, parts of a much larger phenomenon: the death of industrialism and the rise of a new civilization. So

long as we think of them as isolated changes and miss this larger significance, we cannot design a coherent, effective response to them.

So profoundly revolutionary is the new civilization that it challenges all our old assumptions. Old ways of thinking, old formulas, dogmas, and ideologies, no matter how cherished or how useful hi the past, no longer fit the facts. The world that is fast emerging from the clash of new values and technologies, new geopolitical relationships, new lifestyles, and modes of communication, demands wholly new ideas and analogies, classifications, and concepts. We cannot cram the embryonic world of tomorrow into yesterday's conventional cubbyholes" [4, p. 154].

Globalization and global transformations present an unprecedented anthropological challenge to the systemic multilevel and multidimensional manifestations of integration in the main spheres of human and social life.

Education is no exception, as it is one of the key social and cultural institutions. Education always reflects the key processes taking place in the society, and its definite type always corresponds to a certain type of socio-cultural practice. The present-day image of education is determined by new social and cultural determinants, modification of types of society and cultures, and formation of new social and cultural values, meanings, and value orientations.

According to A. Arutyunova, "the sphere of education is the only subsystem of society that has a specialized character, the objective function of which fully coincides with the goal of modern society. While various spheres and branches of the economy create material, spiritual products and services for a person, the educational system 'creates' the person himself, influencing his intellectual, moral, aesthetic, and physical development. Education ultimately determines a person's position in society, and his abilities, goals achieved in society, a person's worldview are the result of education" [1, p. 24].

Global shifts and systemic changes in modern education determine its new image and new social and cultural orientations in the first quarter of the 21st century. Nowadays we deal with such tendencies of development of education, as:

- Changes in the cultural, social, educational, and pedagogical meanings and functions of education with quite new values of educational and pedagogical activities.
- Consideration of the quality of education as an essential component of the quality of human life and a basic condition for the success of an individual in the contemporary and future worlds.
- Integration of education and culture, actualization of the cultural approach to education, strengthening the relationship between education and innovations.
- Expanding the boundaries of the educational space, which is becoming not only formal, but also informal and non-formal, digital, and virtualized.
- Transformation of values and meanings as well as development of quite new image of changing childhood and adolescence in the changing world.
- Formation of new ways for children and adolescents to master the world around them.
- Change of the paradigm of goals by the paradigm of roles in education.
- Orientation to a fundamentally different type of pedagogical culture orientated to the development of the essential forces of the student's personality (interests, motives, intentions, values, meanings).

As A. Asmolov writes, "the future has already arrived. 65% of current first-graders will get professions that do not currently exist. The modern education system prepares the child for life in a stable world and does not meet the challenges that a person of the 21st century faces. To be successful and keep pace with change, our children and ourselves must constantly learn and be ready for new living conditions and technologies" [2]. The problem of *why* and *how to teach and*

learn to become successful in a world of uncertainty, complexity and diversity is in the agenda for the changing society.

Obviously, a very urgent problem for both theory and practice of education is the question of what to teach today to be successful tomorrow.

Many authors and researchers are convinced, that school economics education is of great importance and plays an extremely important role in the process of formation and development of school leavers' abilities for cultural and social adaptation, competent and socially responsible decision-making and economically expedient behavior and activities in a rapidly changing social and economic reality. It has a great educational and pedagogical potential in the process of economic socialization at school (S. Allgood, W.E. Becker, A.D. Glenn, D.R. Leet, D.R. Lewis, J.A. Mackey, J.S. Lopus, W.B. Walstad, etc.).

Problem Statement

In the scholarly literature, there are many approaches to defining the essence of school economics education, its mission, and functions at changing school. The other key issue, closely related to the first one, concerns the appropriate definition of the strategies, objectives, content, methodology and technologies of teaching economics at changing school.

We share the point of view of those authors and researchers who consider that the mission of school economics education is to create economic culture of school graduates. In this aspect, it includes the ability to analyze different economic phenomena, to discern proper economic and financial choices, to discuss and estimate economic and financial issues, to make adequate economic and financial decisions in various life and economic situations, and to demonstrate competent economic and financial behavior in accordance with the formed values and meanings of economic activity.

In addition, the economic culture, formed among school leavers, should contribute to their competent and responsible choice of profession, to further development of social activity and social responsibility, their entrepreneurial experience and efficient management as future subjects of economic activity. It should stimulate their life-long economic education.

Despite the significance and the undeniably high educational and pedagogical potential of school economics education as the main tool and mechanism of economic socialization, it should be recognized, that it is still at the stage of its institutionalization and conceptualization.

The existing experience of the practice of school economics education is not sufficiently evaluated and explained on the theoretical level. Such key aspects of the problem as the purpose, objectives, and strategies for the development of school economic education and its content require further theoretical development and practical implementation into educational practice due to the challenges of post-industrial society and the economy and the mission of school for the 21st century.

Research questions and purpose of the study

In this study the main question was formulated in the following way, "What does school economics education mean for the 21st century and what are the main challenges and strategies of its development?" To answer these questions is the purpose of the study.

Materials and methods

The study included: (a) an analysis of the contemporary state policy of the Russian Federation in modernization and strategic innovative development of education due to the challenges of the post-industrial society and economics of the 21st century; (b) a theoretical and methodological analysis of the cultural approach to the modernization and innovative development of school economics education (its mission, values, vision, strategies, instruments,

etc.); (c) approbation of the cultural approach technology of teacher in-service education on teaching economics at school; (d) data collection, data analysis and interpretation; analytic framework and modeling.

Literature review

Contemporary shifts and systemic changes in culture, education and communications, modern transformations of cultural, social and economic relations tightly connected with transformational processes in the society, cultures, economy and education are focus of the interdisciplinary research activity.

A philosophical approach to interpretation of different aspects of global transformation have become the subject of special analysis in the publications of I. Wallerstein, S. Huntington, Th. Levitt, J. Stiglitz, etc. in the western tradition, and O.T. Bogomolov, Y.D. Granin, V.G. Kalyuzhnyi, V.A. Lektorskiy, A.S. Panarin, V.S. Shvyryov, V.S. Stepin, A.B. Weber, etc. in the Russian tradition. It has been proved, that globalization is a multidimensional process that affects all aspects of public life and is of socio-theoretical interest. It is clear that such a multidimensional process as globalization can be viewed from a variety of angles. It seems that one of the most productive approaches is the analysis of globalization in terms of a profound change in the nature and organizing principles of everyday practices, the complex interweaving of which forms the life world (V.N. Furs) [5].

The post-non-classical philosophy is of great significance for understanding modern civilizational shifts and changes. It allows us to comprehend the essential nature of the transformation of industrial society into a post-industrial one. The main provisions of the philosophy of post-non-classical rationality, significant for the interpretation of the contemporary tendencies of development of cultures, society and economics are the following ideas:

1) The post-non-classical type of rationality expands the field of reflection over activity. It takes into account the correlation of the received knowledge about the object not only with the peculiarity of the means and operations of activity, but also with value-target structures (V.A. Lektorsky, V.S. Stepin, V.S. Shvyrev).

2) In the conditions of post-non-classical science and the global nature of cultural and social changes, fundamentally different values, meanings and value orientations of a person are required within the framework of one's life activity, while the orientation towards expediency remains dominant in the search for the defining principle of rationality. The degree of rationality is determined by the optimal ratio of the elements of an integral system-activity approach and its effectiveness (B.S. Shcheglov).

3) Rationality in various forms of human activity, in the desire to participate in the creation of new meanings, becomes one of the main key value orientations and meanings in human life. The problem is not only to form the principle of rationality as a sequence of patterns of human activity, but also to designate peculiar values, meanings and value orientations commensurate with the human being in terms of what is necessary and possible in relation to himself, to the world he creates, to everything that has a way out to the problem, which in post-non-classical science is focused on the key concept of "life" (V.V. Popov, B.S. Shcheglov).

4) Self-developing systems are characterized by synergetic effects, fundamental irreversibility of processes. The interaction of a person with them proceeds in such a way that the human action itself is not something external, but, as it were, turns on into the system, modifying each time the field of its possible states. By engaging in interaction, a person is no longer dealing with rigid objects and properties, but with a kind of "constellations of possibilities". There is a problem of choosing a certain line of development from the many possible ways of evolution of the system. Moreover, this choice itself is irreversible and most often cannot be unambiguously calculated (V.A. Lektorsky, V.S. Stepin, V.V. Popov, B.S. Shcheglov).

The key ideas of post-non-classical philosophy allows us to understand the nature of the integration of culture and economy in the conditions of transformational processes. As A. Auzan mentions, from the very beginning of the existence of economics, it was based on a simplified model of a person striving only for wealth. To this essence belong all the conclusions of classical political economy by A. Smith, D. Ricardo, J. S. Mill and others. Of course, a real person is much more complicated and contradictory [3, p. 7].

According to A. Auzan, the following ideas form the holistic concept of contemporary social and cultural economics:

- 1) There are economic phenomena that cannot be explained by factors other than cultural ones.
- 2) From the point of view of the theory of informal institutions, culture is values and behavioral attitudes shared by a certain community and slowly changing over time.
- 3) Culture influences economic development, but does not determine it. The impact of culture is stable over time, but is associated with other factors.
- 4) Culture can inhibit or stimulate economic development through the structure and level of transaction costs. The emergence of an increase due to a decrease in transaction costs allows us to interpret the totality of socio-cultural factors as social and cultural capital.
- 5) The use of the influence of culture on the economy is also possible through changing the structure of social and cultural capital through, first of all, education [3, p.8].

The ideas of integration of culture and economy (A. Auzan) are consonant with the concept of a pre-adaptive flexible model of education (A. Asmolov).

According to A. Asmolov, adaptive education models based only on the translation of skills, knowledge and skills are becoming less effective. "Preadaptive flexible models that prepare universal students come to the fore. They are united by the main value setting - to teach to learn. In these models, education is aimed at ensuring that the student himself can construct a semantic picture of the world that helps him make decisions in uncertain, non-standard situations. Universalization in education comes to the fore, rather than focusing on a narrow specialization of knowledge. Nowadays the "school of uncertainty" is becoming more and more popular. In fact, the world of classical physics of Newton has been replaced by the world of non-classical, relativistic physics of Albert Einstein and Niels Bohr. Similarly, the new approach in education is aimed at finding a model in which it is important not to transfer specific knowledge or a recipe for obtaining this knowledge, but to teach a person to find information independently and use it" [2].

The foregoing defines the special mission, values, vision and development strategies of school economic education.

Results

1. Changes in the mission, values and meanings, sociocultural image and landscape of education are determined by:

- 1) Transformations in the civilizational paradigm of the development of education for the 21st century (new social and cultural values, meanings and value orientations, etc.).
- 2) The multicultural character of transformations of interconnected and interdependent processes of both cultural, personal and professional development throughout life (in childhood, adolescence, youth, maternity). Education expands the age limits of education. It becomes not only formal, but also informal and non-formal, digital, media and virtual.
- 3) The actualization of the role and significance of academic and socio-professional mobility of the contemporary society and a person to solve various life and professional situations by means of education and from the standpoint of one's own and the other culture.

- 4) The increased competition in the domestic and global markets of cultural and educational services.
- 5) The formation of a new type of educational and pedagogical culture of education that is to fulfill the following functions:
 - (a) pedagogical assistance in the development of the essential forces of a developing personality (interests, needs, motives, values, meanings, value orientations);
 - (b) ensuring effective and productive interaction (co-operation, dialogue) between different subjects of educational activities;
 - (c) creation and support of a pedagogically expedient environment for educational activity with its creative, developmental character.
- 6) The key competencies of the individual as a subject of activity are increasingly “shifting” towards communicative (managerial and operator) and creative (research and development).

2. Today, there are four main approaches to school economics education that are practically implemented in Russia: professionally oriented (business-oriented), theoretical, cultural-functional, and academic.

The cultural approach a special place among them.

In the process of educational activity, a person masters social experience as an integral part of a common human culture. Social experience is represented by the following components: (a) knowledge about nature, society, man, technology; (b) skills and experience, practical experience; (c) creative skills and experience, creative experience; (d) the experience of an emotionally valuable attitude towards the surrounding reality, other people, and oneself; (e) communication experience.

The same concerns the content of school economics education as the key resource of economic socialization.

The cultural approach to school economics education is based on the understanding of economic culture (society, personality) as the goal and the result of school economic education.

We define economic culture as a part of common human culture. On the other hand, it represent a definite level of person’s cultural, social and economic development. It allows the subject of economic activity to orientate in the uncertain and changing economic reality and to solve successfully various cultural, social and economic problems.

In this aspect we can conclude, that this interpretation of economic culture reflects the fundamental principle of the unity of consciousness and activity (divergent economic knowledge) and activity (economic activity). In this aspect we can state the fact, that the basis of economic culture is the synthesis of economic knowledge, values, meanings, motives and experience of their implementation (competencies) in economic activity.

3. We share the opinion of those researchers who define the vision and mission of school economics education as an educational and pedagogical resource “to make people become aware of basic economic principles and concept as well as the tools for sound economic analysis and inculcate in them an attitude of mind that will contribute intelligently to discourse on economic reforms and development as they affect or would affect the society” [7].

The main goal of school economics education and upbringing of students at school is the formation of elementary economic concepts necessary in practical economic activities, and the beginnings of economic culture.

Conclusion

The analysis of the problem of the cultural approach to school economics education allows us to conclude, that despite the fact that teachers are aware of the importance of teaching economics at schools, the vast majority of them are not yet ready to accept innovations in this field. At the same time, they still are trying to find adequate ways, methods and technologies to

implement in the educational process at the lessons of economics with their orientation to development of economic culture.

Project activity on the development and implementation of the main provisions of “effective pedagogy” of teaching economics, which is based on the unity of cultural and value-semantic approaches to economic education, was tested in the research and educational activities of the authors of this article at the Mikhail Fedorenko Academy, whose classes were held for teachers in many regions of the Russian Federation, and in the process of teaching methods of school economics education and financial literacy education in the Moscow State Pedagogical University.

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