

Part I: ACTUAL ISSUES IN MODERN PEDAGOGY

WHAT IS GOING ON WITH EMPLOYEES' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN UKRAINE?

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Abstract: *The article describes the current situation of employees' professional development in Ukraine. The selected statistical data show that the situation leaves much to be desired. The author analyzes the most crucial legislative documents which ensure the professional development. The revealed problems are the absence of necessary laws: on adult education, on post diploma education; the scarcity of other documents which must regulate the financial responsibilities and their fragmentary character. There have been outlined prognostic measures to improve the situation, among them working out the necessary legislative documents; using the potential of informal learning by both employers and employees; conducting comparative scientific researches with the aim to find out the progressive ideas and to critically implement them into Ukrainian practice.*

Keywords: *employees' professional development, legislative documents, adult education, prognostic ways*

INTRODUCTION

Today a matter of prime importance in the pedagogical domain has become the problem of adult education, particularly employees' professional development. Till recent time professional development has been regarded as an economic category that was under consideration within various economic disciplines. Nowadays it is a complex, multi-facet phenomenon which encompasses a wide range of interrelated questions such as pedagogical, psychological, social, and economic ones. It has attracted the thorough attention of pedagogues and educationists, thanks to its great educational potential. Due to the introduction of new technologies which resulted in rapid changes in all types of activities, no employee can do for long with his or her acquired qualification. The times when it was possible have gone to the past. Employees' vocational knowledge and professional skills need upgrading and continuous renovating. Only in this case, any employee stays competent, competitive and mobile. Hence, the question of employees' professional development is becoming acute and requires a detailed examination. First of all, it concerns the current state of this question especially in the countries which are developing. Ukraine, being such a country, is trying to integrate into the common European space. It is conducting reforms in all spheres and in the educational one as well. Thus, the research results of how the state supports and stimulates the continuous education and professional development of its employees can become a good indicator of successful settlement of the problem on the government level. *The objectives of the article* are 1) to analyze the Ukraine's legislation on the professional development of its employees; 2) to identify some ways of prognostic development of the problem in question.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To achieve the mentioned goals the following resources have been used: Orders of the President of Ukraine, of the Cabinet of Ministers, of Ministry of Labor and Social Policy of Ukraine, Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine; Laws of Ukraine and the drafts of the laws, the Concepts and National reports of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine. All of them are fully or partly related with the professional development of employees in Ukraine.

The research methods were: 1) the selective ones to choose the related laws, acts and other legislative documents; 2) the analytical ones to analyze the contents of the collected data

and 3) the prognostic ones to work out the ways of improving the situation with continuous education in Ukraine.

RESULTS

Originally, the legislation which supports the employees' professional development is believed to start in independent Ukraine with the President's Order from the 3rd of August 1999 (President's Order, 1999). It identified the major directions of labor force development in Ukraine. Among others, in the education sphere it was foreseen to develop harmoniously person's intellectual, moral and physical qualities, to ensure the labor market with skilled labor force through orienting vocational, higher and post diploma education to the training, re-training and upgrading of staff skills according to the regional labor markets; creating a system of continuous education and providing the possibilities for self-education (President's Order, 1999).

Starting with 2000, Ukraine has been performing a range of activities and has introduced some of the legislative documents related to the system of vocational training of workers, upgrading their skills and professional development. Thus, according to the Cabinet of Ministers' Order from January, 24, 2001 No 13 "On Measures for Encouraging the Organization of Staff Professional Development within Industry" (Cabinet of Ministers Order, 2001), the common Order of Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and Ministry of Science and Education of Ukraine from March, 26, 2001 No 127/151 (Order 127/151, 2001) created the Council of Staff On-the-Job Training, the plan of activities and methodical provision of such training were worked out. Though these documents refer to factory employees' training, they can be regarded as the first basic legislative document which regulates the professional development of the staff.

Generally, various aspects of employees' professional development are partly regulated by the following laws of Ukraine: "On Education", "On Vocational Education", and "On Higher Education". Their full texts are represented on the official site of the government (Parliament of Ukraine: Laws). It should be noted that these legislative acts do not cover either the features of working adults' training and learning, or identify the methods of stimulating workers to their learning and self-education. However, there have been observed positive changes in the volume of employees' up skilling. To compare: 6.2% of Ukrainian employees in 1996 upgraded their professional skills, in 2002 and 2004 this figure reached 8.0 and 8.3% accordingly (Concept of Development, 2010). The ratio of employees in 2007, as compared with 2006, increased by 80,000 people (it was 8.6%) and rose to 9.2% (Recommendations, 2008). In 2011 it reached 12.3% (Kharchuk, S.A., Remorov, Ya.S., 2012).

This tendency is represented on the *Figure 1*.

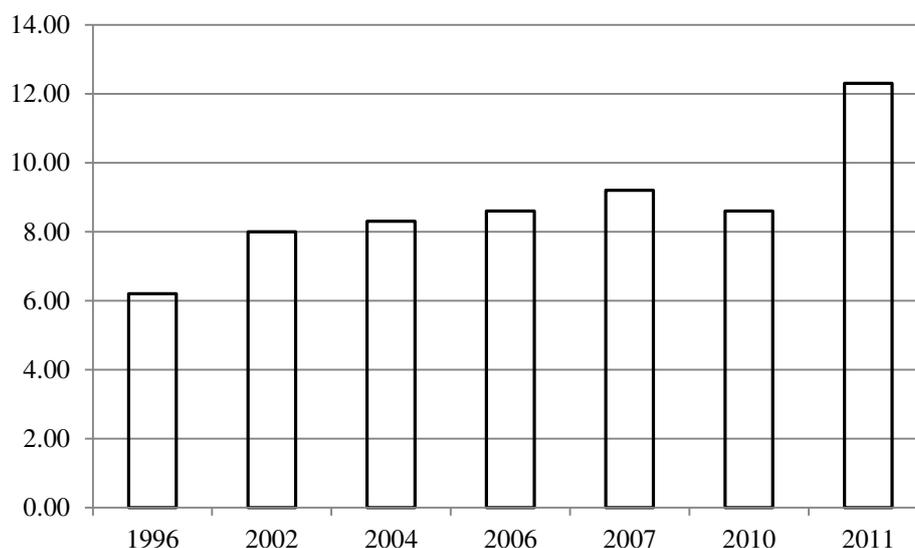


Figure 1: Number of employees in Ukraine who upgraded their professional skills

Source: systemized by the author with the help of [5-7]

DISCUSSION

As *Figure 1* shows, the number of employees who upgraded their skills is slowly but inevitably increasing. Alongside, these indicators are much lower from the average indices in the developed countries, e.g. the periodicity of employee's up skilling is approximately once per five years in Europe, and once per year and a half in Japan (Vakulenko, O., 2012). At the same time the average periodicity of improving employees' skills in Ukraine is by 2.5 times lower than it is required, and in some industries (agriculture, wholesome and retail trade) even by 10-20 times lower (Concept of Development, 2010). It means that the level of employees' professional skills does not meet the demands of modern production; hence the system of upgrading skills needs to be developed and reformed. Something has already been done in this direction, particularly the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy in collaboration with the Federation of Employers and the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine worked out the Concept of Development of Employees' Upgrading Qualification System for the Period to 2010 (Concept of Development, 2010), and the plan of corresponding activities to realize it. Above-mentioned documents are the foundations to the Law of Ukraine "On Professional Development of Employees" which was adopted by the Verkhovna Rada on January, 12, 2012 (Parliament of Ukraine: Laws). It outlined the mechanisms of domestic staff professional development. The Law points out such major directions as: 1) project of current and perspective plans of employees' professional development; 2) creation of curricula for employees' training; 3) definition of types, forms and methods of employees' on-the-job training; 4) training of the pedagogical staff for conducting on-the-job training for employees; 5) encouragement of employees' professional development; 6) provision of upgrading employees' skills either at the employers' or at educational establishments not less than once per 5 years; 7) assessment of employees' job performance after training (Parliament of Ukraine: Laws).

In spite of the availability of the Law on Employees' Professional Development, it coordinates the professional development only of those who work in factories and plants. Besides, this Law does not identify the financial responsibilities which results in employers' unwillingness to pay for their staff training. As employees are adults, it is necessary to analyze the legislative documents which regulate adult education. However, Ukraine has not had the corresponding law and the rest of documents for adult learning are also scarce despite extreme importance of continuous education nowadays. Adult education especially the one of the employed can bring a lot of benefits for the production activity and for the employees' self-education, as well as for the society, in general.

Hence, the prognostic ways of improving the current state of employees' professional development in Ukraine are, *firstly*, working out and adopting the law on adult education and on post diploma education, the lack of which deteriorates the state of employees' professional development in Ukraine. *Secondly*, employers and employees should exploit the potential of informal learning for improving employees' professional knowledge, skills and competences. *Thirdly*, it is necessary to undertake scientific comparative researches to learn the progressive experience of the developed countries and to implement it into Ukrainian practice.

CONCLUSION

All above-mentioned gives the basis to conclude that the employees' professional development in Ukraine faces with a number of problems and challenges. The most crucial of them are the absence of corresponding laws and the scarcity of other normative documents which must regulate its mechanisms. But nevertheless, it is worth remarking that the situation with employees' professional development is gradually changing to the better which the statistical data proves.

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