

ЯКІСТЬ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ ТА ЕКСПЕРТНИЙ СУПРОВІД ЇЇ ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ: ДОСВІД ЄС

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS EXPERT SUPPORT: THE EU EXPERIENCE

UDC 37:005.6]:[006:061.1ЄС]

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QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The internationalization of the market coincided with the opening of state borders for the benefit of free movement of capital, goods, labor, services and information. With the dominance of the ideological realm of economic pragmatism, educational discourse is overwhelmed and dominated by conceptual loans from the business world: choice, competition, efficiency, speech, management, productivity, consumer. Thus, a successful criterion of international economic competition emerges as a key quality criterion. The Communication from the Commission of the European Communities (2008) on an updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training raises the need for upgrading the skills of the population and the need to implement skills development policies that better respond to current and future needs of the labor market. However, the entrepreneurial spirit promoted at all levels of education and training rather establishes a more modern surveillance mechanism by establishing a cultural arbitrary accord with the market economy (Foucault, 2005). Consequently, it is necessary to find an alternative way of teaching that welcomes the questioning and manifestation of both the genetic cause and the prospects behind the formal education policy.

Key words: critical educational theory; education; EU strategic documents; market mechanisms in the education area; quality of education.

<https://doi.org/10.28925/1609-8595.2020.1.13>

Introduction - Problematic of Work. The quality of education is a matter of priority for education systems in the European as well as in the wider international environment. The quality of the education system is shaped by a number of parameters that interact with and promote the goals and aims of the education system. These parameters include the administrative framework, the pedagogical context, and the logistical infrastructure of the system (Harvey, Bowers-Brown, &

Leman, 2003). However, the quality of education is an extremely complex issue that is influenced by social and historical contexts as well as political choices.

In the context of tracing the subtle manifestations that highlight the complexity of the quality of education, the problem of the present work is one of them. The aim is to highlight the key features of quality education, as highlighted in the relevant UNICEF and Commission of the European Community documents. In addition, the scope of the work includes the critique and revelation of the latent educational policy, which is hidden beneath

the veil of quality education and the Curricula from the perspective of criticism and postmodern educational theory.

Subject – Significance. The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999, the aims of which were reaffirmed at the meeting of European Ministers of Education in Prague on 9 May 2001, is a classic example that clearly serves the principles of globalization¹ in education. The main aim is, in the context of the free movement of ideas, citizens and services in the member states of the European Union under the Bolkestein Directive, the creation by 2010 of a European Higher Education Area promoting the mobility and employability of European citizens (Vavouras, 2001).

Bearing in mind that the application of free-market rules to education has at times received criticism concerning both the quality of education provided and the ideological background that governs it, as well as the end product that is the knowledge produced (Zebylas, Petrou, Papastefanou, 2008), while its supporters believe that pedagogical science should not cause drowsiness in her «clientele» or cause it to run away, but be useful, attractive, and follow life's developments (Faltin and Zimmer, 2004), highlights the importance of the present work.

New Approaches to Quality in Education. With the dominance of the ideological realm of economic pragmatism, educational discourse is overwhelmed and dominated by conceptual loans from the business world: choice, competition, efficiency, speech, management, productivity, consumer. The admiration for the dynamism of businesses and their ability to achieve their goals reinforces the voices that argue that education must adopt market standards. In particular, to turn schools and higher education institutions into self-sufficient units for managing their education and managing their finances, to encourage competition between them, to apply the principles of business management and in any case to loosen the suffocating embrace of the state by deregulating education (Matthew, inc.). These changes in the educational environment have affected the perception of quality. Thus, a successful criterion of international economic competition emerges as a key quality criterion. To a large extent, this subversion of the hierarchy of quality criteria was the inevitable consequence of the inability of the national state to independently manage economic developments in a globalized and fluid business environment (Reich, 1991), where the decisions of multinationals largely regulate of things and in a society with a multicultural composition, in which value relativism and freedom of individual choice give the tone (Matthew, 2006).

For those looking for a job in an unstable environment, quality education can only satisfy those priorities that

directly relate to the close relationship education has to the economy. In the new ideological view of quality in education, the criterion of promoting social equality and justice has been incorporated. However, migratory flows and often market cynicism have created additional outbreaks of inequality and increased risks of social exclusion. The Communication from the Commission of the European Communities (2008) on an updated strategic framework for European co-operation in education and training refers to a challenging strategy of education and training policy enabling all citizens, regardless of gender, age, and socioeconomic background, to acquire, update and develop throughout their life both the professional skills and the essential skills needed for further education, active citizenship and intercultural dialogue. Education must therefore promote intercultural skills, democratic values, respect for fundamental rights and the fight against discrimination, providing all young people with the opportunity to interact positively with their peers from different backgrounds. However, due to the right of the citizen and the obligation of the solidarity state, equality in education is increasingly seen as a condition of social normality, which requires the proper functioning of the market.

In the new view of quality education, the revelation of objective truth is considered to be beyond the reach of science, new cognitive hybrids develop at the points of contact of traditional disciplines, consumable knowledge acquires primacy over timeless, emphasis on schooling in relation to the needs of the surrounding reality (eg New Technologies), they have gained priority as quality criteria. This framework, coupled with market demands, has shifted the focus from knowledge to skills (cognitive, social, personal and professional) (Commission of the European Communities, 2008). However, in the new context, the public sector is turning to the private and the politics to the economy, humanities have lost their usefulness and the unity of intellectual and professional perspective has been broken. Quality education now aims at preparing the individual to learn and adapt to life, to manage information, to innovate and produce (Commission of the European Communities, 2008). Therefore, tool knowledge and skills are at the heart of quality education. Educational inputs are still contributing to the quality of education (human and logistical infrastructure) but the objective is to deliver on human resources, knowledge, abilities, attitudes, attitudes and behaviours according to market demand standards.

The invasion of market mechanisms in the education area has resulted in the adoption and use of appropriate standards in order for quality to be quantified. Quality judges are the recipients of the educational good: students, parents and the labour market. Therefore, there are no

¹ The term globalization describes the enlargement of the scale, the increase in intensity, the acceleration and deepening of the impact of trends and patterns of social interaction across the continents. Developments in communication, economics, technology, and various other fields are shaping a new framework of dynamics that human contacts acquire (Held & Mc Grew, 2004).

objective quality criteria. Members of the educational and academic community (Matthew, eg) disagree with the new quality assumptions and its certification mechanisms. For them, the invasion of market standards, criteria and quality mechanisms risks undermining the meaning and definition of quality. Concerning the quality control of education, human costs have been shown to be extremely high (Morley, 2005). The tensions that accompany the quality assessment attempt, at the same time undermine interpersonal relationships in the school environment and introduce new ethics to it (Warde, 1996). Productivity now replaces creativity as a fundamental element of quality.

Critical Review of the Practices of the Updated Strategic Framework for European Cooperation Based on Critical and Postmodern Educational Theory.

Setting cognitive goals and skills so that individuals can meet market needs and acquire the basic skills (cognitive, mental, emotional, psychomotor) to function as future useful citizens raises concerns about power, pluralism, democracy and equality. According to Apple (2001), defining and acquiring these supplies and skills benefits the powerful and has disastrous consequences for the weak. Cultural capital is standardized and students are required to adapt to specific knowledge and even to specific levels and standards. This promotes a school life cut off from the lives of students, an undemocratic imposition of lessons, the suppression and reproduction of unequal, hegemonic and hierarchical power relations. The existence of specific indicators, benchmarks and levels in the Curricula (CAs), according to Aronowitz (1996), is a reflection of a conservative way of thinking and policy and responds to the needs of the neo-liberal labour force that boosts the economy. In addition, there is no change in the mechanisms by which cultural capital is distributed, the existing inequalities are perpetuated, and the existing class system is validated in a new way. It appears that the specific levels and benchmarks as set out in the Communication from the Commission of the European Communities (2008) on an updated strategic framework for European co-operation in education and training, likely reflect a case of «banking» education making the CAs oppressive². Freire (1977) states that banking education converts students into containers filled by the teacher. They become better students when more persuasive are left to be filled by the teacher and the students become the savers and the teacher the depositor in a saving procedure. Therefore, CAs, either through predetermined events, skills and values, or through Eurocentric or multicultural guidelines, or presented and tested through lecture and cross-selection or collaborative learning, are nothing more than the result of a banking approach where a strong group can impose its decisions on others, decisions made according to its terms, interests and needs (Zebylas, 2009).

Significant is Foucault's contribution to radical

criticism, a contribution that complements Freire's criticism. The aforementioned norms and predetermined skills to serve the market needs set by the Commission of the European Communities (2008) can be said to function as a truth regime where truth is produced and supported by a power regime and then the truth produces some power effects. The truth or knowledge is therefore intertwined and in line with the levels set by the Commission. They produce and confer privileges on particular relationships of power, contribute to the legitimation of certain knowledge as true, specific acts as being in accordance with the truth and the power of specific individuals who will determine the truth and its components. Such a regime of truth builds on a specific set of coherent power and knowledge relationships (Foucault, 2005), which imply the consequences and existence of disciplinary practices that seek to control and manipulate movements and behaviours geared emerging international trends which concern the globalization of markets, decentralization and cross-sectoral diversification of productive activities, reinforcement of multinational gains through acquisitions and mergers, privatization identification of sectors and activities of the public sector, the abolition of past working practices and arrangements (eg mechanical engineering, vertical management, etc.) and their replacement by new ones (higher and ever-renewing occupational training, lifelong training) etc.), flexible work that introduces into the labour market the new division of the workforce into unemployed and full-time and part-time workers, assigns a leading role to the consumer and the emphasis on marketing practices (Matthew, 2001).

Reflections and questions arise reasonably from the aforementioned practices. It is possible for an anthropocentric orientation of education to go hand in hand with the strategic challenges and immediate priorities set by the Commission of the European Communities (2008) concerning increasing skill levels through lifelong learning, student mobility, quality improvement and the efficiency of service delivery, promoting equality and active citizenship, fostering innovation and creativity including entrepreneurship at all levels of education and training? Can education be regarded as an enterprise whose profitability or product can be measured and offset by the investments made in it?

In general, formerly ethnocentric goals are weakened in the context of modern ideological reorientation of educational systems. Although the latter's contribution to the consolidation of national identity has been decisive, it is now sought to preserve the national values at absolutely necessary levels and to alleviate historical disputes under the pressure of transnational ideals (eg European citizens). Writing for example school textbooks in the light of its «pedagogical peace» aims to eliminate any stereotypical prejudice about the «other» that traps the student in a barren ethnocentrism.

² Freire (1977) refers to the «banking» concept of education as a means of oppression. His criticism of this education is a complaint about conservatism and tradition in modern History of education (Zebyla, 2009).

The educational system must help the educator on the one hand discover the meaning of otherness in their attempt to self-identify, on the other, understand the true magnitude of their difference in comparison with the «other». On the other hand, the search for and promotion of a controversial «common cultural tradition» in this European context in many cases lead to the writing of «History of Light» textbooks (Gotovos, 2002). This writing direction serves primarily political goals and less scientific expectations for a valid interpretation of the past and empowering students' critical thinking. The key to the internationalization of education systems promotes peoples' society, Europe of peoples, European identity. Through these reports, policy makers call on the education mechanism to help support transnational organizations such as the European Union and specific socio-political developments (eg globalized society), which are viewed a priori as positive, linear and inevitable. However, promoting specific educational priorities through the introduction of desirable skills and standards nationally and internationally limits the possibility of reconstituting curricula (Bottcher, 2002). In the postmodern era, state power is called upon to balance the contradictory demands made by local communities and individual groups. The latter are addressed to state bodies and then to supranational organizations to reclaim their claims. In addition to the occasional burst of xenophobic and racist tendencies, they are constantly negotiated and renewed. The individual is now confronted with a variety of contradictions surrounding reality that often shatter his identity in multiple «ego». This has led to the end of great narratives, the challenge of traditional values and standards of living, and of course the shaking of the once-unmoved ideologies of the past (Zimas, 2007).

The nature of scientific knowledge and the advancement of modern knowledge that requires more and more specialization to meet market needs exclude the subjectivity of participants (teachers and students). According to Lyotard (1988), the requirement for universal consensus and uniformity exerts some form of terrorism. It is therefore necessary to arrive at a practice of justice that is not linked to the ideas of consensus. The use of intuition and emotion by students and teachers can lead to paths that have not been found by the current education system and have not been traced by the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (Zebylas, 2009). In addition, great narratives that show the meaning and value of life in the future make people indifferent to the modern present. The education system must not adapt human life but be adapted to it. Responding to this requirement, in addition to following the cognitive and technological evolution, must give a great basis to the present and link it creatively to the past and the future (Petrou & Zebylas, 2009).

An important element emerging from the strategic framework for European cooperation and training is the efficiency element (Commission of the European Communities, 2008). However, according to Lyotard (1988), the tendency to subordinate everything in the light of efficiency entails the risk of knowledge losing its value and the idea behind system efficiency being to maximize system efficiency. Typically, Lyotard (1988) points out, «Applying this criterion to all our games does not avoid being frightened, pleasant or hard: you are effective, that is, symmetrical, otherwise you will disappear» (p. 27). This particular criterion in the postmodern age equates power with knowledge, and Lyotard urges teachers and students to cultivate imaginative invention³ in the context of learning and teaching. In addition, Lyotard's ideas make it possible to question a science-for-all issue. Reporting for all eliminates diversity among students and suggests a science that is the same for all and therefore eliminates heterogeneity. In addition, the polysemy of such phrases is a form of terror because some individuals or groups willfully or unintentionally exclude themselves from engaging in science with their own language games.

Suggestions for a Healthy Education System. A sound education system must meet the following key factors in terms of content, methods and structures: First, the modern educational needs of the people and the developmental goals of the country, second, the developmental needs and aspirations of the younger generation, third, the values associated with the functioning of society and the role of social forces; and fourth, the provision of equal educational opportunities for all (Haas, 1977). However, agreement on the recording of factors does not imply agreement on the interpretation or the ways in which they are integrated into the system, since at one level each era and at a second each society has its own specific characteristics that differentiate it so much their interpretation and methodology. Bearing in mind that each educational system is not eternal but belongs to its time, we cannot speak of an ideal – utopian educational system but of a system that must constantly be recreated, through aesthetically and energetically reversible projection of its presence, as a goal as well as a field of view in the target, ie purpose (Petrou and Zebylas, 2009).

In today's age of science and technology, economic developments, newer philosophical and social trends, and the collapse of political ideologies in a high-speed era, the educational system cannot remain stationary. It needs to be constantly updated and adapted to new circumstances so that it can fit smoothly into its time and help people cope with their problems and needs in a contemporary and creative way (Dafermos, 2001). It has to constantly change the perspective of its objective view which requires the recognition of the relevance of

³ Lyotard (1998: 152), in his statement «In the end, the only legalization that permits such a claim (the activity of absurdity) is this: it would give rise to ideas, that is, new judgments», specifies the place where the postmodern, that is where the little narrative remains the predominant form of imaginative conception.

absolute values and eternal truth, as the only certainty that prevails in our time is uncertainty (Handy, 1995). However, the emergence of new needs as a result of industrial development and technical progress can easily drag a non-resistive education system into the passion of homogenization, the obsession of rationality, bureaucratic rationality and the ideology of specialization. The dangerous tendency of the system to orientate education in response to new needs and to add more technical lessons to the curriculum of the schools, is what compels us to remind ourselves of another imperative, of the conditions necessity, that of releasing the educational system from institutionalization and uncritical incarnation in the finesse of the spirit of the senses and of specialized knowledge (Schweizer, 1988).

Evaluation and Conclusions. Evolution in various fields such as communication, economics, technology, brought about by the phenomenon of globalization, gives new impetus to human relations and contacts. The ruling class and the ruling elite, in order to safeguard the economic, political and social management of society, promote neoliberal principles, arguing that this is the best but also the only way to prosper people and society. However, in reality, their purpose according to Adorno (2000) is to semi-educate a large part of the population to the extent that their authoritarian culture requires the obedience, compliance and consent of the people. To achieve this, they are launching, through educational policy, a class-based curriculum that specifies who will

be the future supervisors of the unequal distribution of the economy of knowledge with the ultimate goal, the unilaterally concentrating power and maintaining a global market economy. The values of neoliberal ideology make the transition from market economy to the new order easier. It seems that an anthropocentric orientation of education cannot go hand in hand with the strategic challenges and immediate priorities as set by the Commission of the European Communities (2008) since the entrepreneurial spirit promoted at all levels of education and training, seems to establish a modern surveillance mechanism, according to Foucault (2005).

However, the disengagement of educational organizations from the bonds of the dominant social model can be achieved when students and teachers explore and free their judgment from extrinsic values, thereby calling into question the conditions of their existence in order to clarify the ambiguities, inconsistencies and contradictions of the current system. Anthropocentric policy that empowers communities more and is not competitive, privatized, hierarchical and heteronomous but more collaborative, democratic and autonomous could be the alternative so that the educational product allows us to move towards the goal of genuine education where the creative potential of man, his impulse for improvement and self-realization through contact with his emotions and knowledge of himself, will be emphasized.

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ЯКІСТЬ ОСВІТИ В СТРАТЕГІЧНИХ ДОКУМЕНТАХ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОГО СОЮЗУ: КРИТИЧНИЙ АНАЛІЗ

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У статті наголошується, що інтернаціоналізація ринку співпала з відкриттям державних кордонів на користь вільного руху капіталу, товарів, робочої сили, послуг та інформації, що призвело до змін в освітньому дискурсі, де стали переважати концептуальні основи бізнесу: вибір, конкуренція, ефективність, управління, продуктивність, споживач. Вторгнення ринкових механізмів у сферу освіти призвело до прийняття та використання відповідних стандартів з метою кількісної оцінки якості. У статті акцентовано, що успішність в міжнародній економічній конкуренції є ключовим критерієм якості освіти. У статті проаналізовано Повідомлення Європейському Парламенту, Раді, Економіко-соціальному комітету та Комітету регіонів (2008 р.) «Про оновлену стратегічну основу європейської співпраці в галузі освіти та навчання», в якому відзначено, що мета стратегії полягає в приведенні людських ресурсів, знань, здібностей, поглядів та поведінки відповідно до стандартів ринку, а сучасна якісна освіта має бути спрямована на підготовку особистості до навчання та адаптації до життя, управління інформацією, інноваціями та виробництвом. Оновлена стратегічна основа європейської співпраці в галузі освіти та навчання дозволяє всім громадянам, незалежно від статі, віку та соціально-економічного походження, набувати, оновлювати та розвивати протягом свого життя як професійні навички, так і основні навички, необхідні для подальшої освіти, активного громадянства та міжкультурного діалогу. У статті також представлений критичний огляд практик оновлених стратегічних рамок європейського співробітництва на основі критичної теорії освіти, яка наголошує, що глобалізація і технологічна революція повинні бути використані для радикальної перебудови і реконструкції освіти для її служіння демократії та прогресивним соціальним змінам.

Ключові слова: критична теорія освіти; освіта; ринкові механізми у сфері освіти; стратегічні документи ЄС; якість освіти.

КАЧЕСТВО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ В СТРАТЕГИЧЕСКИХ ДОКУМЕНТАХ ЕВРОПЕЙСКОГО СОЮЗА: КРИТИЧЕСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ

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В статье доказано, что интернационализация рынка совпала с открытием государственных границ в пользу свободного движения капитала, товаров, рабочей силы, услуг и информации, что привело к

изменениям в образовательном дискурсе, где стали преобладать концептуальные основы бизнеса: выбор, конкуренция, эффективность, управление, производительность, потребитель. Вторжение рыночных механизмов в сферу образования привело к принятию и использованию соответствующих стандартов с целью количественной оценки качества образования. В статье акцентировано, что успешность в международной экономической конкуренции является ключевым критерием качества образования. В статье проанализировано Сообщение Комиссии Европейскому парламенту, Совету, Европейскому экономическому и социальному комитету и Комитету по делам регионов (2008 г.) «Об обновленной стратегической основе европейского сотрудничества в области образования и обучения», в котором отмечено, что цель стратегии заключается в приведении человеческих ресурсов, знаний, способностей, взглядов и поведения в соответствии со стандартами рынка, а современное качественное образование должно быть направлено на подготовку личности к обучению и адаптации к жизни, управлению информацией, инновациями и производством. В статье также представлен критический обзор практик обновленных стратегических рамок европейского сотрудничества на основе критической теории образования, которая акцентирует, что глобализация и технологическая революция должны быть использованы для радикальной перестройки и реконструкции образования для его служения демократии и прогрессивным социальным изменениям.

Ключевые слова: качество образования; критическая теория образования; образование; рыночные механизмы в сфере образования; стратегические документы ЕС.

Стаття надійшла до редакції 09.02.2020

Прийнято до друку 27.02.2020