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© O. A. SELIVANOVA

Dr. Pedag. Sci., Professor, Institute of Psychology and Pedagogics,  
Tyumen State University

*towerred1966@mail.ru*

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### **PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF CHILDREN'S ADDITIONAL EDUCATION MODERNIZATION IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION\***

*SUMMARY. The aim of the paper is to characterize the current state of the system of additional education of children in the Russian Federation. The article describes the main problems of its functioning: a poor correspondence of the substantial component of kinds of 'extra' educational institutions for urgent needs and interests of different children and youth age groups, considerable socializing recreation (i.e. "non educational"), difficulties within the institution of additional education. The organizational and substantive aspects of the specified areas modernization directions are covered: options for the legal form of institutions engaged in extracurricular sphere; the type distinction of organizational forms and institutions implementing "educational" and "non-educational" socialization programs etc.*

*KEY WORDS. Leisure sphere of socialization, additional education, pre-professional training, recreation and socialization.*

The events of the recent decades in our country have gradually transformed the system of extracurricular leisure activities for children and youth into a kind of entertainment industry, functioning according to the laws of the market economy. Children and young people today play the familiar role of "consumers of social and leisure services", and unwillingly become hostages of the commercial relations.

Unfortunately, the idea of the importance of extracurricular educational process and the significance of this process as an essential component of the controlled socialization is presented only in a semi-virtual world of the scientific and popular science articles [1-6]. This idea has nothing to do with the real relationships in the system of additional education institutions; it does not affect the content of their activities.

The reason of many problems in this field is a restricted approach to the specifics of a person's extracurricular socialization. This process is often reduced to the domain of "additional education." At first sight, it is quite logical: general education and additional education, when combined, constitute continuous education. It is believed

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that this type of education has historically been a specific part of the continuous education system which ensures the development of a child and a young person in his spare time. This aspect is reflected in the federal state educational standard of general education (Approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, December, 17 2010 № 1897): "...the implementation of the basic educational program of the general education is provided by an educational institution. If the educational institution is unable to provide the extracurricular activities required by the state, it has to apply to the institutions of additional education, culture and sport organizations" [7].

As a rule, the scientific literature provides the "ideal", very optimistic descriptions of the benefits of "additional education" in various institutions. For example, G.N. Kudashov, characterizes the potential of the modern institutions of additional education as an effective means for children and young people's socialization. He points out that:

— It is important that the additional education of children and youth should be voluntary (based on free choice of a kind and amount of activity). It should have a positive impact on their social adaptation, self-assertion and self-realization, health (physical, mental and spiritual), self-determination (personal, social, professional), general and leisure culture, etc.

— Children, teenagers and young people who are members of educational and creative communities in the additional education institutions do not feel any moral or psychological stress associated with outward conditions. Every member defines the meaning and extent of his/her participation in a program activity. That is why additional education establishments always have comfortable, creative and communicative environment, good for self-assertion and self-realization, and, consequently, for an effective self-development.

— Groups of additional education institutions cannot work efficiently by any standard programs. Each of them is a unique social organism, that can not unconditionally accept any of the organizational and methodological standards and stereotypes [8].

Let us try to find out whether this "ideal" image corresponds to the real situation in the field of additional education. To do this, we will list the most relevant problems of this area.

*The structural and functional fragmentation of the supplementary education system.*

The system of the supplementary education institutions in Russia resembles a "patchwork", due to its highly diverse legal and economic status, different levels (municipal, regional, etc.), multidepartment subordination (education and science, physical education and sports, youth policy, culture and tourism, social development, etc.), the composition and number of program participants, the scope and focus of ongoing activities, the development practices and traditions, and etc. So, the problem is not quite obvious at first sight. Many believe this diversity to be a great advantage. However, we should not forget that the institutions of additional education operate

within the law of the Russian Federation "On Education". Tyumen region's sad example shows that when additional education institutions operate in the field of youth policy (which does not have its own legislative federal framework), a lot of problems emerge. Most funds and workers' energy are wasted in efforts to observe the Education Law in the activities that should not and cannot be regulated by the articles of this law. For example, a medical certificate is required for a teenager to attend a discussion club or a quilling studio; or in order to accept a problem teenager into a group of a leisure center, they require an application from his/her alcoholic parents who in fact do not care about their son/daughter. Such situations are obviously illogical, but "educational" profile of these institutions imposes its standard requirements.

*The inconsistency of contents and functions of the system of supplementary education.*

Until recently, the supplementary educational services were mostly employed by children aged 7-12: choreography, macramé, quilling, the list of such hobby groups is actually endless. For teenagers different sporting activities (including sport dance) become more important. They are usually offered by sport clubs and sport schools. The everlasting challenge for the additional education workers is to involve older teenagers and university students as far as the latter are reluctant "to make macramé", while additional education institutions have no legal right to pay to a specialist who would implement the program of a "discussion club" or a "support group", because these types of activities are considered "non-educational". It is also ridiculous when "rappers", "graffiti" artists or members of "comedy club" are to attend scheduled classes and pass "knowledge assessment" tests. This kind of contradiction makes teachers of additional education disguise goals, objectives and content of the "non-educational" kinds of leisure activities for children, teenagers and youth to make them fit the requirements of educational standards and regulations. It is particularly difficult for institutions that deal with children and teenagers belonging to the so-called "special attention group". Work with these kids requires application of social-pedagogical, psychological, correctional and other methods and only in some cases – educational ones.

The prospects of the further development of this contradiction are quite negative: the introduction of the primary education standards in schools requires the organization of a number of additional classes for primary school children within the educational institution. Thus, it will soon make kids aged 7-12 "move" from additional education institutions to classrooms and school halls. Meanwhile, youth programs and projects (comedy clubs, debate clubs, cheerleading, historical reconstruction, etc.) implemented on the basis of additional educational institutions as the programs of supplementary education, are often closed and shifted by the young people to the non-educational field (they create independent associations and groups, which are beyond control of educational officials and institutions).

It is a well-known fact that the modern requirements are quite controversial. On the one hand, the activity of additional education institutions has to include "educational" component (curricula, competences, time-table, etc.). On the other hand, they are required to constantly increase the number of children and teenagers

engaged in various additional “services”. This contradiction may be well considered as being unsolvable. The attempt to solve it with administrative measures results in overstatements at all the levels of additional education system: in the reports of separate institutions as well as in the municipal and regional reports. For example, there were exaggerated reports about the number of employed teenagers during the summer period (taking into consideration that 90% of these teenagers were employed only for 3(!) days, though with all the necessary papers for the Employment Center. Such a report was issued in Tyumen in summer 2012). So, the fundamental work of the specialists who really employed the remaining 10% of teenagers was neglected, though it was worth respect, not criticism and accusations of poor performance. Once the author of the article was on a business trip in Seattle (Washington, USA). While our group was looking through the project system for the youth’s employment and leisure in summer, a representative of the local administration mentioned that 245 teenagers were engaged in the city programs in the previous summer (the population of Seattle was about 608,000 in 2010). Then one of my Russian colleagues proudly declared, “About 8000 young people were employed in Tyumen during the last summer!” (the population of Tyumen is about 604.8 thousand); most members of our group, being workers of the system of general and additional education, felt embarrassed by this statement.

Including the idea of “pre-professional” training in the programs of additional education institutions might be useful, as far as the vocational education is being generally cut down today. However, it is difficult to imagine that a leisure center would be capable to provide a full-fledged “pre-professional” training and issue a state certificate (except sport schools with their system of assigning sporting categories). All the attempts to achieve this goal transform a leisure institution into some sort of a training and production center or a vocational education college that teach the definite professional skills. Educational aspects of interaction with children and teenagers, the resources of collective interaction, free pleasant communication with friends, and so forth recede into the background. In America the author of the article happened to see a cutting-edge public computer studio for 100 people (Tacoma, WA). The studio was supervised by Bill Gates and his company (they were responsible for the equipment update). When our group arrived, two kids were working there. Being asked about the schedule of these classes, the children explained that the studio is open 24/7. So they may come any time during the day and, if necessary, get a consultation of a specialist on duty. As a rule about 1-30 teenagers study in the studio at the same time. Being asked about the contents and the time-table of the classes, the kids said: “We don’t have classes. Sometimes the supervisors inform us about the topics of the offered courses and if a group is formed, the schedule is agreed on and the classes are conducted”. If there are no volunteers for the course, it is not conducted and teenagers continue to attend freely. It is quite evident that a head of a Russian institution of additional education will be accused of the waste of the city funds and of the inefficient use of the building, if he/she dares to implement the similar educational model.

“Leisure” officials are reluctant to admit that the “pre-professional” training within the modern system of supplementary education can be implemented only as recurrent short-term topical courses, sort of “plunges”. Having taken a number of them, a person, in certain cases, may be conferred a particular qualification. To develop the content of such flexible individual “pre-professional training” is the biggest challenge of the additional education perspective development.

The desire of additional education institutions administrators and managers to combine several incompatible options seems really hasty. Firstly, they want to increase the number of children and teenagers involved in the “organized forms of leisure”; secondly, they face a formalized idea of providing additional educational services; and thirdly, they need to have an educational institution that would function permanently and continuously. Such a combination has no prospects at all, as far as the key aspect of any leisure activity is voluntariness and getting pleasure, or sometimes mixing “business” with pleasure, but on one’s own volition. Meanwhile, the idea of providing\getting some services, even educational ones, is founded on the social mandate for the definite knowledge and skills (or competences). Moreover, the activities of any educational institution are based on the idea of continuous “pre-professional” training with an exactly defined content, course length, a permanent number of learners, check-lists, and various “certifying” papers from children and their parents. It should be noted that the rigidity of the modern system of additional education makes it impossible to overcome the obvious contradictions mentioned before, although they are successfully resolved by life itself, but beyond the system. The “non-educational” institutions of supplementary education fall behind the process of social education of the younger generation due to the countless number of paid clubs and leisure centers with flexible time-table and courses; different sorts of “tutors” and “coaches”, and, finally, quite qualified additional educational services provided by the secondary schools to their students. The attempts to “squeeze” the activity of these institutions, “non-educational” by nature (volunteer, recreational, social-pedagogical and other), into the frameworks of the law “On Education” deprive these institutions of any future prospects, and make them plead innocent for not observing the regulations of the law “On education”.

Quite interesting in this regard is the Interdepartmental Program of Additional Education of Children in the Russian Federation until 2020 (draft) [9]. The document claims to identify the key areas of the additional education system modernization in the coming years. According to the program draft the priority is given to the development of innovative, modern ways to organize additional education and its specific forms (exploratoriums, etc.), and to the promotion of the relevant modern communication resources (portals, internet-communities, etc.). Undoubtedly, it can improve the entire development of the field.

However, the document neglects some key issues. Thus, the text says nothing about the prospects of the conceptual aspect of additional education modernization. Neither objectives, nor purposes, nor characteristics indicate the exact ways of upgrading this sector. The objective of the program states: “...*To create conditions...*”

*to increase the scope of the activity, to improve the quality of services and the variety of resources*". But the text only provides a list of some organizational changes (per-capita funding, efficient contract, codification, etc.) that are hardly connected with the stated objectives *"for social adaptation, comprehensive development and self-realization of the younger generation, for the formation of their values and competences for professional and life self-determination"*.

Besides, the program draft hardly explains the claimed interdepartmental character of the program. A simple enumeration of the areas of culture, youth policy, physical culture and sport does not reveal the mechanism of their resource potential activation, or the specifics of these areas, the "educational" component of which, has never been (and cannot be) the leading one. One gets the impression that the developers of the program give preference to preserving the organizational-legal form of the institutions of children additional education (CAE), and ignore the specifics, direction and content of interdepartmental coordination of the various areas of youth socialization. Such an approach is methodologically wrong. The trends, issues and actual state of the sector should be analyzed in details; its prospects should be preliminarily assessed; the specifics of the "cross-sectoral" nature and resources of the institutions should be defined, as well as constantly changing needs of the potential consumers, and the complex nature of these needs in the field of social interaction.

The draft includes 25 program efficiency indicators; however, only three of them are indirectly connected to the conceptual aspect of perspective results evaluation (*the regional concepts and programs of CAE system development; availability of assessment forms for the CAE students and legal possibility to include the received certificates in one's portfolio; parental approval of the innovative programs of additional education and new forms of recreation and improvement of the children's health: clubs, social practices and activities*). The rest are concerned with "the amount of funds" and "relative significance" of the particular units. Interestingly enough, the text of the document uses "non-statistical" indicators to refer to the aspects which are artificially included in a fairly orderly and logical system of the CAE development: neither club forms, nor social (volunteer) practices, nor social activities of children and young people can be realized within the "codified" system of "per-capita funding", "pre-professional" additional education.

The tendency, mentioned at the beginning of the draft ("*...less and less children attend extra-curricular classes today, in fact, only half of the total number of school kids*") makes it necessary to think about new ways to increase the attendance and to try to understand the reasons why it has actually decreased (the reports from the certain regions on a steady growth of the number of children involved in the additional education are just statistical overstatements meant to guarantee stable funding of the network of the institutions). There is a huge gap between the "recreation centers" popularity in our country among children and youth 25-30 years ago and the current situation. The Russian system of additional educational institutions has been functioning for 20 years now. Over this period it became obvious that the CAE system alone (even combined with the system of general education) can not meet all the needs

(not only educational, pre-professional, etc.) of the growing population. These needs are much broader and include interests in the field of leisure, recreation, communication, obtaining various kinds of assistance and support, implementation of various social initiatives, etc.

It should be clarified that additional education is not sufficient in order to develop different forms of modern youth's activities. Moreover, it is initially restricted by its specificity, and no modernization can help combine the designated form of additional educational institutions (with all the requirements to their work) with the necessity to develop modern, adequate forms of personal leisure activities and social interaction. The artificial attempts to include these activities into the legally restricted "codified" system of supplementary education will make it move to a non-institutional segment of the society.

The above mentioned contradictions and problems might be resolved only if the role of additional education and its institutions (both in terms of goal-setting in official documents, and efficiency indicators) is no longer generalized in the overall process of extracurricular socialization of a person. The area of interest of the additional education system should be defined right away: an overall development and pre-professional training of children and youth. Thus, additional education institutions will get rid of the nonrelevant task to involve the maximum number of children into studies, and will be able to calmly improve "special" activities, to keep the stable number of participants (those who acquire a specific activity), to establish contact with colleges or universities (in this respect, the idea of a child getting the particular amount of knowledge and skills in a certain field becomes perspective; the child can get a qualification certificate that would guarantee some privileges when entering a college or university) etc. Therefore, additional education establishments will fully comply with the idea of pre-professional training.

According to Karl Marx: "... the real (social) wealth is comprised of the developed productive power of all individuals. When wealth is measured not by working hours, but by leisure time... when people can recreate, improve their knowledge and skills, grow spiritually, ... get education, develop intellectually, perform social functions, communicate with friends, train their physical and intellectual skills" [10; 217].

The broader socializing tasks should be the priority of other (non-educational) fields and other types of institutions (not of the additional education). This idea might be illustrated by the federal draft that proposed the development of a network of institutions for children, teenagers and youth in the field of the youth policy. The development of such a network of non-educational institutions (along with the development of the network of additional education institutions), forming their hierarchy on all the levels, designing their legislative, organizational, methodological and conceptual basis with a less strict system of attendance control and reporting (this is especially important for older teenagers and young people), will make leisure and recreational activities come to light and fully utilize the wealthy resources accumulated by the extracurricular leisure (non-educational) pedagogy in the previous historical periods. Moreover, the appropriate criteria and methods of evaluating the socialization

and personal development efficiency of the learners of these institutions will be developed and implemented, without being restricted by the certain lists of acquired skills, knowledge and competencies.

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