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The problems of distance education of civil servants in Ukraine

It is known that in 2010 in Ukraine administrative reforms were proclaimed initiated. Almost simultaneously state management pointed out one of the biggest problems of today – lack of qualified managerial staff. A dire need appeared in organizing rapid professional retraining and further qualification improvement of managerial staff, as well as improvement in the system of civil servant further education. A number of specialists offered creation of a network of structures aimed at organizing distance education for civil servants. But the idea has not still been fulfilled completely. Let us take a look at the main tendencies which lead to the appearance of the mentioned problem.

Establishment of informational society, quickness of information becoming out-of-date, rapid change in legislation, connected with professional training and further development of the workers' qualifications, training regularity, set by current legislative acts in civil service, lead to intense increase of the workload within the system of civil servant education. It is perfectly clear that meeting the needs of civil service institute in highly trained staff can be achieved through improving informational support of the educational process by giving more access to study information, allowing the possibility of self-development based on the choice of an individual study strategy.

The processes of globalization, establishment of global informational space, implementing new educational technologies change the approaches to solving traditional issues in education. Educational informatization becomes today the most prominent means of fulfilling new educational paradigm with the dominant role in it played by the information, the development of constant and proactive nature of education. Implementing informational technologies leads to radical change of the informational-educational environment, making it more accessible, transforming separate educational centres into a unified educational space. Studying these tendencies becomes vital for the development of the strategy of professional education reforming. A scientific problem of equal topicality is the change in the nature of subjects interaction, engaged in the educational process based on the improvement of the means of searching, processing, storing and transferring educational information, appearance of new educational models based on distance form of educational process arrangement.

Complication of the structure of informational support in professional education dramatically changes the strategy within pedagogy itself. Autonomous pedagogical branches appear and actively develop – e-pedagogy, pedagogical informatics, andragogy (adult pedagogy) that lead to change in content and organization of the educational process and the need in improving its methodological and informational support.

Informational support covers various activities, connected with organizing and planning of the educational process: development of educational programs, choice of study technology, conducting testing and control, monitoring. Implementing new informational technologies boosts solving problems, existing in the system of professional education for managerial staff, optimal usage of educational process resources, transition to a new level of civil servant training.

It is known, that one of the forms of continuous education is distance education, developed to fulfill the rights of people to acquire information. Distance education today is in quite a demand, meaning it will further develop. It is enough to mention that in USA alone \$200 billion are spent annually on continuous education and over \$50 billion – on further training.

The need in distance education in Ukraine today is related to increase in mobility of the labor market, importance of comprehensive consideration of dynamically changing demand for educational services and, at the same time, certain inertness of a number of traditional forms of education.

According to the acmeological approach on this phenomenon the notion of distance education means that it does not revolve around one of the forms of education, but synthesizes abilities and benefits of various forms, used in our case, developing new complex interactive educational model. Then education becomes variable, directed and controlled, combining various forms of studying and independent work of students, thus more effective and relevant to the real needs. It is obvious that the system of distance education should not contradict the existing forms of education, but integrate into them, boosting their development and creating mobile educational environment.

Current stage of development of distance education in Ukraine is characterized by widespread usage of various educational technologies that take advantage of the newest tools for delivering information directly to the subject. Development of new technologies revealed countless vectors of fulfilling educational services, provided millions of citizens with the actual opportunity for education. Also fundamental principles in state policy on education: its humanistic nature, unity of educational environment, accessibility, high adaptability to levels and specifics of development of the students' abilities – further increased their influence area in the process of development of a versatile personality.

Implementing distance education in the system of staff training without giving up core activity seriously expanded the range of consumers for educational services and changed its structure as well as content of consumer motivation.

It is widely known that distance education implies a complex of educational services, provided to the general public both inside the country and abroad with the help of specialized informational-educational environment, based on the means of remote educational information exchange: satellite TV, radio, computers etc.

Popularity of distance education is explained by having a range of undeniable advantages before the traditional. Firstly, there is no need to physically gather a large amount of students in an educational centre. This is particularly topical for large educational centres having several affiliates, separated territorially. Usage of e-learning lowers expenditures of course organizing, classroom equipment, staff salaries, transport fees and a lot more. Experience of institutions offering e-learning has shown dramatic change in educational expenses.

Secondly, a very important advantage lies in the opportunity for distance education students to study at convenient times and with convenient pace.

Every person is known to have their own educational style, characterizing the optimal mechanism of perceiving educational material. There is a certain percentage of people that can only perceive educational material through auditorium studies. But research has shown that at least 80% students can effectively accept study material of any form. This means, that absolute majority of people can effectively study remotely, through e-learning (naturally, in case of availability of adequate study content (course content).

Usage of innovative acmeological-pedagogical potential of distance education opens new perspectives for more effective professionalizing managerial staff. Benefits of distance education include such aspects, important in today's world as flexibility of educational process structure, allowing taking into account the needs in active communication in the framework of educational connections both vertically (centre-satellites) and horizontally (between remote students through e-mail and direct dialogue); improvement of the quality of education through usage of various approaches using new informational technologies and establishing proactive nature of distance education, targeting the most topical problems of today and future post-industrial civilization; providing better public accessibility to education as means for involvement in modern socio-cultural and professional values, preparation of people for living and working in various social environments, principal expansion of available informational funds and methods of accessing them taking into account the students' interests and capabilities for productive mastering the study programs; opportunity for teachers to practically use educational materials, acquired in the net or generated in the course of continuous education; more complete fulfillment of the principle of differentiation, flexibility and targeting of educational programs; maximum consideration of personal and individually-typological peculiarities, individualization of working regime and fuller fulfillment of interests and the principle of subjectivity; improving efficiency and effectiveness (speed, completeness, ob-

jectivity) of the quality control over student activity and curriculum mastering through easily executed cross-checks, cuts in transport and temporary expenditures, anonymity of educational process.

Acmeological nature of distance education lies in its systemic compatibility with other, traditional forms, in execution of a range of functions, significantly broaden horizons of an adult person, in adding opportunities for personal creativity development of a personality in continuous education, in harmonizing individual interests and functional capabilities.

For the system of distance education for civil servants to work it is important to create certain organizational conditions:

- The system of distance education should have operative capability of rapid restructuring based on new economic and social conditions;
- The system should be revenue-generating;
- The quality and amounts of educational programs should meet state standards;
- Ability to include regional distance education systems into the nodes of central executive authorities.

Conducting studies on technologies of distance education set new level of acmeological requirements from the teachers. Conditions of distance education require a fairly high level of skill of teachers and organizers of educational process in terms of didactic interaction with students.

From didactic point of view, organizing the system of distance education one should realize the following:

- Orientation of educational process (project-making and organization) on the students' cognitive activity;
- Transparency and individualization of studies;
- Organization of the educational process as a set of intervals between contact and non-contact periods of education with the dominance of the later;
- Organization of communication of participants of educational process both directly and remotely, with the help of modern informational technology means;
- Organization of pedagogical support of student studies with tutors, functioning as a teacher, consultant and manager.

Effectiveness of any kind of distance education depends on: 1) effective teacher-student, student-student interaction, their cooperation in the process of cognitive creative activity; 2) usage of pedagogical technologies; 3) availability and quality of methodological materials; 4) feedback intensity.

Thus, effectiveness of distance education depends on the level of students' motivation, their interaction with the teacher, adequacy of the study course and set goals.

Motivation is an important constituent of distance education. It should be maintained throughout the entire period of studying. Motivation quickly de-

grades, if the level of set tasks doesn't coincide with the level of student's ability, which is why study goals must be stated clearly in the program.

As some scientists state (namely Y. Tyan, V. Sergeev and others), distance forms of staff assessment have been spreading lately. The advantage of distance diagnostics lies in being able to cover government institutes with horizontal organization form, and cutting time, money and functional expenditures on the procedure of staff assessment, allowing quick automatic data gathering as well as decreasing the losses in working time of the staff.

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Abstract

To sum it up it should be stated, that the usage of distance education technologies should be considered one of the most effective toolsets in professional education, continuous education and further training of civil servants in Ukraine. At the same time the following should be noted: Distance education at present is an innovation for civil service. Usage of certain distance courses by authorities is rather an exception than a rule. To our mind, limited usage of such a convenient means can be explained by the lack of legal basis for the system of distance education and the activity of institutions, offering it.

Key words: distance education, professional education, continuous education.

Problemy kształcenia na odległość pracowników administracji państwowej na Ukrainie

Streszczenie

Podsumowując należy stwierdzić, że wykorzystanie technologii kształcenia na odległość powinno być uważane za jedno z najbardziej skutecznych zesta-

wów narzędzi w edukacji zawodowej, doskonaleniu i doksztalcaniu urzędników państwowych na Ukrainie. Jednocześnie należy zauważyć, że kształcenie na odległość w chwili obecnej jest innowacją w służbie cywilnej. Korzystanie z niektórych kursów na odległość przez władze jest raczej wyjątkiem niż regułą. Można przyjąć, że ograniczenie korzystania z tych wygodnych środków doksztalcania można wyjaśnić brakiem podstawy prawnej dla systemu kształcenia na odległość i działalności instytucji ją oferującą.

Słowa kluczowe: edukacja na odległość, edukacja zawodowa, edukacja całościowa.