

Comparative Investigations for Education

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Abstract

Komparativní výzkumy pro vzdělávání. – Zkoumání vnímání světa v různých oblastech společenského života je zapříčiněno nejen intenzifikací globálních problémů, ale také intenzivnějšími vzájemnými vztahy a vzájemnou závislostí zemí a lidí současného světa, v důsledku globalizace ekonomiky, kultury, vědy a vzdělávání.

Keywords: Comparative Investigation, Culture, Science, Education

Klíčová slova: komparativní výzkum, kultura, věda, výchova

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The investigation of world experience in different spheres of social life is caused not only by the intensification of global problems, but also by the growing interrelation and interdependence of countries and peoples of contemporary world, by the processes of the internationalization of the economy, culture, science and education.

In the conditions of integration and rapid development of new information technologies the universal communicative environment, which erases the boundaries between the continents, the states, the peoples, is formed. Accelerating rate of system, structural and institutional conversions leads to the global transformation of world educational space. So, in under such conditions the study of international and national experience of the development of education becomes actual and objective.

The importance of the given investigation also is the further development of the theory of education and production of new methodology of philosophical-educational studies. In this sense a comparative study of the philosophical problems of education is one of the effective research strategies that makes possible to analyze the phenomena of system level. We mean both the properties of philosophy of education as systematic scientific knowledge and education as a system.

Comparative analysis is valuable because it allows to understand the concrete scientific theories and methodologies, to comprehend their advantages and deficiencies and so on. It helps to understand not only theory but the practice of different educational systems. As the Indian philosopher R. Raju writes that the purpose of philosophical comparativistics is the cultural synthesis, which implies not supremacy, but development, not dictation, but mastering, not contraction of world view, but its expansion, not limitation, but comprehensive bloom of life (Raju 1962: 288).

Philosophical comparativistics has become the inherent fact of academic publications, discussions and world philosophical symposia. In difficult conditions of unstable existence of the world community it attempts to engage reflective meta-position, to be connected with the processes in the world. Russian philosopher S. Gessen considered that the given approach will make it possible to explain the mechanisms of interaction of cultures, opposition and succession of different educational systems (Gessen 1923: 35). We agree with Mikhail Bakhtin who wrote later that “we put the new questions to strange culture, that it has not asked itself, we search for answers in it to our questions, and strange culture answers to us, opening before us its new sides, new semantic depths” (Bakhtin 1986: 354).

Nowadays Russian education system has the problem of mechanical, thoughtless transferring of copying foreign experience, without the deep and thought-out reflection in this sphere. The conflict of cultures and educational paradigms is expressed, first of all, in the conflict of the systems of values, the means of life, the understanding and the relation to the world view, the ideological orientations. Education is a part of culture of one or another society, and the introduction of new educational models leads to intrusion into such spheres as values, world view and ideology.

Philosophy has always attempted not only to comprehend the existing system of education, to formulate values, ideals of the educational system of future, but also to generalize and to compare the existing experience in this field. Scientific resolving of the problems of experience in the history of philosophy was begun by F. Bacon, who recognized the leading part of experience in the process of knowledge. He understood an experience as an image of external world in the consciousness of man. Then English thinker J. Locke noted that our knowledge was based on experience.

Experience as a concept in philosophy has different meanings. From one view, it indicates the concrete, urgent experience of reality and contains the components of sensory receptions and sensations, their spiritualizing senses, entire conceptual complex, and also accumulated previously specific habits and skills, knowledge and ability. From this point of view, educational experience is a theoretical-methodological basis of knowledge about education as reflection of the objective reality, in which it exists. Such basis is founded on the understanding of the practical action of man on the external world (education). In the process of this action the necessary connections, properties of education are opened, expedient methods and means of educational activity are looked for and tested. Thus, educational experience as the result of this action is an educational practice.

From the other side, an experience is understood as a component of social-historical existence, including storage, creation and transfer of cultural senses, it is objectified in the standards and values, in the lingual and objective forms, reflecting the overall level of the development of thinking and civilization, mastery of the laws of nature and spirit.

This definition means that an educational experience is the axiological bases of education, its value – purposeful characteristics that are expressed in the lingual and objective forms, in philosophical directions and so on. The world educational experience is all social theory and practice in the sphere of education and it serves as the most important means of the enrichment of philosophy of education as a scientific field, as the development of the widely understood educational practice (educational policy, educational technology, etc.).

The main methodological question of philosophy of education is to what extent is possible and expedient to use achievements of contemporary foreign experience in theory and practice of the educational activity of one or another country. So we can investigate it comparative methods and use the term of “comparative philosophy of education”. Comparison of educational theory and practice means as the method, which makes it possible to pass from the descriptions (what? where? how?) to the answer to the more fundamental questions (why?): to explanation and development of reasons – casual connections.

The basic methods of the comparison of educational experience are the comparative confront method, oriented to the development of nature of different objects; the historical-typological comparison; the historical-genetic comparison. It is important to combine these methods to receive objective result of comparison of educational systems. Comparative confront method can be used with comparison of the national systems of education – crossnational comparison (crossnational comparison is a comparison of the countries with each other). It is necessary to work out crosscultural bases for the comparative analysis of educational theory and practice. We mean the understanding of the object of philosophy (philosophy of education); the problems of language (different understanding basic concepts), historical interaction and dialogue of philosophical cultures, translation and interpretation of philosophical thought. If we want to compare educational systems correctly we need to investigate ontological level of the studied phenomenon, its gnoseological (epistemological) characteristic, its axiological and praxeological foundations.

Societies are unique. Education systems in each country have their unique features. It is a system of educational and upbringing attitudes, values, ideals, educational methods, form and activities. The comparative study of education is a deep understanding of sociocultural basis of society (through the problems of education).

SEZNAM LITERATURY

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