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Доступность образования в России и Германии (сравнительные аспекты)

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Availability of Education in Russia and Germany (Comparative Aspects)

Актуальность научного сравнения образовательных систем России и Германии определяется их общностью. При всей самобытности российской системы образования она по своей структуре и содержанию близка к западноевропейской системе, в частности к немецкой модели, явившейся ее исторической основой. В истории образовательной политики Германии и России накоплен определенный опыт по обеспечению широкой доступности образования и его качества. Исследование проблемы доступности и качества образования на современном этапе диктуется не только теоретическими потребностями сферы образования, но и процессами, включающими экономические и политические трансформации в обществе, влекущими за собой изменения в социальной политике стран всего мира. Эти изменения связаны с процессами глобализации и демократизации национальных систем образования.

Ключевые слова и словосочетания: доступность, качество, реформы высшего образования, социальное неравенство, социальная политика Германии, международный опыт.

Comparison of Russian and German educational systems is in the spotlight of present day research because they are similar. Though Russian educational system is distinctive, it is close to the Western European system both in structure and content. As for the German educational model – it is in the basis of the Russian one. In the hindsight both Russia and Germany have accumulated experience in providing availability of education and its quality. Research of the issue of availability and quality of the education is presupposed by theoretical demands of the education and by economic and political transformations of the society throughout the world. The above mentioned changes are connected with globalization and democratization of national educational systems.

Key words and word-combinations: availability, quality, higher education reforms, social inequality, social policy of Germany, international experience.

Historically fate of Germany is interconnected with the fate of our country. Notwithstanding tragic periods of our relations (horrors of two World wars are in the memory of both Russians and Germans), people have always sympathized with each other. Our contacts have a long history and have been established for several centuries.

Russian tsar family members and nobilities as well as famous political and military officials, scientists, travelers and researchers had German ancestors.

Some regions of Russia (for example territory of former Autonomous republic of Volga region Germans near to Saratov) were explored due to hard work of several generations of German settlers.

Many of our countrymen have recently immigrated to Germany.

Lots of people come here on business, make and maintain research, cultural, sport contacts. At present economic, political and cultural relations of Germany and Russia intensified in comparison with the past.

Access to education is a social issue of the XXI century. Education availability is a political goal, mutual for the majority of countries. Research of the issue of availability and quality of the education is presupposed by theoretical demands of the education and by economic and political transformations of the society throughout the world. The above mentioned changes are connected with globalization and democratization of national educational systems. Under the conditions of the unified labor market there emerge common principles of education and consequently many countries experience “educational boom” facing the new wave of radical educational system reforms.

Educational reforms overseas are aimed at the current and future society needs, effective use of resources including educational systems themselves and presuppose the availability of education to everyone. This is the one of the fundamental principles of the unified European educational space.

Education must remain public good and service, i.e. be available to everyone and satisfy different customers’ wants without discrimination. It must serve the society – economy, culture and social sphere. It’s also necessary to keep in mind that global equality and availability of education is nonsense. Every society has its own educational standard corresponding to its objective needs.

The main hindrance to international education is not lack of foreign language skills but mutual recognition of education results (diploma nostrification).

Education within Russian territory is subject to the general laws. New information space, cultural dialogs demand and social consequences of Soviet society transformations lead to inevitable renewal of educational system and increase of access to it. It is explained by the fact that current Russian system of education does not keep pace with the social processes. Russian choice of joining Bologna process is absolutely right as it corresponds to historically explained tradition of integrating Europe.

Successful efforts of Germany in the sphere of social policy and education issues solving make it possible for Russia to find ways of increasing access to education and adapting it to the modern tendencies of European and global development.

The objective of our research is to compare and analyze educational systems of Germany and Russia in the spotlight of quality and accessibility of education under the conditions of modern transformations.

The following theoretical and empirical tasks must be realized:

- to conceptualize different approaches to solving the issue of accessibility of education;
- to prove that quality and accessibility of education are characteristics of social-oriented education policy and to find means of directing Governmental policy to education accessibility increase;
- to explore the dynamics of education accessibility under the conditions of modern social transformations.

Methodologically the research is based on the structural-functional approach of different scholars: K. Davis, E. Durkheim, R. Merton. U. Moor. T. Parsons. The author used several conceptions of social stratifications and social inequality made by M. Weber and further developed by B. Barber, E. Giddens, L. Gumplovich, G. Lebon, K. Marks, A. Smith, P. Sorokin, A. Tokville, E. Shils.

The author also used works of P. Bourdieu, K. Jenks, D. Coleman, D. Konstantinovskiy, I. Loshakova, G. Cherednichenko, V. Shubkin, V. Yarskaia, E. Yarskaia-Smirnova.

Social-anthropological approach let the author to analyze concepts of social policy in the sphere of education (F. Ziatdinova, V. Yarskaia) and interpret modern state of education in the context of social structure and up-to-date paradigm of education sociology.

Interdisciplinary, system approaches (L. von Bertalanffy, V. Kartashov, N. Luman) and comparative historical approach (M. Kovalevskiy, O. Kont, G. Spencer, A. Toinbi) as well as project method are in the foundation of our research.

Conceptual and empirical implementation of basic concepts was developed according to principles of sociological research worked out by G. Batygin, I. Butenko, I. Deviatko, P. Romanov, O. Shkaratan, V. Yadov.

Empirical material was taken from statistical data results of 2010-2012 by sociological monitoring reflecting level of accessibility of German and Russian education. The author used the following methods: questioning the pupils of secondary schools, vocational schools, institutions of higher education (Social-economic University, Volga region Academy of Public administration, Saratov State Law Academy, Saratov State University of Techniques, Technology and Management, questionnaires of parents and Internet-questionnaires of German students. The total sample of respondents in Russia was 928 people. It was stratified and goal-oriented.

Internet questioning of Germans was organized in the following way: the author sent out 344 questionnaires forms, the total sample of respondents was typical and multistage. Empirical data was analyzed with the help of universal software statistics package SPSS for Windows.

1. Availability of education in Russia and Germany.

Cultural and educational environment of our country is regarded by us as extremely important one. Institute of Russian education change, its modernization becomes a precondition of spiritual and socio-economic development of our country on its way to a law-governed state and civil society. New individual and collective resources emerge due to the possibilities of educational system. Researches make absolutely different classifications of the present day state of education as a whole as well as they make different assessment of the ongoing changes. It is necessary to study positive and positively assumed as well as negative changes in the sphere of national education. Social expectations of different social strata from being well-educated are extremely different. The most serious is the issue of availability and quality of Russian education.

In the system of higher education there exists dual situation of “lack of availability” and “over-availability”. The fact of paid education makes it less available. At the same time paid education is expanding its influence. Members of German Parliament say that Russia is ahead of their speed of implementation of market tools into education implying the pay for educational services. Motives leading to the system of paid education are different in Russia and Germany.

Different levels of availability of education are reflected in different understanding of availability of education in the two countries.

Germans don't view it as privilege but as social gain providing equal chances for education to everyone. They don't correlate this notion with social inequality.

In Russia paid or partially paid system of education is perceived as violation of declared human right to free secondary education.

Paid education increases social inequality, makes society unfair as to the social promotion, because it is not any more based on merit. The role of a student becomes less important than role of material and intellectual contribution of parents.

Structural inequality is a characteristic of any society.

Education plays a role of social selection, translating class differentiations and social inequality. The degree of availability of education becomes the main indicator of the mentioned processes radically changing the whole system of education.

Evolution of the concept “social inequality” is connected with the achievements of social state: inequality becomes less negative notion and is viewed as an indicator of “otherness”, “uniqueness” as pluralism of life styles and cultural values.

Social status of any person influences the degree of availability of education.

It is especially evident in modern Russia.

Higher education is still prestigious in our country, it is not available to everyone and is still regarded as one of the most important values, as a social good, inevitable component of eligible citizen that must be provided for free. From the other point during social transformations there appear market definition of education as a “service” that have to be paid for.

This dilemma of education is largely determined by misbalance of interaction of educational system and Russian society.

It's necessary to discuss both innovations and barriers to getting education, different access to getting education, factors decreasing chances to getting education determined by global conditions.

We single out several factors explaining different access to education. Social inequality transforms education into elite privilege. Economic issues of our country make implementing paid education into practice inevitable. Availability of education and prestige of certain professions as well as regionalization processes are also interconnected.

Limited access to education is determined by social-economic processes, not by personal traits of the applicants.

At present there is tendency to raise the barrier to the availability of qualitative and prestigious education.

In Russia socially-oriented community is being established and the new conception of social policy in the sphere of education will realize the principle of social fairness making chances of different social strata of people almost equal.

Prospects of socially-oriented education will be realized in compensation measures and governmental social programs for low-cost group life.

Thus it's necessary to think over all the changes in educational system of the West (Germany) to find the optimal way of reforms making education more available and socially-oriented.

According to socially-economic parameters Russia and Germany belong to different groups of countries. Educational systems of these two countries are at different stages of development, and this fact also determines the degree of education availability.

Germany has a social market-oriented economy; it means the state plays an important role in solving social issues. The country reached its level of economic and technological development because of constant attention of the state to the educational issues. German educational reform started in 1950s made it available to everyone. There is a real tendency of paid education increase but it does not mean that it will become less available as the life standards are very high. German educational reforms are very cautious, preserving traditions and gradually implementing changes making the previous system more competitive and corresponding to the demands of Bologna process. Higher education is free in Germany, professional education is well-developed, but primary education needs quality improvement. German professional education is considered to be the standard by many countries. In the country there is a tendency of introducing paid higher education but it doesn't mean that it will become less available because high standards of life.

German success is predetermined by the adequate selection of students according to abilities and natural inclinations, social and financial support of the state making education available to every social stratum.

In Germany there exist strong commitment to solidarity and belief in common access to social goods. Only economy of this country combines welfare and social fairness so successfully. Germans judge the quality of their economic establishment according to the benefits it provides. In Germany as well as in some other market-oriented countries there was formed a number of social services and institutions leveling social inequality. European type of civilization has a higher level of social dynamics. Social market economy was founded by Reichs chancellor Otto Von Bismark. He introduced a system of obligatory social insurance in the 1870-s.

Other Prussian reformers baron Shtein and duke fon Gardenberg had made foundations of the modern state aimed at the wellbeing of every citizen.

Since 1883 Germany has been building social policy on insurance principles.

Social insurance is based on pension insurance, sickness insurance, sick or retired care insurance, accident insurance and unemployment insurance.

Ludwig Erhard is rightly considered to be the Titan of social economy. In the 1950-s he worked "an economic wonder". He put his philosophy I one phrase: "Wellbeing for everyone, wellbeing through competition". At present German economists stick to the principle "As little state as it is possible and as much state as it is necessary".

Social market-oriented economy of Germany has been reformed several times.

If the social state wants to be socially fair it must be transformed from the state of social wellbeing and insurance into the state of social investments.

Nowadays Germany faces reforms again and it inclines closer to liberal strategy, not to the social one. Experts think that the previous model of solidarity capital redistribution is an unsustainable pattern. The wish to guarantee equal standards of life throughout the whole country can't come true under the condition of economic stagnation.

It is necessary to adapt social system to the changing conditions through raising the level of personal responsibility without considering the state responsible for any risk i.e. sickness or old age.

Germany tries to find new paradigms and correlate it with tax burden reduction. And still social state reforms move closer to neoliberalism, i.e. social liberalism and supports social fairness.

As for Russia it has transitive economy. The stage of fundamental education development is almost over here and the country is beginning to develop professional forms of education.

Availability of education is paramount nowadays.

Systematic social research is absolutely necessary in this situation as the process must be monitored and every person must make right choice, develop life strategy, work out attitudes either to survive or to achieve success.

2. International and Russian experience in implementing education quality.

Almost all the countries have concerns about the quality of their secondary and higher education. There is a tendency to raise the barrier to the qualitative and prestigious educaion. Compulsory secondary education led to the

growth of illiterate people unable to read, make calculations, write to the level necessary to perform job functions.

This issue is also relevant for Russia.

20 years ago Soviet schoolchildren understood the written text better than pupils from other countries. According to the latest research they don't keep pace with the children from developed countries. Only 50% of Russian schoolchildren understand science. Social-economic crisis provokes inner contradictions of the educational system. Socio-economic situation presupposes different educational spaces for implementing educational strategies by different countries.

In the West educational crisis was caused by shift to high technologies. According to the international Pisa research German schoolchildren also demonstrated low progress.

School education in Germany is in crisis now. The research «Pisa» (Programme for International Student Assessment) – encompasses 180 thousand of 15-year-old schoolchildren from 32 countries made sad conclusions for Germany. The performance of German children was extremely low. This fact provoked discussion by politicians, journalists and simple people and the government planned to put Germany to the five most educated countries of the world. In comparison with secondary education professional education in Germany is assessed very high all over the world.

99,7% Japanese read and write (and this is in spite of the objective difficulties of hieroglyphic writing comprising three absolutely different systems of writing).

This is the best achievement in the world. Japanese schoolchildren demonstrate best results at the international competitions in mathematics. They are the best in music.

They say that Japanese economic miracle is based on the perfect system of upbringing and education.

Upbringing in Japan is a way to higher social status. Half of the children start to learn since the age of 5, one third of the children – since the age of 3. Door to the prestigious University is open to the graduates of prestigious kindergartens and secondary schools. Selection to the good kindergarten is by open competition. Applicants are chosen among 5 in the kindergarten, among 10 in the school and among 40 in the University, so the competition is tough. Graduates of prestigious Universities can be employed by famous corporations and can work in the sphere of public administration.

According to M. Barber, in Great Britain the main criterion of education reforms efficiency is quality of education. All the other parameters are viewed as the means of achieving a good result in education. British system of education is characterized by well-developed curricula, perfect reputation, sticking to traditions.

Comparison of international results in the education is made in the subjects that can be correlated, - mathematics, physics, and science.

In Russia these subjects are taught very well according to good methodologies. Russian schoolchildren still perform well at the international competitions and contests.

These results contradict our educational system. It is necessary to note that in Russia there appear lots of specialized schools which make good education more available but at the same time demonstrate social and class differentiation, admitting children not according to their merits but according to their ability to pay for the education.

It is impossible to improve education quality without adequate funding.

Funding depends on GDP, governmental budget, sources of finance: governmental, municipal, private ones, profits of institutions of higher education.

Funding higher education in Russia changed.

Process of co-financing in higher education is still developing. In 2010/2011 33% of students both of governmental and non-governmental institutions paid for their higher education. In 2012 this percentage increased up to 44% (only governmental institutions of higher education are meant). Russian experience is unique. Only 25-30% of families can afford education for their children, and these families invest the sum that can be compared to the governmental spending for this purpose.

Many factors influence the education quality: applicants level of knowledge, qualification of teachers, curricula content, funds of higher educational institution, social security of employees, environment and so on.

Traditional Russian educational paradigm valued once and forever acquired education level. At present the measure of quality assessment is not only the level of knowledge but acquired skills and abilities to study, to search information, to support life-long learning.

Socio-economic, informational and values-based parameters of educational system in different countries are also different. That is why it is very important to pay attention to the issues of secondary and higher education quality and availability both in Russia and overseas. Correlation of inequality and education is different. People need higher education and are interested in it. In Russia higher education is prestigious, not available to everyone, and valued as a

social good guaranteed for every citizen.

At the same time market views education as a service to be paid for.

This education dilemma is explained by imbalance of Russian education and society interaction. Availability is a characteristic of socially-oriented education.

The poor must receive access to education as to the public good.

It is necessary to provide availability of education and modify strategies of knowledge transfer, which is impossible without governmental preventative educational policy.

We analyzed vast experience of education availability provision in Germany.

We can conclude that correlation of measures improving education availability and decreasing education availability is different in Russia and Germany. Sometimes they are even in inverse ratio.

Unfortunately, such positive factors as talent, interest, abilities and “unacceptable” factors as income, family social status, race, ethnicity, location often swap in Russia.

3. According to the monitoring results we grouped, ranged and tabled sociological information. We can conclude that our research does not contradict basic statements of the theory of social stratification and mobility by P. Sorokin. P. Sorokin thought that education performs function of social selection and camouflage inequality in a society. Our research also corresponds to theoretical conclusions of D. Konstantinovskiy about social status, income and attitudes influence on education availability.

The majority of respondents thought socio-economic and cultural transformations the main factors limiting access to education.

Thus, social inequality as a characteristic of Russia influences education availability. Russians and Germans understand “availability” in different ways.

Our monitoring results confirm the statements of P. Bourdieu about the increase of social inequality after graduating from the higher educational institutions as personal income depends on the education the person acquired.

This issue is also related with a number of present-day changes linking globalization process with traditions of nationalism and liberal ideas of democratic influence.

Education reform in our country and in the whole world is practical application task. It must be solved in the form of experiments, innovative modeling based on empirical research. Russia is being transformed into democratic society, law governed state and market-oriented economy. It will be more successful in case education is reformed well.

One of the main goals of our research is learning of correlation of public administration and social spending improving education availability.

Slump of the 1990-s slowed down the processes of education and made it inaccessible for certain categories of citizens, breaking the chain-system “state-education- society”. Today the state tries to regain its former role in education system management.

New governmental policy is reflected in the Acts “About education” and “About higher education”, in a “Federal program of education development for the period 2000-2005”, in a “Conception of Russian education modernization for the period up to 2010”.

On the 29-th of August 2001 president Putin underlined that the main obligation of the state is to regain its responsibility and play an active role in the sphere of education, making it more available, qualitative and effective.

He also said that educational system must provide equal access to education for every one irrespective of income, location, national origin and health state.

The Council of State approved the draft Conception of Russian education modernization that is aimed at increasing its availability, quality and effectiveness enhancing social-oriented policy in Russia.

4. We would like to sum up the results of the research in the form of theoretical conclusions and practical recommendations.

à) Education becomes more and more global that means it must be available to everyone. The main hindrance to international education is not lack of language knowledge but mutual recognition of the education results (diploma nostrification).

Bologna process has to build unified European educational space, convergent, comparable diplomas, academic degrees and qualifications.

Russian education is subject to general rules.

According to its structure, content and technologies it is historically connected with the German model, but the degree of its availability is different. Learning German experience in social policy and education availability provision lets Russia find ways of adapting to the modern European and global education tendencies.

b) The declared equality of rights to education contradicts social differentiation, and this problem is characterized

as societal one. Inequality of social strata is inevitable in any society. At present people rethink and redefine the notion of social inequality and this is the achievement of a social state. Inequality is no more a negative concept; it has the connotation of otherness and pluralism of life styles and cultures. Education level influences social status and social mobility, but educational status also influences the access to the education.

It has been manifested in Russia for the last decade mostly evident.

c) Education availability is one of the characteristics of socially-oriented education. Education plays the role of social selection, it translates class differences and reproduces social inequality. The level of education availability is the main indicator of these processes determining the degree of radical changes of the educational system.

One of the results of our research is revealing the correlation of public administration processes and social benefits leading to increase of educational availability for the low cost group life.

In Russia new educational conception will let realize principle of social fairness and equalize chances of people in a society. Perspectives of socio-oriented education are in compensation system and social programs of the government.

d) Germany is the country of socially-oriented market economy. Government plays an important role in solving social issues here. Attention of the state to the educational problems leads to the socio-economic prosperity. Education reforms of the 1950-s made it available to everyone. Paid education exists but it does not mean that education is not available as the standards of life are very high. Germany reforms education gradually and cautiously. Traditions remain, innovations make the system only more competitive, the demands of Bologna declaration are satisfied and they have the status of complementary measures.

e) Germans view education availability as a social gain and don't correlate this concept with social inequality. Russian people view restriction of education availability as social unfairness and violation of the citizens' rights.

f) In Russia higher education is prestigious and regarded as one of the most important values, public good, inevitable component of citizenship that must be free of charge. At the same time from the point of view of the market economy education is regarded as service to be paid for. This dilemma is explained by imbalance of education and society interaction. Consequences of liberalization of education and introducing payment for educational services will be analyzed later, because Russian education modernization is such a factor that influences education availability indefinitely.

g) It is very important to speak about innovations in education and barriers to education, about factors narrowing the way to education and about the global conditions predetermining education availability change.

In Russia education availability is predetermined by socio-economic factors, not by traits and abilities of applicants.

It is necessary to state that at this very stage there is a tendency to restrict availability of qualitative and prestigious education.

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